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THE ARGUMENTATION IN GALATIANS

ABSTRACT

Many exegetes set out to analyse not only rhetorical features in Galatians but also other features relating to Paul's argumentation. Still, the use of insights from modern argumentation theory has been modest and no full-fledged argumentation analyses of Paul's argumentation have yet been attempted. However, modern methods for argumentation analysis provide useful tools for such an undertaking. Using the pragma-dialectical model of argumentation analysis, this paper illustrates how a modern approach can be used for Galatians. It is argued that by using a sophisticated method we can gain a more accurate understanding of Paul's argumentation.

1. ANALYSIS OF ARGUMENTATION AND RHETORIC

1.1 Argumentation, rhetoric, and logic

One aspect rarely addressed in rhetorical analyses of Pauline texts is that the emphasis on rhetorical features tends to exclude dialectical aspects such as the layout of arguments and their soundness.[1] However, these are equally important aspects alongside the rhetorical ones when assessing argumentation from an overall perspective.

I suggest that when analysing Paul's argumentation it is useful to unite dialectical and rhetorical analyses. Such a balanced view is important when reaching for a theology of Paul. To this end the pragma-dialectical approach (the so called Amsterdam-school of argumentation analysis) provides the exegete with a set of sophisticated tools.

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1   I here understand 'dialectic' to refer to reasoning by justifying or refuting expressed opinions in a discussion. See Van Eemeren (1996:37-42) and Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984:15-18).

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In many rhetorical analyses of Pauline texts, the terms 'rhetoric' and 'argumentation' are used more or less synonymously. To argue persuasively is to make use of rhetoric and to use persuasive rhetoric requires clear argumentation. For the purposes of making a point I will here make a distinction between these two concepts and illustrate how a comprehensive analysis of Galatians — or any other Pauline text — requires us to take both perspectives into account.

Argumentation and rhetoric can be understood in different ways. The dictionary defines 'argumentation' as "the action or process of reasoning systematically in support of an idea, action, or theory", whereas 'rhetoric' is defined as "the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the exploitation of figures of speech and other compositional techniques" (NOD 2001). Although such definitions point to the right direction, they are incomplete. Is not, on the one hand, a "systematic support of an idea' also important for 'persuasive speaking or writing"? And are not, on the other hand, 'compositional techniques' involved in the 'process of reasoning systematically'? In other words, the one concept can at least to some extent be incorporated into the other and *vice versa*.[2]

A further clarification is in order. Argumentation theory differs substantially from formal logic where the interest is focused on how conclusions are derived from premises. In formal logic, the arguments are de-contextualised so that valid and invalid argument forms can be distinguished more easily. Argumentation analysis, on the other hand, is focused on arguments in context. Pragmatic factors are adequately dealt with, which is not the case in formal logic (Van Eemeren *et al*. 1996:5-12). Further, the aims of argumentation analysts are much more far-reaching than those of formal logicians:

> The general objective of the study of argumentation is to develop criteria for determining the validity of argumentation in view of its points of departure and presentational layout and to implement the application of these criteria in the production, analysis and evaluation of argumentative discourse (Van Eemeren *et al*. 1996:22).

When analysing a text such as Galatians we need to decide what features we are interested in. If our main interest lies on how topical potential, auditorial demand or presentational devices are used in order to persuade, then a rhetorical analysis is called for. If our interest, on the other hand, lies in the arguments as such, in how standpoints are defended, in fallacies or in argument schemes or argumentation structures, then a basic argumentation analysis is needed. For an overall view we need both.

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2   For different perspectives on these two concepts, see Van Eemeren & Houtlosser (eds.) (2002).

Among the many studies of Paul's rhetoric, one often finds comments not only relating to rhetorical aspects, but to all aspects of argumentation. The problem that often presents itself in such cases is that rhetorical approaches do not provide instruments for careful analysis of the dialectical make-up of arguments. References to argument forms taken from formal logic, such as *modus ponens*, are not adequate when the analysis needs to take the context into account. However, the logical aspects are important also from a rhetorical perspective. Poorly built-up arguments are potentially also less persuasive. Consequently, a method should ideally be able to account for both aspects of argumentation.

Following Betz' pioneering analysis of Galatians, most rhetorical analyses take their point of origin in classical rhetoric. The consequent methodological problems are well known: (1) We know little of Paul's education, and of the extent to which he followed classical rhetorical handbooks, (2) There was no uniform classical rhetorical approach but various approaches, and (3) Classical approaches were not designed for textual analysis. Thus the theory that is actually used is either a modern synthesis more or less alien to the classics or an analysis strictly in accordance with some classical tradition (e.g., Aristotle) of which the connection to Paul may be weak.[3]

Naturally, if one is mainly interested in classical influences on Paul's argumentation, a classical rhetorical approach is called for. However, when the purpose is defined as one of understanding the argumentation as such, knowledge of historical and sociological circumstances, including classical rhetorical conventions, become supporting background factors, whereas the text itself steers the analyst. Certainly this is always the ideal, but if one starts off with a method with a certain array of features on offer, so to speak, there is a risk of finding precisely these features.

Modern theories are available that provide the sophisticated tools required by modern analysts. For an overview of different approaches I refer to Van Eemeren *et al.* (1996). In this study I utilise the pragma-dialectical method, which I will present briefly (in Section 1.2.1) and illustrate in use (Section 2).

1.2   Argumentation analysis of Galatians: background

Many traditional exegeses contain quite detailed analyses that clearly aim towards disentangling and understanding all the details of the text-content (a feature traditionally prominent in German commentaries, such as Schlier 1989).

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3   For an elaboration of the problems connected with the use of classical rhetoric as a tool for analysis, see Kern (1998).

However, since a traditional exegesis does not include tools developed specific-ally for the analysis of argumentation it cannot provide a systematic and detailed implementation on the same level as a modern argumentation analysis.

Paul's argumentation in Galatians is difficult or unclear on many points, and analyses diverge on how to interpret both the substance and the function of nearly every passage. Although historical, semantic, grammatical, and other such information is important for a correct understanding of an argumentative text, an approach that is satisfied with this type of information is not sufficient if we want to know how Paul argues. For this task, the traditional methods do not provide us with sufficient information since such considerations are not included in these methods.

Among exegetes, *rhetorical* analyses abound from the 1980s onward (see Watson and Hauser 1994). There are many types of such an approach, but they have in common a focus on arrangement, style, rhetorical effectiveness, and, in more recent studies, invention (*inventio*) as well (Eriksson 1998:7-10). Another perspective is the argumentation analytical one where one studies how arguments are construed and argued in view of the relationship between claims and premises, argument schemes and argumentation structures, soundness and fallaciousness. These aspects are secondary in rhetorical ana-lyses, if at all included.

Rhetorical aspects of Paul's Letter to the Galatians have been analysed thoroughly, and these analyses have increased our understanding of the letter considerably. But so far the interest in argumentation analysis proper has been modest. Studies, which set out specifically to study Paul's argu-mentation, are few in number. In 1985, Siegert noted that the history of ar-gumentation analysis in NT-exegesis has been widely neglected and that it is "now completely forgotten."[4] There are a number of older works that con-sider Paul's argumentation but these often limit their analysis to aspects of style, for example the use of *parallelisms*, *antitheses*, or *tropes*.[5]

The formation of modern theories for the analysis of rhetoric and argu-mentation in the 1950s resulted in implementations in Pauline exegesis in the 1970s. The plethora of rhetorical studies that were published in the 1980s and 1990s present a wide variety of analyses. Quite a few of the early explorations present implausible analyses, typically including long discussions on rheto-

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4   "Die Geschichte der Argumentationsforschung in der paulinischen und über-haupt neutestamentlichen Exegese ist eine Geschichte von Versäumnissen. Das wenige, was geleistet wurde, ist heute vollkommen vergessen" (Siegert 1985:5).

5   Cf. König (1900). Another overview of figures of style in the Bible is found in Bühlmann & Scherer (1973). For an overview of this research history, see Siegert (1985:5-12).

rical *genera* and sometimes "proving" that Paul's argumentation strictly follows ancient rhetorical practices as laid out in handbooks of the time. Most of these exegetical analyses of Paul's argumentation, both early and recent ones, are based on Aristotle and other classical sources.

Among modern works, the first thorough description of Paul's argumentation from the perspective of argumentation analysis is Folker Siegert's (1985) *Argumentation bei Paulus*. Siegert makes use of *The New Rhetoric*, originally published in 1958 (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1971), a work that has been characterised as a re-discovery of classical rhetoric (Mack 1990:16). In addition, it incorporates dialectical features and caused a new interest also in (dialectical) argumentation analysis (see Van Eemeren *et al*. 1996:93-97).

Siegert describes characteristics of Paul's argumentation. Another approach is to try to explain dialectical aspects of Paul's argumentation. The existence of problems in Paul's argumentation has been acknowledged ever since Paul's writings first appeared (cf. 2 Pet. 3:16-17), and how we understand them plays an important role in many issues, as is clearly exemplified by the debate about Paul and the law (see, e.g., Räisänen 1987). It is interesting to note that help has not been sought from argumentation theory even when Pauline argumentation has explicitly been the issue.

Galatians is clearly an argumentative text and is not only suitable for an argumentation analysis, but requires one for an understanding of the argument in it. Galatians offers difficult questions from an argumentation analysis perspective both on a higher level concerning the structure and coherence of the argumentation and on a lower level concerning both the form and substance of many single arguments.

1.2.1 The method

Within the field of argumentation analysis, there are different methods to choose from. However, many methods are designed for the analysis of a specific kind of discourse such as everyday argumentation, spoken argumentation, judicial argumentation, and political argumentation; see Van Eemeren *et al*. (1996:353-355); see also Toulmin, Rieke and Janik (1984:271-421) for some differences between legal argumentation, argumentation in science, argumentation about the arts, argumentation about management, and ethical reasoning. Other methods are very limited in scope; some approach the topic from a specific point of view while others focus on some specific discourse or argumentation phenomenon. For an overview of different methods, see Van Eemeren *et al*. (1996), and the four volumes of van Dijk (ed.) (1985).

Van Eemeren & Grootendorst's pragma-dialectical method is one of the most comprehensive, with a firm base in advances within the discipline of argumentation analysis that has been developing since the early 1980s. The method has been developed in Amsterdam by the same group of scholars who took initiative with the conferences of the International Society for the Study of Argumentation (ISSA) and the journal *Argumentation*.

The pragma-dialectical approach provides a methodological framework and useful instruments. It also provides a framework for understanding and evaluating the argumentation in the context of a dialogue, such as between Paul and his addressees. The short definition of argumentation as it is understood from a pragma-dialectical perspective reads as follows:

> Argumentation is a verbal, social, and rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a standpoint by putting forward a constellation of one or more propositions to justify this standpoint (Van Eemeren, Grootendorst & Henkemans 2002:xii).

The pragma-dialectic theory also takes account of rhetorical features of an argument through an analysis of what is called *strategic manoeuvring*. An analysis of the strategic manoeuvring in an argumentation reveals how "the opportunities available in a certain dialectical situation are used to complete a particular discussion stage most favourably for the speaker or writer." (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser 1999a:165). These strategic choices depend on the stage of the discussion. The notion of different stages, through which an argument advances, is presented as an analytical tool in pragma-dialectics (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1984:95-103). For example, the aim at the opening stage might be different from the aim at the concluding stage.

The options available at each stage refer to topical potential, auditorial demand, and presentational devices (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser 1999a:165-166, 1999b). Although these three aspects can be distinguished analytically, in actual practice they usually work together. As Van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2002b:16) note, these aspects run parallel with important classical areas of interest: topics, audience-orientation, and stylistics. If the strategic manoeuvring is consistently implemented, there is reason to talk about a rhetorical strategy. In such a case the speaker consistently tries to influence the outcome to his own advantage. It is "manoeuvring" since the speaker manoeuvres between what follows the dialectical ideal and that which is rhetorically most persuasive (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser 1999b:485-486). To put it in other words, an argument needs to be solid as an argument but it also needs to be chosen carefully, adapted to the audience, and presented in the best way. These two sides of argumentation are important to address in an analysis.

A traditional historical-critical exegesis typically focuses on historical, grammatical, and semantic aspects. In contrast, many rhetorical analyses after 1979 focus mainly on aspects relating to *dispositio* and *elocutio*, and any elements relating to the persuasiveness of the text. But, as Van Eemeren and Houtlosser note, even a very rhetorical text has dialectical substance.[6] From a pragma-dialectical perspective it is argued that rhetorical moves can best be explained within a dialectical framework since an arguer's aim seldom is solely to win a discussion, but also to conduct it in a reasonable way. Consequently, rhetorical moves can be viewed against the dialectical objective of the discussion stage under analysis (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser 2002a:135).

The pragma-dialectical theory currently provides the most comprehensive approach to the analysis of argumentation. This is incentive to utilise the method on argumentative New Testament texts such as those of Paul with the goal to provide a fresh approach that would yield a more precise understanding of Paul's argumentation.

2. ANALYSIS OF GALATIANS 3:6-9: ABRAHAM'S FAITH

2.1   Analysis

In the following I will illustrate the use of a modern argumentation analysis with a passage in Galatians 3 often recognised as containing an enthymeme:[7] vv. 6-9 (the analysis is based on Hietanen 2005:96-116). The pericope is traditionally recognised as a part of the argumentative section of Galatians, chapters 3-4, and does as such call for an argumentation analysis. The text reads as follows (NRSV 1995, slightly adjusted):

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6   The alleged rhetorical pervasion of argumentative discourse does not mean that the parties involved are interested exclusively in getting things their way. Even when they try their best to have their point of view accepted, they have to maintain the image of people who play the resolution game by the rules: they may be considered committed to what they have said, assumed or implicated. If a given move is not successful, they cannot escape from their dialectical responsibility by simply saying, "I was only being rhetorical". As a rule, they will therefore at least have to pretend to be interested primarily in having the difference of opinion resolved (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser 1999b:481).

7   Basically, an enthymeme is a syllogism with one of the elements (usually the so-called minor premiss) left implicit. One can distinguish between logical enthymemes, where the focus is on validity, and rhetorical enthymemes, where the focus is on persuading a certain audience. See Van Eemeren (ed.) (2001:53).

> 3:6 Just as "Abraham believed God, and this was reckoned to him as righteousness", 3:7 recognise, therefore, that those who are of faith, these are sons of Abraham. 3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, proclaimed the Promise beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you." 3:9 Therefore, those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham who believed.

I begin by examining the text in detail, describing the build-up of the argument, i.e. its structure and argument schemes. I will include an evaluation of the argument schemes already here, but will reserve the rest of the evaluation for Section (2.2).

Betz describes v. 3:6 as the "proof text for the entire argument in 3:6-14" (Betz 1988:138). The OT-quotation is used as grounds for the claim in 3:7 "those who believe are the descendants of Abraham". Setting the argument in a form with premises followed by conclusion and separated by a line it reads as in Fig. 1.

Abraham believed God.
Abraham's faith was reckoned to him as righteousness.

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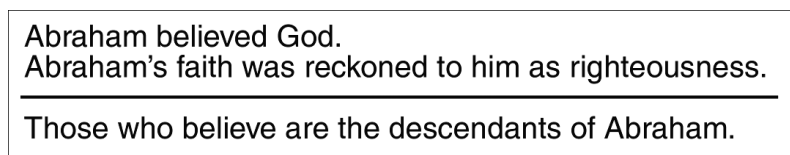Those who believe are the descendants of Abraham.

Figure 1: The text of Galatians 3:6-7

This presentation shows an imbalance in the argument. Mußner notes that we would rather have expected another conclusion, namely: "Erkennt also, daß der Mensch aus Glauben gerechtfertigt wird und nicht aus Gesetzeswerken."[8] Hansen (1989:112) recognises that "[v]erses 6 and 7 taken together form an argument by enthymeme", and notes that "[t]he conclusion […] in v. 7 is derived from the implicit premiss that as God dealt with Abraham, so he will deal with all men." The enthymeme suggested by Hansen then reads as in Fig. 2. Hansen does not display the enthymeme schematically and the figure shows his description to be unbalanced as well, since the premises do not directly support the conclusion.

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8   Mußner (1981:216), "Recognize, therefore, that man is justified by faith and not by works of the Law."

Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.
[As God dealt with Abraham, so he will deal with all men.]

Those who believe are the descendants of Abraham.

Figure 2: Hansen's understanding of Galatians 3:6-7

For a modern argumentation analytical approach this is not a problem since one does not have to assume that a certain classical or other specific form of argument is followed. The problem is solved by seeing that two different arguments have been mixed in vv. 6-7: one about Abraham, one about faith and works. Paul has shortened the argument by leaving out two premisses. Logically, the first unexpressed premiss is: "Faith is reckoned to one as righteousness." That this is the premiss that is implied is clear from the statement in v. 8 that "God would justify the Gentiles by faith" (it is also clear from the whole section of vv. 6-14, which focuses on faith). The second unexpressed premiss has to do with the thought that those who share the same faith and righteousness as Abraham are the (spiritual, true) descendants of Abraham. In other words, to be a descendant of Abraham is to be one that is justified by faith like him. Paul simply omits some of the intermediate stages of the argument. By using the schematical notation of pragmadialectics,[9] the argument can be explicated as in Fig. 3.

1
The Gentiles' faith is reckoned to them as righteousness.

↑

| 1.1 | & | 1.1' |
| Abraham's faith was reckoned to him as righteousness. | | [What is reckoned as righteousness to Abraham is reckoned as righteousness to the Gentiles.] |

↑

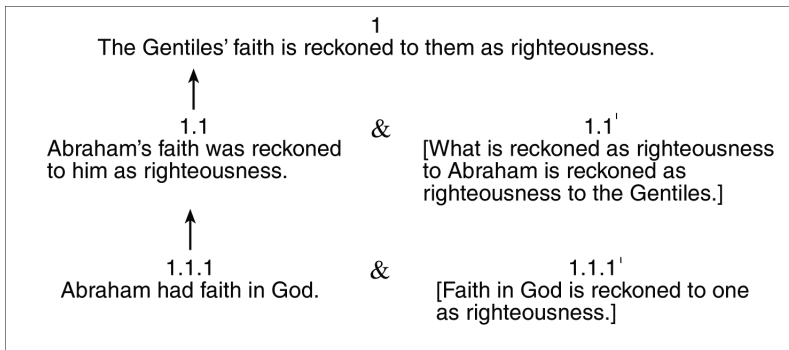| 1.1.1 | & | 1.1.1' |
| Abraham had faith in God. | | [Faith in God is reckoned to one as righteousness.] |

Figure 3: Galatians 3:6-9: Part 1/2, Abraham's and the Gentiles' faith

9   The figures are rather self-explanatory. It is important to note, however, that unexpressed elements are indicated by a prime, ', and put in brackets, [ ]. An unexpressed premiss is linked to an explicit premiss with an ampersand, &. Premisses in co-ordinatively compound arguments are connected with an overbrace. For further details, see Van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1992:73-89).

In order to analyse an argument we need to specify the relationship between standpoint and premisses. The way in which these are related is important for the function of an argument as a defence or refutation. The relation can be symptomatic, analogous or causal (see Van Eemeren *et al*. 2002:96-104 and chapter four in Van Eemeren 2001). Argument schemes describe the relation between the expressed premiss and the standpoint in a single argument. In assessing the scheme used, the primary interest is not in the logical validity but in the way in which the scheme advances the argument. The use of particular argument schemes is closely connected with the argumentative strategy chosen. It is more a question of rhetoric than of logic. In a certain type of argument, certain types of speech acts presented in a certain way are more likely to be accepted than others.

The argument scheme in argument 1.1→1 (Fig. 3) is *analogous*:[10] just as Abraham's faith was reckoned to him as righteousness, so also the Gentiles' faith is reckoned to them as righteousness.

Pragmadialectics enables us to evaluate the use of argument schemes by understanding how the elements relate to each other. The general argument scheme for an argumentation based on a relation of analogy is: Y is true of X *because* Y is true of Z *and* Z is comparable to X. The most important critical question to ask about argumentation based on analogy is: "Are there any significant differences between Z and X?" The similarities should be evaluated on an abstract level (unlike in the case of a literal comparison): "By which general principle are the two connected and does this principle indeed apply?" (Van Eemeren *et al*. 2002:100). Illustrating how the scheme works, we substitute the appropriate variables in this particular argumentation as follows:

- "reckoned as righteousness" is true of "the Gentiles' faith"
- *because*: "reckoned as righteousness" is true of "Abraham's faith"
- *and*: "Abraham's faith" is comparable to "the Gentiles' faith"

The analogy is well chosen since Abraham's example seems to lend support to Paul's argument. It is a good choice among the topical potential since it has the potential of adding scriptural authority to Paul's argument. In order to examine if it is correctly applied we ask the critical question: "Are there any significant differences between Abraham's faith and the Gentiles' faith?" or: "By which general principle are the two connected?" The principle is here expressed by the implicit premiss in the underlying argument, 1.1.1 "Faith in God is reckoned to one as righteousness." For the argument scheme to

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10 In an analogous relation "a standpoint is defended by showing that something referred to in the standpoint is similar to something that is cited in the argumentation" (Van Eemeren *et al*. 2002:99).

be correctly applied one needs to agree with Paul that Abraham's faith and the Gentiles' faith are comparable, a comparison which is not unproblematic.

In the second argument, 1.1.1→1.1 (Fig. 3), the argument scheme is *causal*.[11] The general argument scheme for an argumentation based on a causal relation is: Y is true of X *because* Z is true of X *and* Z leads to Y. The most important critical question to ask about argumentation based on causality is: "Does Z always lead to Y?" Again, substituting the variables from our argument, we get the following:

• "reckoned righteous" is true of "Abraham"
• *because*: "faith in God" is true of "Abraham"
• *and*: "faith in God" leads to "reckoned righteous"

The critical question is then: "Does 'faith in God' always lead to 'reckoned righteous'?" Could "reckoned righteous" have been caused by something else (something other than "faith in God")? Could, for instance, God have reckoned Abraham righteous because of some of his deeds or was it specifically his faith that led God to reckon him righteous? These are difficult questions, but in Paul's argument they are simple: it was Abraham's faith. But is Paul here doing justice to the OT-passage on which the argument is built or is the causal argument scheme more of a presentational device which leads the addressees to a conclusion that is not well founded?

The unexpressed premiss 1.1.1, "Faith in God is reckoned to one as righteousness", is not the only possible interpretation of Genesis 15:6, but Paul's argumentation shows that here this is his interpretation. Paul makes Abraham's experience a general rule and makes this interpretation seem like a fact of the argument (a rhetorical move): the faith of those who believe is reckoned to them as righteousness. The problem is that in the argument, it seems that it was Abraham's faith specifically — or even only — that led to righteousness. This is not the point of Genesis 15:6; so the application of the argument scheme is not without its problems. However, Paul needs to use a causal scheme in order to arrive at standpoint 1 (Fig. 3): the Gentiles' faith is reckoned to them as righteousness.

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11 In a causal relation "a standpoint is defended by making a causal connection between the argument and the standpoint" (Van Eemeren *et al*. 2002:100).

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┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                              1                                     │
│          Christian Gentiles are sons of Abraham, spiritually.      │
│                                                                    │
│                              ↑                                     │
│                      ⌒⌒⌒⌒⌒⌒⌒⌒⌒⌒⌒                                  │
│                                                                    │
│     1.1a — — — — — — — 1.1b        &          1.1(a-b)'            │
│  Abraham's faith was   The Gentiles' faith is   [To have faith which is │
│  reckoned to him as    reckoned to them as      reckoned to one as      │
│    righteousness.        righteousness.       righteousness is to be a  │
│                                               son of Abraham, spiritually.]│
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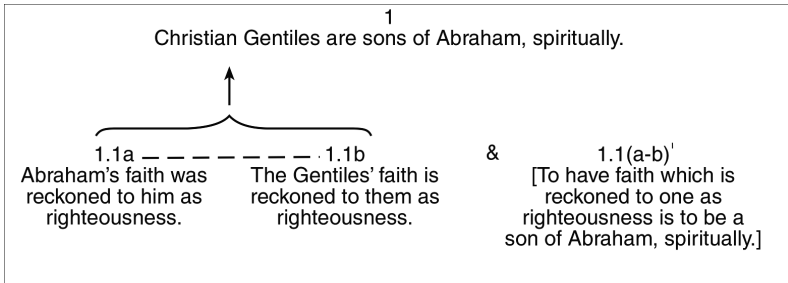
Figure 4: Galatians 3:6-9: Part 2/2, The Gentiles are Abraham's sons

Elements 1 and 1.1(a-b) in Fig. 4 represent my interpretation of what Paul meant by being "a descendant of Abraham". Since there can be no question of a physical descent on behalf of the Gentiles, Paul must have had a spiritual lineage in mind. What is meant by "those who believe" in 3:9 are Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians that believe in God and because of their faith are reckoned righteous. Verses 8 and 14 indicate that Paul has the Gentiles especially in mind. If we explicate this, the argument can be presented as in Fig. 4. Standpoint 1 means, in biblical language, that "Christian Gentiles are descendants of Abraham" or "Christian Gentiles are sons of Abraham." Jewish Christians are then clearly included at the end of the pericope, in the "we" of v. 14.

The argument scheme here is *symptomatic*.[12] The general argument scheme for an argumentation based on a symptomatic relation is: Y is true of X *because* Z is true of X *and* Z is symptomatic of Y. The most important critical questions to ask about argumentation based on a symptomatic relation are: "Are there not also other non-Y's that have the characteristic Z?" and "Are there not also other Y's that do not have the characteristic Z?" In this argument we have the following:

- "sons of Abraham" is true of "the Gentiles"
- *because:* "faith reckoned to one as righteousness" is true of "the Gentiles"
- *and:* "faith reckoned to one as righteousness" is symptomatic of "sons of Abraham"

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12   In a symptomatic relation "a standpoint is defended by citing in the argument a certain sign, symptom, or distinguishing mark of what is claimed in the standpoint" (Van Eemeren *et al.* 2002:96-97).

The critical questions are: "Are there not also other non-sons of Abraham whose faith is reckoned to them as righteousness?" and "Are there not also other sons of Abraham whose faith is not reckoned to them as righteousness?" The problem is here the same as above: is it only those who exhibit a faith of the kind Abraham had that should be counted as Abraham's sons or should some other criteria in addition to faith be fulfilled, such as being a Jew or obeying the law? Of course, this problem is not solved by the use of a certain argument scheme, but Paul's choice of a symptomatic argument scheme shows that he considers the Gentiles' position *vis-à-vis* righteousness to be essentially the same as that of Abraham (a rhetorical move): faith is reckoned to both as righteousness. Again, it can be discussed whether the argument scheme is correctly applied or not.

It is here worth noting that the acceptability of starting-points, premises, and standpoints must be evaluated from the perspective of the discussants. What they both accept is acceptable. The pragma-dialectical method offers normative rules only for what in a discussion is unacceptable with regard to potential frustrations to resolving a difference of opinion. The acceptability of starting-points depends on the context in question.

In vv. 6-9, we notice a tendency to leave some premises unexpressed: in only four verses, we find five arguments of the type with one conclusion or statement and two or three premises, one of which is unexpressed (not all of which are presented here). Since the arguments are intertwined, as in 3:6-7, it is not always easy to determine how the different elements are related. Contrary to earlier suggestions, however, I do not consider it helpful to describe any of the arguments in vv. 6-9 as enthymemes.

Regarding the rhetorical strategy, a complete analysis cannot be made based just on a short excerpt of Galatians but the whole letter needs to be taken into account. Suffice it to say here that in Galatians 3 we find examples of strategic manoeuvring and the letter as a whole indicates the presence of a rhetorical strategy (Hietanen 2005). I here end the analysis with a few further observations on strategic manoeuvring, supplementing the above analysis.

As noted above, the analogy of Abraham has much dissimilarity, which reduces its argumentative value. This indicates that the appeals to the authority of Abraham and the implied tradition of righteousness by faith may be rhetorical moves (*argument by appeal to tradition and to authority*). For instance, the reference to Abraham can be argued not to be *evidentially relevant*; it is, however, *topic relevant* since it does deal with the key-concepts of faith and righteousness. Abraham as an example of a faith not based on works of the law seems to be a clever argumentative construction created in order to support Paul's thesis of a righteousness based on faith alone.

The same holds true for the many quotations from Scripture: they are probably intended to add authority to Paul's argument, especially through the quotations centred on Abraham. At the same time they make good use of the auditorial demand since the Scriptures, the law, and Abraham were certainly discussed among the Galatians generally and among Paul's antagonists especially.

It is possible that the OT-quotations, which Paul makes use of, are suggested by some earlier stage in the argumentation, either between Paul and his addressees or within the Galatian congregations. By making claims that seem conclusive and are based on a tradition that is traced all the way back to Abraham, Paul can give the impression that the tradition he represents is firmly attested to in the Scriptures and therefore authoritative also for the Galatians.

2.2   Evaluation

Already in the analysis above, some evaluation was included, namely about the acceptability of premises and the correct use of argument schemes. In addition, the pragmatic validity of the arguments can be put into the larger context to check if the different arguments and sub-arguments are consistent with each other. Without going into detail here, I note that Galatians 3:6-9 is consistent with the rest of the argument in Galatians (see Hietanen 2005). The argument that faith is the basis for righteousness supports Paul's standpoint that the Galatians should not give into circumcision and other forms of law-abiding.

Although not necessary for understanding the argument, an evaluation is useful if we want to characterise Paul's argumentation. By mirroring it against an ideal, weaknesses are easier to spot and describe precisely.

A crucial part of an argumentation analysis is the identification of fallacies. The traditional definition of a fallacy is an argument that seems to be valid, but is not (see Hamblin 1970:12). This definition is problematic and is abandoned in pragma-dialectic theory. Instead, fallacies are seen as such moves in a discussion that hinder the resolution of a dispute. By providing a code of conduct for critical discussion, pragmadialectics enable the analyst to mirror an argumentation against a normative set of discussion rules. (This code of conduct is first presented in Van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1984:151-175.) Van Eemeren *et al.* theorise that argumentation follows certain conventions and they present ten rules based on theoretical and analytical assumptions. When these "rules" or ideal conditions are fulfilled, the chances for a successful resolution of a debate are high. The more the discussants depart from or directly offend against these rules, the lesser the chances for a resolution of a dispute.

The set of ten rules, then, function as a "heuristic, analytical and critical framework" for dealing with argumentative discourse (Van Eemeren *et al*. 1996:283). On the one hand, the rules help analyse speech acts by giving clues for what to look for in the argumentation. On the other hand, the rules provide a set of norms for assessing how actual discourse deviates from the course that most conveniently would lead to a resolution of the dispute (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1984:283). In Van Eemeren (1993) the usefulness of this ideal model is described as follows:

> The model does not prevent our seeing what argumentative practice is actually like. This fact should be evident from the empirical analyses presented throughout, in which observed arguments are set up in contrast to what the model portrays as ideal. It is precisely in the contrast that some of the most interesting observations are to be made. The model's function is thus to help us to notice what is, from a certain point of view, most important about argumentative practice (Van Eemeren 1993:177-178).

It should be pointed out that argumentative shortcomings do not automatically reduce the persuasive effect of a discourse. But if one embarks upon an argumentation that relies on premises that turn out to be poor as support for the argument made, the credibility of the argumentation (and of the arguer) may suffer, and thereby also lessen the persuasive effect. In the following I give a few examples of possible violations in Galatians 3 against the discussion rules.

We do not know exactly what possible standpoints have been advanced among the Galatians, and which Paul now attacks. It is not even certain that the Galatians perceived their situation as problematic before they received Paul's letter. In that case we have a violation against the *Standpoint Rule* (Rule 3), which states that a party's attack of a standpoint must relate to the standpoint that has indeed been advanced by the other party. Even if the Galatians experienced some internal theological conflict, it is not certain that they conceived such problems in the same way as Paul did. The idea that permeates the whole passage, the dichotomy between law and faith, may not have been a relevant formulation of the problem from a Galatian perspective. Law and faith need not be as mutually exclusive as Paul asserts.

As noted in the analysis above, the connection Paul creates to Abraham can be seen as more of a rhetorical construct than a factual connection. It is, however, possible that the OT-quotations that Paul makes use of are suggested by some earlier stage in the argumentation, either between Paul and his addressees or within the Galatian congregations. In such a case the passages are relevant, but there may still be a violation against the Relevance Rule since

Paul, for instance, uses a passage about Abraham to defend his standpoint about faith. The *Relevance Rule* (Rule 4) states that a party may defend his standpoint only by advancing argumentation relating to that standpoint.

In the beginning of the passage, in 3:6, Paul indicates as a fact that it was Abraham's faith that was reckoned to him as righteousness. This statement is then used as a premiss for the following arguments. There is reason to believe that this premiss was not an accepted starting point between Paul and the other party. Similarly, the statement 3:10a may not have been agreed upon. An indication of this is the space in the passage Paul allocates for defending these two ideas. As noted in the analysis above, several crucial premisses are such that they may have been in dispute. Still, Paul presents them as facts. This can be seen as including the use of the technique of *conciliatio*, to use an argument of the opponent to support one's own argument. The Galatians would agree with the Scripture passages, but they would probably not agree with the way in which Paul uses certain passages to support his standpoints. To presuppose the justificatory power of an argument in this way can lead to the fallacy of *petitio principii* (begging the question). If this is so, we here have violations against Rule 6, the *Starting Point Rule*: a party may not falsely present a premiss as an accepted starting point nor deny a premiss representing an accepted starting point.

One could raise the question as to whether the analogy with Abraham is a *false analogy*: (1) Abraham's faith was not faith in Christ, and (2) the righteousness reckoned to Abraham is not identical with the righteousness reckoned to those who believe in Christ, and most importantly, (3) in Genesis 15 the intention is not to contrast Abraham's faith with his deeds. Based on the original context, Abraham's faith cannot as easily be separated from his deeds as it is in Paul's argument. This means that the connection that Paul makes in v. 7 ("those who believe are the descendants of Abraham") is easy to contest: Abraham does not represent such a division between faith and deeds as wanted by Paul.[13]

Rule 7, the *Argument Scheme Rule*, states that a party may not regard a standpoint as conclusively defended if the defence does not take place by means of an appropriate argument scheme that is correctly applied. The argument schemes in Galatians are generally appropriate, but they are in several cases not correctly applied. Many of the premisses can be contested

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13   Cf. Mußner on vv. 6-9:
     Ein Jude kann der "Logik" des Apostels kaum zustimmen. Warum soll allein der Weg des Glaubens zur Rechtfertigung führen und nicht die von Gott selbst verordneten Werke des Gesetzes? Auf diese Frage muß der Apostel Antwort geben; er tut es in den folgenden Versen. Seine Gedankenführung ist dabei teilweise recht sprunghaft, was der Auslegung Schwierigkeiten bereitet (Mußner 1981:223).

which renders the arguments problematical. For instance, is it really so that Christian Gentiles are spiritually sons of Abraham? (Fig. 4). Many of the conclusions are formulated in a more conclusive way than is warranted by the premisses. The tactic of trying to make a standpoint appear to be a statement of fact, and the argumentation merely an explanation, creates the impression that the standpoint needs no defence. Paul does seem to regard several claims as conclusively defended. But almost all of Paul's standpoints can be contested by someone who does not share his conviction about the relationship between faith and works of the law. Both in Figs. 3 and 4 do we find such problems, and consequently we here seem to have violations against Rules 6 and 7.

Rule 10, the *Usage Rule*, states that a party must not use formulations that are insufficiently clear or confusingly ambiguous and he must interpret the other party's formulations as carefully and accurately as possible. However, the opening premiss, 3:6, is not clear in the sense Paul presents it. How is Abraham's faith comparable with the faith of the Galatians? How is Abraham's righteousness comparable with that of the Galatians? However, it is precisely this ambiguity with the OT-quotations that makes it possible for Paul to use them in a sense that fits his argumentation. In some cases, the quotations fit his arguments better, in other cases they are easy to contest. The use of ambiguous texts seems deliberate on Paul's part — an ambiguous text is easier to incorporate as a premiss than an exact and precise one.

In addition to the above, Rule 1, the *Freedom Rule*, states that parties must not prevent each other from advancing standpoints or casting doubt on standpoints and Rule 2, the *Burden-of-Proof Rule*, that a party that advances a standpoint is obliged to defend it if the other party asks him to do so, Rule 8, the *Validity Rule*, that in his argumentation a party may only use arguments that are logically valid or capable of being validated by making explicit one or more unexpressed premisses, and Rule 9, the *Closure Rule*, that a failed defence of a standpoint must result in the party that put forward the standpoint retracting it and a conclusive defence in the other party retracting his doubt about the standpoint.

2.3   Summary

The analysis of the beginning of the section, vv. 6-7, is a good example of the benefits of the use of a proper method of argumentation analysis. The analysis shows that the argument should not be explained as an enthymeme, as in Figs. 1 & 2 — *contra* Mußner (1981:216) and Hansen (1989:112). Instead, the analysis indicates that two arguments have been combined and two premisses left implicit. The analysis shows that Paul includes his own interpretation in the argument in such a way that the argument seems at first

glance to be based on fact, not on opinion. A compact mode of argumentation favours such an approach since (a majority of) the addressees do not necessarily have the time or ability to scrutinise unexpressed premisses.

The analysis shows that Paul makes maximal use of the selected OT-quotations to support his argument about Abraham's faith and the promise of salvation through faith for the Gentiles. On closer inspection, the quoted passages do not necessarily support all of Paul's conclusions. The analysed arguments here are probably not in themselves enough to persuade anyone, which indicates that Paul's strategy is one of cumulative 'evidence': that by stacking small more or less convincing arguments in the letter, the cumulative effect would be in favour of his argument. This is a rhetorical presentational technique.

Another tendentious use of Scripture is found in v. 8: Paul's interpretation that the blessing of the Gentiles in Abraham can only mean that the Gentiles will be justified specifically because of their faith only, is not warranted in the quotation of Genesis 12:3, as has been noted in earlier studies (e.g., Betz 1988, Hansen 1989). Based on this interpretation, Paul deduces that the promise to Abraham must have been the gospel, which then in turn must include the Gentiles. The whole chain of argument is rather loose at points.

In the above-analysed passage we find the rhetorical move of appeal to tradition and to authority. Most important is the dominant use of OT passages in support of the argument. Since the quotations rarely support the argumentation clearly — and certainly not conclusively — their use can be seen as rhetorical moves; in other words they are convincing by seemingly supporting an argument.

3. THE USE OF ARGUMENTATION ANALYSIS

No single method can bring out all aspects of a text. What is more, an analysis from a very specific perspective runs the danger of distorting aspects that another method would have done better justice. These two considerations lead us towards using comprehensive methods, such as the standard historical-critical approach. When analysing aspects that relate to argumentation, we need a method that does not focus only on one feature, such as presentation, topics, or audience, nor only on argument schemes, validity, or structures. In argumentation all of these come together forming a whole, which is then more or less sound, from a dialectical perspective, and more or less persuasive, from a rhetorical perspective.

A good argumentation analysis establishes what the different standpoints are and how they are organised with respect to the overall argument. Even

if the interest of an analyst would be on rhetorical features, it is valuable to know if the arguments can be seen as convincing from a *logos* perspective and to have a clear understanding of what the contents are of the separate arguments, for example concerning the main themes of Gospel, law, Spirit, circumcision, and freedom.

Concerning Galatians, the *logos* element is clearly not indifferent — otherwise Paul would not dedicate such a great part of the letter to arguments in favour of his position, arguments which at points are very difficult and which must have required careful consideration also on Paul's part.

The pragma-dialectical approach also allows us to analyse how *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos* function in the argumentation as part of strategic manoeuvring. In Galatians we find a wide variety of topical potential, including arguments from Scripture, from tradition, from experience, and from common practice. Galatians also includes a variety of presentational devices, including intimidation, teaching, irony, personal appeal, allegory, and vilification. There is indeed a clear use of strategic manoeuvring. Pragmadialectics enable us to evaluate Paul's argumentation from a normative perspective. Mirroring Paul's argumentation against the ten rules of argumentation clarifies the qualities of the argumentation in a very specific way. Even if some such violations can be explained as strategic manoeuvres, it is helpful to be able to describe the shortcomings exactly. A rhetorical analysis does not enable us to do this. Neither would a purely descriptive argumentation analysis of some sort show us why certain features are problematic.

The pragma-dialectical method approaches a text from a specific standpoint, that of an argumentation between two parties. In the case of Galatians, the method has proven useful in spite of the problem of not having the expressed statements of the other party (Hietanen 2005). The set of ideal rules for the resolution of a dispute provides the analyst with a tool for pinpointing problems in the argumentation. Again, this allows the exegete to be more exact in his analysis. Finally, the concept of argumentative strategy allows for a comprehensive picture of the argumentation.

The discipline of argumentation analysis provides new tools for those who wish to make a full analysis of argumentative texts. In the case of Paul and other NT-texts the pragma-dialectical method is a useful addition to those methods currently in use.

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Keywords	*Trefwoorde*
Rhetorical analysis	Retoriese analise
Argumentation analysis	Argumentasie-analise
Pauline Letters	Pauliniese briewe
Letter to the Galatians	Brief aan die Galasiërs