Social Values in the Rhetoric of Pauline Paraenetic Literature

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Abstract
In the new social construction of reality for the Christian communities, Paul uses various strategies of argumentation. Social values are operative in his arguments. Not all the social values in Paul's paraenesis are new inventions. Some of the values of the broader society are taken over and confirmed.

An analysis of the syllogisms and enthymemata employed in Paul's paraenesis (in this article applied to Romans 13:1-7) is a valuable tool which can be used to explicate the social values operative in the argumentation. However, such an analysis is only a first step. Rhetorical criticism must go beyond that and inquire into the interests and power at stake in specific instances of social interaction.

1 Introduction
The rhetorical function(s) of the paraenetic sections in Paul's letters remains a matter of interest. To determine the persuasive function(s) of this literature within the rhetorical situation of a specific letter, creates an interesting challenge for rhetorical criticism. This article has a threefold aim, namely

* to illustrate how the social values operative in a quite controversial passage of paraenetic literature, Rm 13:1-7, can be discovered and made explicit by means of an analysis of the enthymemata and syllogisms in the passage,
* to identify the rhetorical strategy employed in the passage,
* to describe how these particular social values reflect a paradigm of order.

2 Terminology
Important concepts and technical terms used in this article are rhetoric, paraenetic literature, syllogism, premise, enthymeme, topos, and social value.

Much has been written about these terms, and the concepts 'rhetoric' and 'social value' in particular have a very broad field of reference. I merely highlight certain aspects of these concepts which are relevant for my purpose here.
2.1 The aim of rhetorical criticism

According to Susan Suleiman, the rhetorical critic 'seeks not only to formulate the set of verbal meanings embedded in the text, but above all to discover the values and beliefs that make those meanings possible—or that those meanings imply' (Suleiman 1980:8).

Of course there are many other conceptualisations of rhetoric and the aim of rhetorical criticism, but rhetorical criticism aimed at the discovery of social values is currently my concern.

2.2 Paraenetic literature

Gammie (1990:70) defines 'paraenetic literature' as 'a complex and secondary literary genre the aim of which is frequently hortatory and instructive'. For him paraenesis are

Moral exhortations which usually feature an assemblage of precepts and comprise a major division of Paraenetic Literature. Frequently paraenesis is taken to be a synonym for exhortation, or to be aimed at conforming the addressee in a given course of conduct (1990:70).

The passage known as Rm 13:1-7 can be characterised as Paraenetic Literature. It is hortatory in nature, consisting of a number of specific instructions for conduct with regard to authorities, namely

* πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίας ὑπερεχοῦσας ὑποτασσέω ('let everyone be subject to the governing authorities' 13:1),
* φόρους τελείτε ('pay your taxes' 13:6),
* ἀπόδοτε πᾶσιν τὰς ὀφειλάς ('pay all of them their dues' 13:7).

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1 *Rhetoric is situated discourse: That 'a text must reveal its context' (Sloane 1975:804), is for Wuellner (1987:450) the most important difference between rhetorical criticism and literary criticism. By 'context' is meant more than historical situation or genre or the generic *Sitz im Leben*. For modern rhetorics 'context' means the 'attitudinizing conventions, precepts that condition (both the writer's and the reader's) stance toward experience, knowledge, tradition, language, and other people' (Wuellner 1987a:450).

2 *Rhetoric is goal-oriented discourse, or, persuasive discourse (Aristotle's definition *Rhetorica* I.1.2), or social interaction.

* Rhetorical criticism seeks to reveal the *interests* of a speaker (= ideological criticism), it seeks to discover and expose the *powerplay* manifesting itself in an act of language.

* New rhetoric (the theory of argumentation of Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:4): 'the study of the discursive techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent'

2 'Paraeneses' and 'instructions' constitute the two largest divisions of paraenetic literature.
Rm 13:1-3 is a section within the last part of Romans (chs 12:1-15:13) which is usually described as the 'paraenetic' section of the letter. Paraenesis (which conforms to existing values) differs from protreptic (exhortation to adopt a new system of values, thus, confronting the existing system).

2.2.1 Syllogism

The syllogism is a schematic device that Aristotle used to analyse and test deductive reasoning (Van Eemeren et al 1987:60-70; Corbett 1971:56). A syllogism consists of two premises and a conclusion. A model syllogism runs like this:

**Major premise:**
1. All humans are mortal  
   middle term  
   major term

**Minor premise:**
2. All Australians are humans  
   minor term  
   middle term

**Conclusion:**
3. All Australians are mortal  
   minor term  
   major term

In this example the middle term in the major premise is thus in the position of the subject and the minor premise in the position of the predicate. Two rules govern the validity of a syllogism, namely, (i) there must be three terms and only three terms, and (ii) the middle term must be distributed at least once. The middle term is the term that occurs in both premises, but not in the conclusion.

2.3 Premise

Premises are the propositions from which syllogisms reason.

2.4 Enthymeme

An enthymeme is a shortened syllogism with the mandatory major premise usually omitted (Aristotle, *Rhetorica* i.1.8). In other words, an enthymeme is the rhetorical equivalent of the logical syllogism (Corbett 1971:73). The reason why the major premise is often omitted in an enthymeme is that the rhetor regards it as generally known and expects the audience to be able to supply it themselves (Leeman and Braet 1987:70).

Enthymemes often take the form of a compound sentence, the two clauses being joined by co-ordinating conjunctions *for* or *so* or linked logically by such conjunctive adverbs as *therefore*, *hence*, *consequently*; or they take the form of a complex sentence, the clauses being joined by such subordinating conjunctions as *since* or *because*. Since such conjunctions abound in Rm 13:1-7—γάρ (v1),
yáρ (v3), γάρ (v4a), γάρ (v4b), γάρ (v4c), διό (v5), διά τοῦτο (v6)—it justifies such an analysis of this passage.

In the analysis of rhetorical enthymeme it is important to ascertain the implied premise of an enthymeme, because the implied premise or assumption may be the vulnerable spot in the argument (Corbett 1971:77). Often the implied premises are shared social values employed by a rhetor as basis for the meeting of minds during the act of persuasion. While these values often remain below the surface of a discourse, they are actually its focal point (Kraftchick 1990:72).

2.4.1 Topos
In classical rhetoric τόπος is defined as a place (store, thesaurus, department, region) to which one resorts to find something to say on a given subject. It is a 'heading' containing a number of rhetorical arguments of the same kind, stored where they can easily be found for use. More specifically, a τόπος is a general heading or line of argument which suggests material which might supply proofs. Topoi are 'suggesters' or 'prompters' or 'initiaters' or a 'checklist' of ideas on some subjects (Corbett 1971:108-109). Aristotle distinguishes two kinds of topoi:

* κοινοί τόποι ('commonplaces' or simply τόποι, the topics common to the three kinds of rhetoric (Rhetorica i.2.21; ii.18.3-5). Examples of common topoi are definition, comparison, relationship, circumstances, testimony.
* εἴδη or ἔδη: specific topics, propositions of limited applicability, derived from propositions which are peculiar to each species or genus of things, for example, propositions about physics or ethics (Rhetorica i.2.21). Examples of special topoi are (i) for deliberative discourse: the good/worthy and the advantageous/expedient/useful, (ii) for judicial discourse: right, wrong, and (iii) for epideictic discourse: the noble, the base.

Topoi in association with argumentation, are the underlying premises, the basis for the meeting of minds in the process of argumentation. With the aid of topoi the rhetores look specifically for arguments to back up their position with regard to the krinomenon (Braet 1987:81). The finding of the 'suggesters' or 'prompters' or 'initiaters' of ideas forms a very important element in the inventio in the process of the rhetorical creation of discourse (Lausberg 1973:146). When engaged in the process of a rhetorical analysis of discourse, however, the process is reversed: we need not invent our own topoi to argue a specific point (see Sloane 1978). We analyse the argumentation in order to discover the topoi which are used to substantiate the argumentation.

I want to illustrate how this can be done by way of an analysis of the syllogisms and enthymemes used in a text. Through such an analysis those premises...
of the argumentation which are usually not explicitly present in the text can be discovered. Furthermore, these premises usually reflect the social values which are, in the perception of the encoded author, shared by the audience and form the basis for a meeting of minds, resulting in persuasive argumentation.

2.4.2 Value
Corbett (1971:74) maintains:

Every civilization has a body of accepted opinions that influence the conduct of its affairs—a body of ‘truths’ which have never really been demonstrated but in which people have faith, almost to the point of accepting them as self-evident.

This ‘body of opinions’ can be termed the social values of a society. Joubert (1992:2) defines values as ‘notions of the good and desirable in personal dispositions, social conduct, societal arrangements and cultural resources’.

Against this background I now turn to the analysis of Rm 13:1-7. The purpose of this analysis is to

* identify the syllogisms/enthymemes in the text and explicate the premises not mentioned in the text,
* list the premises.

3 ANALYSIS OF ROMANS 13:1-7

3.1 Identification of the syllogisms/enthymemes in the text and explication of the major premises not mentioned in the text
In Rm 13:1-7 the following enthymemes and syllogisms can be identified (the major premises not stated explicitly in the text are printed in bold letters):

3 Other definitions of values:
* A value is ‘the enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. A value system is an enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence alongside a continuum of relative importance’ (Rokeach 1973:6-21).
* A thing has or is a value if and when people behave toward it so as to retain or increase possession of it (Lundberg).
* Anything capable of being appreciated (wished for) is a value (Part & Burgess).
* A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available means and ends of action (Kluckholm).
* Values are normative standards by which human beings are influenced in their choice among the alternative courses of action which they perceive (Jacob & Flink) (all quoted by Rescher 1969:2).
Enthymeme 1:

**Conclusion:**

(3) $\pi\alpha\sigma\alpha$ ψυχή

major term

έξουσίας

minor term

υπερεχούσας υποτασσέσθω

**Major premise:**

[3] $\pi\alpha\sigma\alpha$ ψυχή

major term

τῷ θεῷ

middle term

υποτασσέσθω]

**Minor premise:**

(2a) οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν

minor term

έξουσία

middle term

εἴ μὴ ύπο θεοῦ

(2b) αἱ δὲ οὖσαι

minor term

ύπο θεοῦ

middle term

tεταγμέναι εἰσίν

Restated this enthymeme reads:

* Every soul (a) must submit to God (b) (major premise) (a=b),
* and God (b) has ordained the authorities (c) (minor premise) (b=c),
* therefore, every soul (a) should submit to the ordained authorities (c) (conclusion) (a=c).

In actual discourse the usual logical sequence of the syllogism (major premise, minor premise, conclusion) is seldom followed precisely—as is also the case here in Rm 13:1. Here the conclusion is stated first, followed by a repetition of the minor premise, and characteristic of the enthymeme, the major premise (1) is not explicitly present on the surface structure of the text. In this case the general and self-evident truth, which functions as validation for the argument, is the maxim Everyone should submit to God. Nobody would argue with that. To this major premise and self-evident truth, a minor premise is added, in fact, it is repeated twice (2a and 2b): God ordained authorities. Twice it is emphasised that God ordained the authorities. This qualification of the minor term is retained in the conclusion: Every person should submit to the ύπερεξούσας (=ordained) authorities.

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4 Those premises not explicitly stated in the text are rendered in Greek in this analysis and are thus my own creations. This is done because the logic of the syllogism is easier to grasp on the basis of three Greek sentences in which the Greek terminology is repeated in the various syllogistic roles. Those conjugations which serve to link different enthymemata are also left out here. Only those connecting the different phrases within a specific enthymeme are retained.
Enthymeme 2:

**Major premise:**

\[(1) \text{ ἐξουσία \ (middle term)} \quad \text{ὑπὸ θεοῦ \ (major term)} \quad \text{τεταγμέναι εἰς ἑαυτῷ)}\]

**Minor premise:**

\[(2) \text{ ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος \ (minor term)} \quad \text{ἡ ἐξουσία \ (middle term)}\]

**Conclusion:**

\[(3) \text{ τοῦ θεοῦ διαταγῇ \ (major term)} \quad \text{ἀνθέστηκεν \ (minor term)}\]

Restated, this enthymeme reads:

* Authorities (b) are ordained by God (a) (major premise) (b = a),
* and he who resists (c) the authorities (b) (minor premise) (c = b),
* therefore resists (c) an ordination of God (a) (conclusion) (c = a).

In this enthymeme the minor premise of the first enthymeme functions as major premise. A new element is brought in as minor term in the minor premise, namely he who resists. By means of syllogistic logic, the conclusion is reached that to resist the authorities is to resist an ordination of God.

Note that in both enthymemes the guarantee for the validity of the argumentation is given by means of a transfer of values/characteristics usually attributed to God, to the authorities.

Enthymeme 3:

**Major premise:**

\[(1) \text{ θεὸς κρίνει \ (major term)} \quad \text{τοὺς ἀντιτασσόμενους \ (minor term)} \quad \text{τῇ διαταγῇ αὐτοῦ)}\]

**Minor premise:**

\[(2) \text{ οἱ δὲ ἀνθέστηκότες \ (minor term)} \quad \text{τὰς ἐξουσίας)}\]

**Conclusion:**

\[(3) \text{ ἐαυτοῖς \ (major term)} \quad \text{κρίμα λήμυσονται \ (minor term)}\]
Restated, this enthymeme reads:

* God punishes (a) those who resist his ordinations (b) *(major premise)* *(a=b)*,
* and those who resist (c) the authorities (b) *(minor premise)* *(c=b)*,
* therefore, will be punished (a) (by the authorities) (c) *(conclusion)* *(a=c)*.

In this enthymeme 'ordination of God' (διατάγη) and 'authorities' (ἐξουσίας) serve as middle term as if they were one concept, because their identification was the conclusion of the preceding enthymeme.

In Cicero's rhetorical treatise, *De Inventione* (1,67), the model for the Hermagorean *epicheirema* is given. The epicheirema *(ratiocinatio)* is an extended syllogism. It consists of five statements: the three statements of the syllogism, as well as two statements supporting the premises (Leeman & Braet 88). The model runs like this:

1. All human beings are mortal *(propositio: major premise)*,
2. since up to now all human beings have died *(adprobatio)*.
3. Socrates is a human being *(adsumptio: minor premise)*,
4. since Socrates has all the necessary human qualities *(adprobatio adsumptiones: confirmation of the minor premise)*.
5. Therefore, Socrates is mortal *(complexio: conclusion)*.

The three enthymemata of which Rm 13:1-2 consists, fit this model in the following way:

1. Every person should be subject to God *(propositio: minor premise)*,
2. since God punishes those who resist him *(adprobatio)*.
3. Resistance of the authorities is resistance to an ordination of God *(adsumptio: minor premise)*,
4. since God has ordained authorities *(adprobatio adsumptiones)*.
5. Therefore, everyone should submit to the ordained authorities *(complexio: conclusion)*.

The fact that Rm 13:1-2 fits the model of Hermagorean school-rhetoric so perfectly is significant. It points to the gnomic and traditional character of this exhortation. This exhortation as such is not something newly invented specifically in the rhetorical situation of the letter to the Romans. Part of its rhetorical significance, therefore, does not lie in its 'content' as such, but in the fact of its presence.
The use of this well-known exhortation\(^5\) in this familiar form in the first sentence of Rm 13:1-7 is an indication that the *Verretbarkeitsgrad* (or way of entrance) into the argumentation of Rm 13:1-7 can be identified as ἐνδοξον σχήμα (*honestum genus*), that is, the issues are agreeable to the readers (Lausberg 1973:57).\(^6\) Clearly, regarding this specific issue, the encoded author sets out to meet the audience on familiar ground.

**Enthymeme 4:**

**Major premise:**

\[ \text{[τὸ κρίμα] ἐστὶν αἰτίος τὸν φόβου} \]

**Middle term**

**Minor premise:**

\[ \text{ἄρχοντες κρίνουσι τὸν κάκον ἐργόν} \]

**Conclusion:**

\[ \text{γὰρ ἄρχοντες οὐκ εἰσίν φόβος τῷ ἁγαθῷ ἐργῳ ἀλλὰ τῷ κακῷ} \]

Restated this enthymeme reads:

* Punishment (b) causes fear (a) (major premise) \((b = a)\),
* and the authorities punish (b) the wrong deed (c) (minor premise) \((b = c)\),
* therefore, the authorities are not a terror (fear) (a) to good but to wrong conduct (c) (conclusion) \((a = c)\).

In the rest of 13:3 the argument of enthymeme 4 is repeated, explicating the positive converse element of this conclusion: The authorities not only do not punish those doing τὸν ἁγαθὸν, they praise them. This explicating element is not added by means of a new enthymeme (with the major premise omitted). The element of praise is brought into the argumentation by means of a full syllogism (all three elements are present in the text):

\[ \text{In Jewish tradition there is evidence that it was held that authorities are ordained by God and should therefore be obeyed: Josephus, } \text{BJ ii} \text{ ii.8.7 par 140 ("Rule does not come from anyone apart from God") and Sirach 4:27 ("Do not resist rulers"), cf (Käsemann 1980:345-355).} \]

\[ \text{In contrast to the ἄμφιδοξον σχήμα (*dubium genus*) = the issue provokes serious questions; the παράδοξον σχήμα (*turpe genus*) = the issue is shocking to the readers; the ἀδικον σχήμα (*humile genus*) = the issue is uninteresting; or the δυσπαρασκελοῦθιον σχήμα (*obscurum genus*) = the issue is baffling and obscure (see Lausberg 1973:56-61).} \]
Syllogism 1

Major premise:
θέλεις δὲ μὴ φοβεῖσθαι τὴν ἐξουσίαν
middle term major term

Minor premise:
tὸ ἁγαθὸν ποιεῖς
minor term middle term

Conclusion:
καὶ ἐὰν εἶθε καὶ ἑπανοῦν ἐὰς αὐτὴς
major term major term

Restated, the syllogism reads:

* You do (b) not want to fear the authorities (a) (major premise) (b=a),
* and you do (b) good (c) (minor premise) (b=c),
* therefore they (a) will praise (c) you (conclusion) (a=c).

Note that the conclusion of this syllogism is similar to the conclusion of Enthymeme 4 but stated conversely.

Enthymeme 5:

Major premise:
[ὁ θεὸς πάντως ποιεῖ τὸν ἁγαθὸν σοί]
middle term major term

Minor premise:
[ἐξουσία] θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονος ἐστὶν
minor term middle term

Conclusion:
[ἐξουσία] σοι εἰς τὸ ἁγαθὸν
minor term major term

Restated, this enthymeme reads:

* God (b) always does what is good (a) for you (major premise), (b=a), and
* since the authority (c) is a servant of God (b) (minor premise) (c=b),
* therefore the authorities (c) do good (a) to you (conclusion) (c = a).

This argument is followed by yet another repetition, explicating the logical consequences of the negative conduct in terms of enthymeme 4. Thus, the conclusion of enthymeme 4 is used as major premise in this repetition:

Syllogism 2:

**Major premise**

\[
\text{οἱ ἀρχοντες οὐκ εἰσίν} \quad \phiβος \quad \tauο̱ν ἡγαθὺς ἐργῶν ἀλλὰ τοῦ κακοῦ
\]

**Minor premise**

\[
\text{ἐὰν δὲ τὸ κακὸν} \quad \piοιῆς
\]

**Conclusion:**

\[
φοβοῦ
\]

Restated, this syllogism reads:

* The authorities punish (a) those who do wrong (b) (major premise) (a = b),
* and you do (c) wrong (b) (minor premise) (c = b),
* therefore you (c) should fear (a) (conclusion) (c = a).

The next enthymeme elaborates on this conclusion, once again on the basis of an omitted major premise regarding what God usually does. Every action (positive or negative) of the authorities is thus motivated on the basis of assumptions of what God does and what God wants.

Enthymeme 6:

**Major premise:**

\[
[\text{ὁ θεὸς πάντως ἔχει ὀργὴν}] \quad \tauο̱ν τὸ κακὸν πρᾶσσοντι
\]

**Minor premise:**

\[
\text{οὐ εἰκῇ τὴν μάχαιραν φορεῖ} \quad \thetaεοῦ γὰρ διάκονος ἐστὶν
\]
Conclusion:

Restated, this enthymeme reads:

* **God (b) always holds wrath for the wrongdoer (a) (major premise) (b=a)**
* and as a servant of God (b) the authority (c) carries the sword (minor premise) (b=c),
* therefore the authority (c) executes wrath on the wrongdoer (a) (conclusion) (c=a).

Again, the action of the authorities is motivated on the basis on assumptions of what God usually does and what he usually wants.

**Enthymeme 7:**

**Major premise**

Major premise

Middle term

Minor premise

Minor premise

Conclusion:

Restated, this enthymeme reads:

* **Conscience (b) compels the right conduct (a) (major premise) (b=a),**
* and it is compelling (c) not only to avoid God's wrath but also (to do right) for the sake of conscience (b) (minor premise) (c=b),
* therefore it is compelling (c) to obey (a) (the authorities) (conclusion) (c=a).

**Syllogism 3:**

**Minor premise**
Major premise
(aí ἐξουσίαι)  λειτουργοὶ θεοῦ εἰς καὶ εἰς αὐτὸ προσκαρτεροῦντες
middle term  major term

Conclusion:
διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ φόρους τελεῖτε (τοῖς λειτουργοῖς τοῦ θεοῦ)
minor term major term

Restated, this enthymeme reads:

* Authorities (b) are servants of God (a) (major premise) (b = a),
* and authorities (b) collect taxes (c) (minor premise) (b = c),
* therefore you must pay taxes (c) (to the servants of God) (a) (conclusion) (c = a).

Note that the authority of the authorities, even with regard to such a general fact that authorities collect taxes, is once again motivated by their status as servants of God. An implicit premise underlying the major premise of this syllogism is that everything belongs to God, which, in turn builds on the premise that God gives everything. As giver of everything, God has the right to expect one to pay him everything.

3.2 List of implied premises
This analysis has provided us with the premises which underpin the argumentation in Rm 13:1-7. They are the following:

1 Every soul must submit to God.
2 Authorities are ordained by God.
3 God punishes those who resist his ordinations.
4 Punishment causes fear.
5 People do not want to fear
6 God always does what is good.
7 The authorities punish those who do wrong.
8 God always holds wrath for the wrongdoer.
9 Conscience compels the right conduct.
10 Authorities are servants of God.
11 Everything belongs to God.

Seven premises relate to God:

1 Every soul must submit to God.
2 Authorities are ordained by God.
3 God punishes those who resist his ordinations.
6 God always does what is good.
8 God always holds wrath for the wrongdoer.
10 Authorities are servants of God.
11 Everything belongs to God.

Three premises relate to the authorities:

2 Authorities are ordained by God.
7 The authorities punish those who do wrong.
10 Authorities are servants of God.

Three premises are gnomic statements:

4 Punishment causes fear.
5 People do not want to fear.
9 Conscience compels the right conduct.

These propositions serve as the basis for the meeting of minds in the argumentation in Rm 13:1-7. They are the values which the encoded author presumes to be the common ground of accepted values shared by the encoded author and the implied readers. The encoded author argues deductively, using seven enthymemata and three syllogisms. The gnomic nature of these propositions seems to confirm Käsemann’s (1980:355) observation that the argument in Rm 13:1-7 is related to universally valid realities.

In the next section of the article the strategies of argumentation used in this passage are indicated, as well as how these social values operate in the argumentation.

4 NAMING THE STRATEGIES OF ARGUMENTATION

In an endeavour to argue persuasively the encoded author of Rm 13:1-7 uses a strategy of association, in particular the form which Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969:227) call an ‘argument by transitivity’:

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca specify three forms of association, namely (i) quasi-logical arguments (they appear to be like formal reasoning in structure, but the ambiguity of terms and the possibility of multiple interpretation make them quasi-logical) (1969:193-195); (ii) arguments based on the structure of reality (either liaisons of succession or liaisons of co-existence) (1969:261-263); and (iii) arguments which establish the structure of reality (by means of an example, an illustration or an analogy) (1969:350-410).
Transitivity is a formal property of certain relations which makes it possible to infer that because a relation holds between \( a \) and \( b \) and between \( b \) and \( c \), it therefore holds between \( a \) and \( c \); the relations of equality, superiority, inclusion, and ancestry are transitive.

By means of transitive argumentation three parties are arranged in order of superiority in Rm 13:1-7: God, the authorities, and \( \pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\alpha\upsilon\chi\eta \) (including the implied readers). The values attributed to God by the encoded author and, in his perception, shared by the implied readers, are transposed to the authorities. How this happens was illustrated in the analysis of Enthymemata 1, 2, 3, 5, 6. The argument by transitivity is followed with sequential relations linked by a causal chain (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:266). Values are transferred between the parties by going from cause to effect and from effect to cause. Values usually attributed to God are transferred to the authorities. What God usually does is the cause which has as effect that which authorities do now, and what the authorities do is the result of what God usually does.

Furthermore, Vorster (1988:106) identifies Rm 13:1-7 as a typical example of a pragmatic argument. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969:266) call an argument which permits the evaluation of an act or an event in terms of its favourable or unfavourable consequences, pragmatic. The praise of the authorities is the favourable consequence of obedience to them and their wrath and punishment the unfavourable result. The validity of the argumentation in Rm 13:1-7 rests on this fact-consequence scheme. Paul emphasises that the right conduct towards the authorities necessarily has a positive effect, and the wrong conduct a negative effect. The pragmatic thus dominates in this rhetorical unit.

In order to come to a broader understanding of the nature of the social values operative in Rm 13:1-7, it is helpful to describe them in terms of a particular social model.

5 A PARADIGM OF ORDER

The social model presupposing a paradigm of order, in its ideal form, projects a world order as originating at creation and continuing to categorise all existing elements into a harmonious whole (Wallace & Wallace 1985:17-18). Everything has its place, norms, time, and function. A divine council or natural law maintains this order, often through a system of retribution which sustains life and grants well-being to those who live in harmony with cosmic norms, but brings punishment and destruction to violators (Perdue 1990:6-7, Malina & Neyrey 1988). Ethical action produces well-being within nature, the larger society, the community and the individual, sustaining their ongoing existence.

8 Represented by modern sociologists such as Emile Durkheim, Robert K Merton and Talcott Parsons (see Wallace & Wallace 1985).
Immoral behavior produces chaos in every sphere and is viewed as a threat to communal and individual life (see Perdue (1990:8, Malina & Neyrey 1988).

Rm 13:1-7 is an example of paraenesis presupposing a paradigm of order. The argumentation is underpinned by premises appealing to divine characteristics (‘Every person should submit to God’; ‘God punishes those who resist his ordinations’; ‘God always does what is good’; and ‘Everything belongs to God’). Through a strategy of transitive argumentation, these values are transposed to the authorities—primarily to warrant the claim that authorities are ordinations of God and should therefore be obeyed by everyone. Accordingly, authorities have a specific place and function within the broader society (Gesellschaft). Their function and authority form part of the cosmic order. The authorities are instrumental in maintaining this order through a system of retribution and punishment.

Those who live in harmony with this order, that is, those who submit to the authorities, are characterised as people who ‘do good’ (13:3). To ‘do good’ is conduct in accordance with the divine characteristic, ‘God always does what is good’. Those who ‘do good’ are retributed, they receive the authorities’ approval/praise (καὶ ἐξείς ἐπαινον ἐξ αὐτῆς, 13:3) and their life and well-being are assured. This approval or bestowing of praise by the authorities is specifically grounded with a reference to the function of the authorities in terms of their divine ordination: θεοῦ γὰρ διὰκονός ἐστιν σοι εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν (the authority is a servant of God for your good, 13:4). Note that what ‘good’ consists of is not explicated. The unspoken assumption is that everyone knows what is good (and what is bad). This general and unspoken assumption is a reflection of the idea of a cosmic order consisting of a harmonious whole.

Those who violate the cosmic norms, in this case by resisting the authorities, will be punished: they will incur judgment (οἱ δὲ ἀνθρωπότητις ἐαυτοῖς κρίμα λήμψονται, 13:1). The punishment is explicated with the reference to the ‘sword’ being carried and used by the authorities (οὐ γὰρ εἰς τὴν μάχαιραν φορεῖ, 13:4). The implication of this reference is clear, namely, the punishment consists of the fact that the authorities will execute those who do wrong. This may also be taken as an assumption presupposing a cosmic order of harmony and order. Everyone knows what is wrong/bad. To resist the authorities is one specific example of wrong/bad conduct. To resist the authorities, therefore, endangers the harmony of the divinely ordained cosmic order, sustained by the divinely ordained authorities. Therefore wrong/bad behaviour should be rooted out to ensure the continued harmonious existence of the cosmic order.

Nothing is said about the possibility that authorities themselves might do wrong. To consider such a possibility would be out of line within this line of argumentation, since it would presuppose that divine ordinations might do wrong, which would put in question the values and characteristics attributed to
God. That is unthinkable. The conduct of the authorities (whether to praise or to punish) is justified with appeals to characteristics of God, as well as by repeating that they act in this particular way as servants of God. This enhances the idea that the role and function of the authorities are a reflection of the cosmos as created and sustained by divine council. The social rules and obligations of the broader society with regard to the authorities are submission and conformity. As one of the major instruments for the enforcement of the laws aimed at sustaining the harmonious cosmic order, the state acts authoritatively and requires obedience. A challenge to the state would prove disruptive to the social order at a very basic level, and its consequences would work to the detriment of both the individual and the society.

Moving beyond the formal identification and naming of the strategies of argumentation, the next problem is to describe the role of social values in terms of the social interaction which takes place within the rhetorical situation of the letter. This is quite a complicated process, especially given the complex nature of the rhetorical situation of the letter to the Romans.

6 FUNCTION OF THE SOCIAL VALUES OPERATIVE IN ROMANS 13:1-7 WITHIN THE RHETORICAL SITUATION OF THE LETTER

Social interaction is never ‘innocent’. One of the important aims of rhetorical criticism is to describe the interests or power play which is going on, and the way in which social values are operative in social interaction. To do that in any detail here, however, would take me beyond the aim of this article. I shall therefore only make a few brief remarks without any substantial argumentation.

Within the rhetorical situation of the letter to the Romans as a whole, Rm 13:1-7 forms part of the kind of paraenesis which is characteristic of a liminal experience. The audience is perceived as being in an ‘in-between’ state and the purpose of the paraenesis is the creation of new beings with new behaviour patterns. This is clear from Rm 12:1-2 where Paul explicitly exhorts the readers not to conform to the existing order. However, in order to succeed with the creation of the new community and in order to further its aims (by means of the establishment of an operational base for Paul in Rome and his envisioned missionary activities in Spain), it is for pragmatic reasons necessary for the Christian community to conform to some of the values of the broader society. Specifically with regard to the conduct towards authorities, the existing values of the broader society converge with those envisioned by the encoded author for the new communitas.
7 CONCLUSION

In the new social construction of reality for the Christian communities, Paul uses various strategies of argumentation. Social values are operative in his arguments. Not all the social values in Paul’s paraenesis are new inventions. Some of the values of the broader society are taken over and confirmed.

An analysis of the syllogisms and enthymemata employed in Paul’s paraenesis is a valuable tool which can be used to explicate the social values operative in the argumentation. However, such an analysis is only a first step. Rhetorical criticism must go beyond that and inquire into the interests and power at stake in specific instances of social interaction.

WORKS CONSULTED


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