

## The Word of Exhortation Form in New Testament and Epistolary Discourse

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Gerald Bruns reminds contemporary readers that Jewish hermeneutics has always understood, “The Torah emerges as what it is and comes into its own only in the dialogue it generates; and only by entering into the dialogue can one enter the Torah.”<sup>1</sup>

C. Clifton Black offers a chapter length discussion of “The Rhetorical Form of the Early Christian Sermon” in his study, *The Rhetoric of the Gospel: Theological Artistry in the Gospels and Acts*.<sup>2</sup> He concludes by affirming that understanding the influence of the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition on the composition of the texts of the New Testament, “helps us better understand both the pervasiveness and the limits of logic in the course of religious proclamation.”<sup>3</sup> He maintains that a rhetorical critical understanding of this influence should not only shape the exegetical intuitions of homileticians, but he also develops a chapter length discussion of how the parabolic nature of much of the rhetoric of the Gospels should be taken into account by contemporary preachers. In order to allow the gospel to do its work, he urges preachers to follow Jesus’ use of parabolic *indirection* rather than assume that *explanation* actually brings change.<sup>4</sup> Black’s argument attends to a shift in homiletic understanding that began during the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: a concern to be faithful to the intention of a text’s strategy of reasoning and not just to the theological content “atomistically” derived from it.<sup>5</sup>

My interest in this essay is to advance the discussion of the New Testament homily form that scholars like Black sought to recover as the “Word of Exhortation” design Luke used to structure his version of Paul’s sermon in Antioch Pisidia (Acts 13).<sup>6</sup> But rather than looking to the rhetorical tradition’s genre-centered understanding of how to invent “Proofs” (*epicheirema*) as the influence on the Hellenistic synagogue homily format, I choose to consider the rhetorical tradition’s strategy for conducting topical reasoning by Thematic Elaboration (*expositio*) as the source of this influence. This Pan-Hellenic form of reasoning is found in Book IV of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.<sup>7</sup> I make my case by reviewing Hellenistic synagogue homily form scholarship and then establishing its relationship to the patterned development of the Pan-Hellenic Elaborated Theme. Following this I provide several “demonstrations” of these inventional strategies of reasoning in first century Christian texts and then close by suggesting how understanding the hermeneutic intention of these strategies of reasoning as they occur in New Testament texts might influence a homiletic intention in preaching them.

#### *The Hellenistic Jewish Synagogue Homily*

According to Philo, first century Jews gathered on the Sabbath,

to occupy themselves with the philosophy of their fathers, dedicating that time to the acquiring of knowledge and the study of the truths of nature. For what are our places of prayer throughout the cities but schools of prudence and courage and temperance and justice and also of piety, holiness and every virtue by which duties to God and men are

discerned and rightly performed (*Moses* 2.216; Colson trans.).

He alludes to the nature of the synagogue homily as discourse conducted by the synagogue leader who begins a talk by “explaining and teaching the multitude what they ought to say and do.” Those who gathered listened “so as to improve in virtue, and being made better both in their moral character and in their conduct through life” (*Moses* 2.215). Philo’s treatise on *Moses* is addressed primarily to non-Jews and appears to be intended to serve as a general introduction to the ideals of Judaism as exemplified by Moses.<sup>8</sup> The synagogue homily as described, had the purpose of educating Hellenists and exhorting Jews to understand the principled purpose of such moral instruction concerning the cardinal virtues and the pieties of the Mosaic law.<sup>9</sup>

In his study of the Jewish synagogue homily in antiquity, Borgen identified what he called a “proem” homily form that he found to be in common use. His research was based on an extensive body of examples of synagogue homilies from the Amoraic period (ca. 200-500 CE). He argued that the Fourth Gospel presented a Jesus tradition in John 6 that reveals the same Jewish Torah hermeneutic with regard to the “manna” motif as that is found in Philo and the Amoraic Jewish homilies.<sup>10</sup> The distinguishing form of the synagogue homilies he discusses was the initial reference to the sacred topic derived from a reading of the Torah. He identified this as the “proem” form of the homily. The term “proem” is taken from the Greek rhetorical tradition’s term *proemion*—the discursive portion of a speech that serves as the introduction. Many of the homilies he studied began by citing the text, or key words and phrases shared between the Torah and the secondary text of the synagogue reading.

In a synagogue service, the Torah text for the week was read, supplemented with a second reading, the *Haftarot* (a reading from the prophets), which “completed” the reading of texts. A homily was then offered by the synagogue leader or a preacher who sought to explain the *Haftarot* reading from the prophets in light of the implications of the primacy of the Torah text. Since *Halakha* texts of the law were considered more important than the secondary sacred texts, a form of topical reasoning was interpretively employed (e.g., by a midrashic *qal wahomer* “light and heavy” hermeneutic) in the body of the homily. Borgen adds that a homily would typically conclude with a protreptic Judgement that reiterates a claim made in the proem with words or phrases drawn from the Torah text. A final paraenetic Exhortation might also be present.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, as Stegner notes, researchers like Borgen may have been misled by the practice of ancient editors and copyists who had filled in the initial Torah verse alluded to in the homily and in its final judgement. The text itself may not have actually been in the original proem.<sup>12</sup> However, the basic form of the synagogue homily design appears to have been an effort to interpret and render a judgement concerning the *Haftarot* text(s) in light of Torah understanding.

Actual knowledge of the form of synagogue preaching prior to 200 CE is primarily derived from the writings of Philo and Josephus, *as well as* the influence of the Hellenistic Jewish synagogue homily form on writers of New Testament texts. The epicenter of that research has looked at a purported example of the synagogue homily in Acts 13:16b-41. In vss. 14-15 we are told that on the Sabbath day Paul and his companions went to the synagogue in Antioch in Pisidia. They sat with those in attendance and “After the reading of the law and the

prophets, the officials of the synagogue sent them a message, saying, ‘Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation (*logos paraklēsis*) for the people, give it.’” The text of the sermon in vv. 16b-41 provides a Lukan synopsis of the message that critics look to as a likely example of the Hellenistic synagogue homily form known as a “word of exhortation.” The writer of Hebrews uses this same term in his hope that his audience has accepted the “word of exhortation (*tou logou hēs paraklēseō*)” (Heb 13:22) message of his letter. Though a number of biblical critics have argued that the uses of the phrase “word of exhortation” is too vague to suggest that the entirety of Hebrews should be considered a homily, the issue comes down to the question of form. Is there a common form to be observed between the homily in Acts 13:16b-41 and the development of the argument in Hebrews?

In the mid-1980s Lawrence Wills argued that a discernable form could be derived from the sermon in Acts 13 that was also observable in a variety of Christian and Jewish homiletic and epistolary literature during the late first- and early second-century. This included its use in the Epistle to the Hebrews. He argues that the Christian use of this form of the homily appears to have been appropriated from the Hellenistic synagogue homily design. He identifies a homily form in the Acts 13 sermon that he views as paradigmatic and finds the same form was used to develop a Word of Exhortation introduction to the argument of Hebrews:<sup>13</sup>

Acts 13:16b-41 Word of Exhortation Homily Form	Hebrews 1:1-2:2 Word of Exhortation Homily Form
An Introduction: 13:16b	An Introduction: 1:1-4

Scripture Reference <i>exempla</i> ; 13:17-22	Scripture Reference <i>exempla</i> ; 1:5-13
Exegetical Argument with <i>exempla</i> : 13:23-37	Exegetical Argument with <i>exempla</i> : 1:14
A Concluding Judgement; 13:38-39	
An Exhortation: 13:40-41	An Exhortation: 2:1-2

Wills claims that it was likely that Greek rhetorical theory from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE had influenced this Hellenistic synagogue design, with stylistic “techniques that have been passed over from Greek rhetoric into Jewish and Christian oratory.” However, he maintains that the presentation of a concatenation of scriptural references cited after the Introduction is clearly a Semitic adaptation of this rhetorical design.<sup>14</sup> He finds similar patterns in other Christian literature, writing that, “In *1 Clement* we often find at the beginning of this pattern a “call to consider” the *exempla* (“a citing of something done or said in the past;” *Rhet Her* 4.49.62) that follow in the form of an imperative or hortatory subjunctive such as ‘let us consider’ (*katanoēsōmen*, 24.1; 37:2), ‘let us reckon’ (*analogismetha*, 38:3), or ‘let us bring forth examples’ (*hypodeigmata evegkōmen*, 55:1; Lake, trans.)”<sup>15</sup>

Black was persuaded by Will’s argument that the pattern of the early Christian homily was informed by the Hellenistic synagogue homily design and that both were influenced by the rhetorical tradition. However, Black argues that the sermon form in Acts actually hews more closely to the classical rhetorical norms of the first centuries BCE and CE than to Will’s proposal of ancient Greek rhetoric. He indicates that some may believe he has succumbed to the “parallelomania” delusion of finding

patterns where they do not exist, but he is keenly aware that linear patterns of developing strategies of reasoning was the essence of the preceptive rhetorical tradition.<sup>16</sup> “Once we are clear about this,” he adds, “continued research could delineate precise and creative modifications of Greco-Roman oratory by its Hellenistic Jewish and Christian practitioners.”<sup>17</sup>

This essay pursues this question, but rather than seek to locate the form of the homily tradition within the *partes orationis* system (the functional divisions of compositional purpose in a speech/essay that defends a Cause), I look to a second preceptive strategy of rhetorical reasoning that is distinct from the strategy of Proof (*epicheirema*) used in defense and refutation of Causes that are shaped by the purposes of Judicial, Deliberative or Demonstrative rhetoric. The Thematized Elaboration (*expolitio*) was a format for engaging in topical reasoning used as the student essay in rhetorical education as well as the format of practice declamation (a stylistically dramatized speech intended to move an audience). It was different in purpose from the form of reasoning used to defend a Cause with Rhetorical Proofs. Both strategies of reasoning—the *expolitio* Elaboration and the *epicheirema* Proof—are found in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (*Rhet Her*), which M. L. Clarke argues was the first century BCE rhetorical handbook that “best represents the traditional [Greek] rhetoric of the schools, the sort of thing that was taught by the ordinary rhetorician in Rome.” As such, this is a Latin handbook that sought to summarize the Greek tradition of rhetoric with which writers like Paul and the author of Hebrews would have been familiar.<sup>18</sup>

*Elaboration as a Reasoning Strategy in  
the Rhetorica ad Herennium*

The first treatment of rhetorical reasoning, the *epicheireme*, is a strategy for offering rhetorical “Proof” found in the *Rhet Her*, Book Two. Unlike Cicero’s model of the argument which was designed to emulate a logical argument (*De Inv* 1.37.67), the *Rhet Her* version of the rhetorical “Proof” makes its appeal to both head and heart. Where Cicero’s version focuses on convincing an audience, the *Rhet Her* version of a developed argument seeks both to convince and persuade. Cicero’s “Proof” stipulates the use of two major premises, each supported by a minor premise, that allows a speaker to draw a “quasi-logical” probable conclusion.<sup>19</sup> The *Rhet Her* version of the *epicheireme* is based on the Aristotelian tri-fold enthymeme of rhetorical reasoning. It places the Conclusion at the outset as a Propositional Claim, offers a supporting Reason, which is then buttressed by a Proof of the Reason.<sup>20</sup> This basic rhetorical argument form is then Embellished stylistically to move the listener’s “will” to give their assent and to support the plausibility of the argument. This reasoning strategy concludes with a Résumé that briefly summarizes what has been proved (2.18.28). As George Kennedy observes, “By the early first century BCE [the] ‘*epikheirema*’ had come to refer to a five-part argument, consisting of a proposition, supporting reason, proof of the reason, embellishment, and conclusion; cf. Rhetoric for Herennius 2.2.”<sup>21</sup> This linear development of reasoning as Proof offered in support of a Cause remains the same across all three genres of rhetoric; argument Proof was supposed to be conducted in this manner.

But unlike Cicero’s *De Inventione*, the *Rhet Her* offers a second treatment for engaging in rhetorical

reasoning in Book IV. This manner of reasoning, like the Embellishment of a Proof (see the Kennedy quote above), is stylistic rather than rational. The *Rhet Her* author presents it as a seven-fold way to develop a topic either as an independent argument or as one of the ways to develop the “Embellishment” division of an epicheireme Proof. The full use of an Elaborated Theme is meant to Refine (*expolitio*) a topic by Arousing (*exsuscitationem*) the response of an audience through the use of multiple stylistic figures.<sup>22</sup> The *Rhet Her* author introduces it as one of two ways to Refine a matter both of which involve, “Dwelling on the same topic and yet seeming to say something ever new” (4.42.54).<sup>23</sup>

This second way of engaging in rhetorical reasoning is described as “Descanting on a Theme” by Harry Caplan, the Loeb translator of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. He uses an increasingly old-fashioned word—“descanting”—which means to ‘talk about something at length,’ to translate the Greco-Roman terms for the process of Elaborating (*ekergasia*) or Amplifying (*amplificare*) a topic. Yet his archaic term captures something of the original sense of amplitude of treatment not fully captured by “elaboration” or “amplify:”

“[W]hen we descant upon the same Theme we shall use a great many variations. Indeed, after having expressed (*pronuntiarimus*) the theme simply we can subjoin the Reason (*ratio*), and then express the theme in another form (*dupliciter*), with or without the Reasons (*rationes*); next we can present the Contrary (*contrarium*)—all this I have discussed under the Figures of Diction; then a Comparison (*simile*) and an Example (*exemplum*); ...and finally, the Conclusion

(*conclusionem*).... A Refinement (*expolitio*) of this sort, which consists of numerous figures of diction and of thought, can therefore be exceedingly ornate” (*Rhet Her* 4.43.56).

The *Rhet Her* author’s choice to develop this second strategy of reasoning in his taxonomy of figures of speech is an artifact of how the ancient critics divided the design of persuasive appeals between rhetorical arguments meant to secure “conviction” and topical reasoning meant to secure “credence.”<sup>24</sup> In addition, since the basis of engaging in topical reasoning was conducted by way of figurative Amplification, the author could not have introduced this second form of reasoning until he had introduced, explained, and illustrated the figurative speech necessary to amplify a topic (*topos*). And that was the task of his taxonomy of figures in his fourth and final book of the *Rhet Her*. He concludes his discussion of Refining by Elaborating a Theme by adding that,

I have been led to discuss it at rather great length because it not only gives force and distinction to a speech when we plead a Cause, but it is by far our most important means of training for skill in style. It will be advantageous therefore to practice the principles of Refining (*expolitio*) in exercises divorced from a real Cause [i.e., by declamation], and in actual pleading to put them to use in the Embellishment of an argument, which I discussed in Book II (*Rhet Her* 4.44.58; Caplan, trans.).

Note how he enlarges our understanding of the role of Refining as one of the two major strategies of reasoning.

It was a means to Amplify the Embellishment of an epicheireme Proof<sup>25</sup> and was also the format to be used to develop Digressions (*digrediendi*) used after a Proof in order to stylistically buttress the argument statement of the Cause-at-Issue (*causam*).<sup>26</sup> It was a form of reasoning orators used to declaim topics, i.e., reasoning “divorced from a real *causam*.”<sup>27</sup> It was also the basic format that instructors varied to fit the maxim and *chreia* assignments in a student’s progymnasmata training. Hock and O’Neil conclude that it is “clear that the *expolitio* as presented in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and *exergasia* [i.e., Amplified Elaboration] as outlined by [the progymnasmata training of] Hermogenes are fundamentally similar, if not identical.”<sup>28</sup> Extensive research has been conducted to identify examples of *chreia* as well as the maxim Elaborations (i.e., Herm, *Ex* §3-4;) which should be considered adaptations of the basic thematic Elaboration form stipulated at *Rhet Her* 4.43.56.<sup>29</sup>

What should be clear is that ancient rhetoricians understood rhetorical reasoning as something that could be conducted in two ways: as a rhetorical Proof in reasoned arguments (using *epicheiremata*) or as thematic Elaborations conducted in topically reasoning Refinements (using *expolitioes*). Most biblical critics like Wills and Black, who tried to discover the rhetorical influence that shaped the synagogue homily and its appropriation as a Christian homily form, would have been better served to consider the influence of the sevenfold format for engaging in topical reasoning rather than the fivefold format of conducting a genre-controlled argument. In addition, just as the progymnasmata teachers varied how a theme would be developed between the *chreia* and the maxim, we should consider the Hellenistic synagogue homily form as another adaptive example of the basic *Rhet Her* Topical Refinement

strategy. It simply adds a “Call to Hear” and a “Recounting Holy History,” either in summary or by an interpretive concatenation of Hebrew Scripture references, as an initial meta-framing technique that identifies and situates a *topos* about to be Refined.

*The Hellenistic Jewish-Christian Word  
of Exhortation Homily Form*

This synagogue Word of Exhortation style of topical preaching provided a preacher with a textually situated sacred topic, at least in its use by first century Christian *writers*. Once a topic was interpretively inferred from the cited authorities, the preacher would make a Topical Claim derived from the sacred tradition. They would provide a Reason that justified consideration of this topic, and then Restate the initial Claim, now justified. An Amplifying exposition of that *topos* follows, typically Elaborated by means of a Contrary,<sup>30</sup> then a Comparison,<sup>31</sup> and finally by an Example; an orator might vary the order of the Contrary and Comparison, or simply provide an *exemplum*<sup>32</sup> (which can include multiple examples—*exempla*). But rather than a Conclusion, a homily would close by offering a Judgement and/or an Exhortation.<sup>33</sup>

I add to Will’s original proposal of the New Testament use of this form by demonstrating how Acts 13:16b-41 uses the Synagogue homily form combined with the rhetorical tradition’s means of Elaborating a topic—*at length*. I also compare the form I propose, with the same text Wills used, the opening argument of the Epistle to the Heb 1:1-3:6.<sup>34</sup>

<b>Acts 13:16b-41</b> <i>Topos: Jesus is the Promised Savior for Those Who Believe</i>	<b>Hebrews 1:1-3:6</b> <i>Topos – The Superiority of a Covenant Mediator Son</i>
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Begins with a Call to Hear in 13:16b	Begins with a Call to Hear, 1:1-4
Recounts Holy History with relevant texts (using memorable <i>chreia/cheiais</i> ) in 13:17-22	Recounts Holy History with relevant texts in 1:5-14
Makes a Topical Claim (an <i>aitia</i> ) in 13:23	Makes a Topical Claim in 2:1
Offers a Reason for the Claim (a <i>pisteis</i> ) in 13:24-25	Offers a Reason for the Claim in 2:3a
Restates the Claim (an <i>epanalambanō</i> ) in 13:26	Restates Claim in 2:3b-4
Provides a Contrary/Contrast (an <i>antithesē</i> ) in 13:27-31	Provides a Contrary in 2:5-9
Provides a Comparison that includes supporting scriptural citations (a <i>parabollēs</i> with <i>paradeigmata</i> ) in 13:32-35	Provides a Comparison in 2:10-18
Provides the Example (a <i>paradeigmata</i> ) in 13:36-37	Provides an Example, in 3:1-4
Offers a concluding Judgement (a <i>kriseōs</i> ) in 13:38-39	Offers a concluding Judgement in 3:5-6
Exhorts (a <i>paraklēsis</i> ) hearers to envision/implement the implications of the claim made in 13:40-41.	

The only substantive difference between how these two texts develop their topic is that author of Hebrews ends his homily with a Judgement, but does not include an Exhortation—likely because Heb 1:1-3:6 is the first of a chain of topically reasoned Refinements. For his part, Luke is using the form to provide a synopsis of Paul’s entire discourse.

The opening portion of Hebrews actually develops a second example of the full Hellenistic Jewish synagogue homily pattern (3:7-4:13), but this inventional format does not occur after that. The following outline demonstrates that the whole of Hebrews is organized by a series of thematic Elaborations that are initially introduced by the Synagogue style of situating the topic in the sacred history tradition. The author moves his argument along, *topos* by *topos*, “descanting” with nine additional topically reasoned Amplifications as well as an encouraging *encomium* in Heb 11:1-12:3.<sup>35</sup>

<b>The Epistle to the Hebrews as a Word of Exhortation Homily</b>	
Heb 1:1-3:6	Call to Hear – 1:1-4; Recounts Sacred History – 1:5-14; Topical Claim – 2:1; Reason – 2:2-3a; Topic Restated 2:3b-4; Contrary – 2:5-9; Comparison – 2:10-18; Example – 3:1-6.
Heb 3:7-4:13	Recounts Sacred History – 3:7-11; Topical Claim – 3:12; Reason – 3:13-14; Topic Restated 3:15-19; Contrary – 4:1-2; Comparison – 4:3-8; Judgement 4:9-10; Exhortation 4:11-13.
Heb 4:14-6:12	Topical Claim 4:14; Reason 4:15; Topic Restated 4:16; Comparison 5:1-10; Contrary 5:11-6:3; Example 6:4-8; Judgement 6:9-10; Exhortation 6:11-12.
Heb 6:13-7:28	Topical Claim 6:13-15; Reason 6:16-18; Topic Restated 6:19-20; Example 7:1-7; Comparison 7:8-10; Contrary 7:11-24; Judgement 7:25-28.
Heb 8:1-12	Topical Claim 8:1-2; Reason 8:3; Topic Restated 8:4-6; Contrary 8:7-9; Comparison 8:10-11; Judgement 8:12.
Heb 8:13-9:22	Topical Claim 8:13; Reason 9:1-7; Topic Restated 9:8; Contrary 9:9-12; Comparison 9:13-15; Example 9:16-21; Judgement 9:22.
Heb 9:23-10:18	Topical Claim 9:23; Reason 9:24a; Topic Restated 9:24b; Contrary 9:25-28; Comparison 10:1-4; Example 10:5-17; Judgement 10:18.
Heb 10:19-39	Topical Claim 10:19-22; Reason 10:23-25; Topic

	Restated 10:26-27; Contrary 10:28-31; Comparison 10:32-44; Exhortation 10:35-38; Judgement 10:39.
Heb 11:1-40 An Encomium	Topical Claim 11:1; Reason 11:2; Restated 11:3; Admirable Virtues 11:4-28; Fine Deeds 11:29-38; Judgement 11:39-40
Heb 12:1-13	Topical Claim 12:1-2; Reason 12:3; Topic Restated 12:4-6; Comparison 12:7-11; Contrary 12:12-13.
Heb 12:14-13:6	Topical Claim 12:14; Reason 12:15; Topic Restated 12:16-17; Comparison 12:18-24; Contrary 12:25-27; Exhortation 12:28-13:6.
Heb 13:7-17	Topical Claim 13:7a; Reason 13:7b; Topic Restated 13:8; Contrary 13:9-10; Contrary 13:11-14; Exhortation 13:15-16; Judgement 13:17.
Heb 13:18-25 Closing Appeals	Appeal for Prayer 13:18-19; Benediction 13:20-21; Appeal for Patience 13:22; Closing Remarks 13:23-25

Lincoln concludes his discussion of the genre of Hebrews stating, “Hebrews is a word of exhortation, a Midrashic sermon based on Scripture, particularly Ps. 110:1, 4, sent in written form.”<sup>36</sup> Based on his control of the Greek language and its syntax, as well as his adept use of a variety of figures of speech, most commentators agree that the author of Hebrews was clearly a trained rhetorician. This has led critics to assume that the author must have organized the sermon (*sermo*) to advance the concern of a Cause in service to one of the three genres (Judicial, Deliberative, or Demonstrative speech). Most cite the effort of Übelacker’s proposal in this regard, though support of all of his suggested divisions for his genre-controlled argument design is uneven at best.<sup>37</sup> And as is so often the case in rhetorical analysis of the epistles, the efforts to demonstrate this type of reading flounder after the critic identifies the Statement of the Cause. As Lincoln observes with regard to reading Hebrews rhetorically, “no one has shown that the various elements of its major part, the *argumentatio*, conform more precisely to the divisions of a

Graeco-Roman discourse.”<sup>38</sup> Lincoln’s judgement makes sense of a problem that arises when critics try to analyze texts that are topically Elaborated “Word of Exhortation” sermons as if they should be organized by the strategy designed to defend a Cause with Proofs.

Instead of treating a text as if it develops and defends a single argument, Topical Elaborations provide a speaker with a means to develop a discourse *topos* by *topos*, rung by rung, with each Elaboration leading to the next rung. Listeners and readers follow the reasoning step-by-step allowing them to arrive at a new understanding or insight. Hebrews is composed in this manner, as a *topically* reasoned Sermon that uses the Hellenistic synagogue homily form comprehensively to identify the Topic-at-Issue in the Hebrew scripture tradition of sacred texts (1:1-4:13), topically interpret the implication of these texts in light of Gospel truth (4:14-9:22), render a Judgement topically in two *topoi* (9:23-10:39), then encourage (11:1-12:3) and exhort listeners to pursue this hope without wavering (12:4-29).

Although Hebrews only uses the full Jewish synagogue format in the first two Refinements of this sermon, it should not be assumed that this augmented Topical Elaboration format should only be reserved for the beginning of a discourse. A preacher or writer of a sermon may find reason to use this synagogue homily form at a later stage of discourse development as Paul does in Rom 9:14-33. In the example that follows, Paul uses two texts from the prophet Hosea and three texts from the prophet Isaiah to support his interpretative Elaboration of two Torah texts from Exodus. His homiletic intention is to Refine the argument that God is not being “unfair” to Jews by extending mercy to Gentiles whom God now includes in the Abrahamic covenant promise:<sup>39</sup>

<b>A Word of Exhortation Homily – Rom 9:14-33</b>	
<b>CALL TO HEAR</b> – 9:14	What then are we to say? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means!
<b>RECOUNTS HOLY HISTORY</b> – 9:15	For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." [Ex 33:19]
<b>TOPICAL CLAIM</b> – 9:16	So it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy.
<b>REASON</b> – 9:17	For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth." [Ex 9:16]
<b>CLAIM RESTATED</b> – 9:18	So then he has mercy on whomever he chooses, and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses.
<b>CONTRARY</b> – Conducted as Diatribe – 9:19-20a	<p><b>Question:</b> You will say to me then, "Why then does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?"</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> But who indeed are you, a human being, to argue with God?</p>
<b>COMPARISON</b> – 9:20b-24	<p><b>1</b> Will what is molded say to the one who molds it, "Why have you made me like this?"</p> <p><b>2</b> Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one object for special use and another for ordinary use?</p> <p><b>1'</b> What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath that are made for destruction;</p> <p><b>2'</b> and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—including us whom he has</p>

called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?	
<b>EXAMPLE</b> – Rom 9:25-29	
1	As indeed he says in Hosea, “Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’ and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’” [Hosea 2:23]
2	“And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they shall be called children of the living God.” [Hosea 1:10]
1’	And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, “Though the number of the children of Israel were like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved; for the Lord will execute his sentence on the earth quickly and decisively.” [Isa 10:22]
2’	And as Isaiah predicted, “If the Lord of hosts had not left survivors to us, we would have fared like Sodom and been made like Gomorrah.” [Isa 1:9]
<b>JUDGEMENT</b> – Conducted as Diatribe– Rom 9:30-33	
<b>Question:</b>	What then are we to say?
<b>Answer:</b>	1 Gentiles, who did not strive for righteousness, have attained it, that is, righteousness through faith;
	2 but Israel, who did strive for the righteousness that is based on the law, did not succeed in fulfilling that law.
<b>Question:</b>	Why not?
<b>Answer:</b>	1’ Because they did not strive for it on the basis of faith, but as if it were based on works.
	2’ they have stumbled over the stumbling stone, as it is written, “See, I am laying in Zion a stone that will make people stumble, a rock that will make them fall, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” [Isa 28:16]

When observing this shift in his style of topical reasoning, the interesting hermeneutical question a contemporary preacher may wish to consider is: *Why did Paul chose to make this portion of his case to Roman believers using the Hellenistic synagogue homily style of topical reasoning rather than continue with the use of the standard Pan-*

*Hellenic Elaboration format he had been using?* What is there about this argument that is strategically different than what precedes and follows it?

What should be clear by now is that both the Hellenistic synagogue homily format and the basic Pan-Hellenic thematic Elaboration treatment were used as a Christian version of the Jewish Word of Exhortation. In addition, as Black affirms, use of this form of reasoning should not be taken to mean that New Testament writers were “devoid of any interest in logical argument.”<sup>40</sup> One need only look to excellent examples of *epicheirema* Proofs in Rom 1:18-32 (Proposition, 1:18; Reason, 1:19-20; Proof of the Reason, 1:21-23; Fully Elaborated Embellishment, 1:24-31; Résumé 1:32); in Gal 2:15-21 (Proposition, 2:15-16; Reason, 2:17; Proof of the Reason, 2:18; Embellishment, 2:19-20; Résumé, 2:21); and in Col 1:23b-2:5 (Proposition, 1:23b, Reason, 1:24, Proof of the Reason, 1:25-27, Embellishment, 1:28-2:3, Résumé -2:4-5).<sup>41</sup>

Demonstrating further use of this Synagogue homily form elsewhere in the New Testament and in non-canonical Christian literature from this era is beyond the limits of [this essay](#).<sup>42</sup> I simply conclude this brief demonstration of the intersection between the synagogue homily form and its adapted use of the norm of Pan-Hellenic topical reasoning by way of Refinement observing that additional portions of New Testament epistolary discourse makes inventional use of both sermon forms for discursively Amplifying topics.

### *Contemporary Homiletic Implications*

Black argues that attention to how the rhetoric of Gospel parables originally functioned *then* should inform how we attempt to communicate gospel *now*. He finds that the indirection of parable’s storied form of communication

was a meant to, 1) “explode this world with the power of God,”<sup>43</sup> 2) “blind... as well as illuminate,”<sup>44</sup> 3) belie the ever-present preacherly temptation of trying to offer a sermonically “two-step to whatever ditty its ambient culture pipes,”<sup>45</sup> and 4) call preachers to imagine ways to “handle holy things” with sacred awareness that they are called to “administer God’s relief for this world’s cardiac sclerosis with grace-filled explosions that heal diseased hearts.”<sup>46</sup> Since Craddock first embraced the Kierkegaardian principle of using indirection to help parishioners realize that their version of the gospel may need to be recalibrated by the gospel of the New Testament texts, preachers have begun to discover the power of a narrative rather than a propositional approach to preaching.<sup>47</sup>

We now possess homiletic strategies to perform “narrative indirection” when preaching the storied texts of scripture that allow the preacher to emulate the creation of parabolic insight. However, preaching the epistles has always been more challenging because their rhetorical design is generally structured as argument. The contemporary preacher can still find ways to sermonically move hearers from an initial naïveté to the insight of a Ricoeurian second naïveté using some version of the Orient-Disorient-Reorient (ODR) homiletic design when preaching the epistles, but the task is not as straightforward. The ODR homiletic design was created to preach the sacred narrative texts of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. Narrative’s one-thing-after-another *paratactic* form lends itself to identifying the central gospel question at issue in a text with greater ease than an interpreter of epistolary argument faces. Its *hypotactic* form of reasoning, which constantly subordinates one idea to another and another and then another, in a complex linear succession arguments that often becomes hyperbolic, leads many preachers to opt for

the parabolic over the hyperbolic when choosing sermon texts.<sup>48</sup> So, how might recognizing two versions of a Word of Exhortation homily form (the Synagogue and the Pan-Hellenic types of Refining a Topic) help New Testament preachers think about their own homily form when proclaiming the intention of an epistolary text?

One implication for a contemporary homiletic can be drawn from the ubiquity of both of these topical forms of reasoning as well as the use of rhetorical Proofs in the epistolary literature of the New Testament. At a minimum it would be useful if preachers could learn to distinguish the functional divisions of epistolary reasoning. Is it a Proof designed to convince? Or is the text part of a Topical Refinement intending to move the listener? Epistolary discourse should not be treated as if there is no difference between an author's reasoned argument claims, and supporting proofs and that author's discursive efforts to move listeners to accept that reasoning using strategically devised forceful, evocative appeals.

This was no more true *then* than it would be *now*. What preacher today wonders whether listeners can distinguish the strategic difference between the use of an illustration or an evocative image vs. a conceptual discussion of the argument of a text? First century audiences were equally able to recognize the difference between a rhetorical Proof and a topical Elaboration. And if they could, perhaps the modern preacher aspiring to sermonically communicate a textual intention should learn to discern this distinction as well.

A second implication is to rethink the limitations of our concept of "exhortation." The Word of Exhortation form of topical reasoning was reasoning just as much a rational argument offered in defense or refutation of a Cause. Appeals designed to move listeners were considered

appeals to their will—their willingness to act on belief, while Proofs were designed primarily as appeals to convictions in disputable matters. Topical Exhortation was not merely a matter of paraenetic advice giving or, worse, a way of Torah “proof-texting” from the Hebrew Scriptures. The Hellenistic synagogue may have used the art form of Word of Exhortation to interpret prophetic texts in light of Torah teaching, but the New Testament writers like Paul used this inventive strategy of reasoning to preach the message of a transformative vision of life lived *in Christ*.

Hopefully, modern preachers grasp the limitations of the age-old binary distinction that separates persuasive appeals to the mind from persuasive appeals to volition.<sup>49</sup> And hopefully an increasing number of preachers will choose to take up the work of Dorothy rather than “play” the Wizard in communicating Gospel intentions, modeling the way of a *seeker* rather than a *knower*.<sup>50</sup> Helping listeners and readers discover new ways to think theologically was and should still be the gift of this kind of tradition of reasoning in preaching. Awareness of the original forms can only enhance that purpose.

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### End Notes

<sup>1</sup>Gerald L. Bruns, *Hermeneutics Ancient & Modern* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 116.

<sup>2</sup>C. Clifton Black, *The Rhetoric of the Gospel: Theological Artistry in the Gospels and Acts*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 2001), 118-133.

<sup>3</sup>Black, *The Rhetoric of the Gospel*, 132-133.

<sup>4</sup>Black, *The Rhetoric of the Gospels*, 135-149.

<sup>5</sup>The word “atomistic” used to describe explanatory preaching comes from David Buttrick, “Interpretation and Preaching,” *Interpretation* 25 (1981): 48. On considering what a sermon does and not just what it says based on the performative nature of the text, see

David Randolph, *The Renewal of Preaching* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), viii; Fred B. Craddock, *Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 28. This shift to consider issues of rhetorical form in preaching paralleled the shift to consider issues of rhetorical form occurring in the analysis of sacred texts in Biblical studies.

<sup>6</sup>See the discussion of synagogue sermons and their rhetoric in O. C. Edwards, Jr. *A History of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004), 8-14.

<sup>7</sup>The Loeb edition cited throughout of this anonymous preceptive rhetoric is [Cicero], *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, translated by Harry Caplan. Loeb Classical Library 403 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954).

<sup>8</sup>Louis Feldman, *Philo's Portrayal of Moses in the Context of Ancient Judaism* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 12.

<sup>9</sup>David E. Aune, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 202.

<sup>10</sup>See Peder Borgen, *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo*, NovTSupp 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1965; reprints: Leiden: Brill, 1981 and Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017).

<sup>11</sup>See Borgen's discussion of the Jewish "Homiletic Pattern" in *Bread from Heaven*, 28-58.

<sup>12</sup>William Richard Stegner, "The Ancient Jewish Synagogue Homily" in *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament*, David E. Aune, ed., 51-70 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 58. However, the charge of method-ological anachronism may be offset by the fact that Borgen also compares his research of synagogue homilies from the Amoraic period with Philo's first century strategies of interpretation.

<sup>13</sup>Lawrence Wills, "The Form of the Sermon in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity," *Harvard Theological Review*, 77 (1984): 277-299. For his proposal for the homily form in Acts 13, see p. 279. For his proposal of the homily form found at the outset of the Epistle to the Hebrews, see p. 283. H. Thyen conducted similar research prior to that of Borgen and claimed that the Epistle to the Hebrews is formed by a series of carefully structured Hellenistic synagogue homilies; H. Thyen, *Der Stil der Jüdisch-Hellenistischen Homilie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1955); cf. Swetnam's helpful summary of this research in J. Swetnam, "On the Literary Genre of the 'Epistle to the Hebrews,'" *NovT* 11 (1969): 261-269.

<sup>14</sup>Wills, "The Form of the Sermon," 299.

<sup>15</sup>Wills, "The Form of the Sermon," 279-280.

<sup>16</sup>C. Clifton Black, "The Rhetorical Form of the Hellenistic Jewish and Early Christian Sermon: A Response to Lawrence Wills," *Harvard Theological Review* 81 (1988): 11.

<sup>17</sup>Black, *The Rhetoric of the Gospel*, 132-133.

<sup>18</sup>M. L. Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome: A Historical Survey*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Routledge, 1996), 24. For my use of the term Pan-Hellenist rhetoric see Enos, "The Art of Rhetoric at Rhodes," in *Rhetoric Before and Beyond the Greeks*, edited by C. S. Lipson and R. A. Binkley, 183-196 (Albany: State University of New York, 2004), 194. The term Pan-Hellenism or *panhellenismos* is modern convenience of expression rather than a term of ancient rhetoric in use in the Hellenistic era. Modern critics use the hyphenated word to describe a phenomenon that functioned across cultural norms of the era; See Lynette Mitchell, *Panhellenism and the Barbarian in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Swansea, UK: Classical Press of Wales, 2007), xv-xviii.

<sup>19</sup>Where logic seeks to arrive at a valid conclusion, rhetorical reasoning seeks to arrive at a probable, or perhaps a merely plausible conclusion. The qualifying phrase "*quasi-logical*" argument and a "*quasi-logical*" conclusion is terminology created by Chaim Perelman, in describing rhetorical argument's manner of formulating reasoning in a way that is "similar to the formal structure of logic and mathematics.... [in which the latter] calculus employs an artificial language so constructed that one sign can have only one meaning. In logic, [this] principle of identity designates a tautology, an indisputable but empty truth., whatever its formulation. But this is not the case in ordinary language... [where seeming tautologies like] 'business is business,' or 'boys will be boys,' or 'war is war'... give preference, not to the univocity of the statement, but to its significant character." Chaim Perelman, "The New Rhetoric: A Theory of Practical Reasoning," in *The New Rhetoric and the Humanities: Essays on Rhetoric and its Applications* (Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979), 1-43; excerpted in Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg, *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. [New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2001], 1396-1397.

<sup>20</sup>For more than two millennia, Cicero's youthful compendium of rhetorical invention, *De Inventio* has been the culturally preferred way to think of argument in antiquity. For example, Gaines reflects this

preference when comparing the *Rhet Her* version of argument with Cicero's *De Inv* version. He suggests that the *Rhet Her* version of the epicheirema represents "a kind of theoretical economy, one designed to provide only what is necessary to promote facility in speaking." Robert N. Gaines, "Roman Rhetorical Handbooks," in *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric*, edited by W. Dominik and J. Hall, 163-180 (West Sussex, Wiley-Blackwell, 2007) 175. However, Braet approaches the comparison less disposed to dismiss versions of reasoning that include appeals to emotion. He argues that the *Rhet Her* version of the rhetorical Proof was the cultural norm in the empire and finds that Cicero's *De Inv* version is too tied to Plato's Academy and its preference for use of inductive reasoning rather than reasoning that suggests an emotive appeal should play a role in rational reasoning. A. C. Braet, "Hermagoras and the Epicheireme," *Rhetorica* 22 (2004): 327-47; here 340. Of course, Plato's student Aristotle disagreed with his teacher. He argued that effective *pathos* appeals must play a role along with *logos* and *ethos* appeals in any civic discourse seeking to affect persuasion.

<sup>21</sup>Italics original to Kennedy; from Kennedy's prefatory commentary for Chapter Five on Epicheiremes in "On Invention" in George A. Kennedy, trans. and ed., *Invention and Method: Two Rhetorical Treatises from the Hermogenic Corpus* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 85.

<sup>22</sup>For example, the US Supreme Court decision of *Tinker vs. Des Moines* is almost always cited by its singular use of a powerful metaphor, that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate." A certain amount of eloquence used in aid of assent to rational discourse is the essence of good rhetoric.

<sup>23</sup>Refinement was conducted either by creating a sense of immediacy in shifting to first-person "Dialogue" (*sermocinatio*) or by Embellishing/Refining (*expolitio*) a topic through "Arousal" (*exsuscitationem*) by way of the figures of thought of Contrast, Comparison, and Example (or cited support). The idea of using figurative language to "arouse" the willingness of an audience to accept reasoned argument remains a hallmark of excellent reasoning to this day.

<sup>24</sup>Cicero distinguished these two types of rhetorical reasoning, noting that "amplification is a sort of forcible method of arguing, argument being aimed at effecting proof, amplification at exercising influence" (*De Part* 8.27; Rackham, trans.).

<sup>25</sup>The *Rhet Her* author states that an “Embellishment consists of similes, examples, amplifications, previous judgements (i.e., cited authorities), and other means which serve to expand and enrich the argument” (2.28.45; Caplan, trans.).

<sup>26</sup>Cicero states, “It is often useful to digress from the subject one has put forward and is dealing with, for the purpose of arousing emotion; and accordingly very often either a place is given to a Digression (*digrediendi*) devoted to exciting emotion after we have related the facts and stated our case, or this can rightly be done after we have established our own arguments or refuted those of our opponents, or in both places, or in all the parts of a speech, if the case is one of this importance and extent; and the cases that are the weightiest and fullest for amplification and embellishment are those that give the greatest number of openings for digression of this kind, so allowing the employment of the topics which stimulate or curb the emotions of the audience” (*De Orat* 2.76.312; Rackham, trans.). The Elaborated Theme was the form by which Digressions were to be conducted.

<sup>27</sup>The advanced forms of declamation—*controversiae* and *suasoriae*—were extended forms of a stylistically Refined topical theme. Learning to control these two thematic forms which combined both the Dialogue and the figurative Elaboration aspects of *expositio* were the final rhetorical assignment in progymnasmata training; see Janet Fairweather, *Seneca the Elder* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 243-303.

<sup>28</sup>Ronald F. Hock, and Edward N. O’Neil. *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises* (Boston: Brill, 2002), 89. Mack and O’Neil had previously claimed that, “It is clear that the *Rhet. Her.* is the first reference to this form of topical reasoning in extant literature, but the handbook author appears to assume that what he describes was also part of the classroom training in rhetoric reported in later centuries as ‘preliminary exercises’ in progymnasmata training;” Burton L. Mack and Edward O’Neil, “The Chreia Discussion of Hermogenes of Tarsus” in Ronald F. Hock and Edward O’Neil, eds., *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric: Volume 1- The Progymnasmata*, 153-182 (Atlanta, GA: Scholar’s Press, 1986), 161.

<sup>29</sup>A recent example of the latter is offered by Thomas D. Stegman, “Reading Luke 12:13-34 as an Elaboration of a Chreia: How Hermogenes of Tarsus Sheds Light on Luke’s Gospel,” *NovT* 49 (2007): 328-352. For extensive ancient examples of the chreia in rhetorical use see the literature cited in the previous note.

<sup>30</sup>Reasoning by Contraries (*contrarium*) juxtaposes two opposing statements or ideas with the purpose of using one to disprove the other. When conducted as a figure of thought rather than a figure of diction, the oppositional dimension of the rhetorical unit is developed as a comparative antithesis (*contention*); see the discussion of the figure at *Rhet Her* 4.18.25-26 and 4.47.58.

<sup>31</sup>The figure of thought, Comparison “carries over the form of likeness from one thing to another.” In diction it functions as a simile, but in its use in *expositio*, it can be used to create either contrast or to provide a detailed parallel at *Rhet Her* 4.47.59-61; see Marsh H. McCall, Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theories of Simile and Comparison* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

<sup>32</sup>Exemplification (*exemplum*) “is the citing of something done or said in the past.” It can be a cited authority source like scripture, a retelling of a historic occurrence, or recourse to an illustrative cultural instance or image that would be commonly accepted as true to the experience of the listeners (*Rhet Her* 4.47.62).

<sup>33</sup>This is not a specifically Semitic addition to give a Word of Exhortation since a Judgement is akin to a Conclusion and Hermogenes advises his students to also offer a concluding Exhortation. Hermogenes tells students concluding their presentation on a famous saying that “At the end you will put an exhortation to the effect that one must be persuaded by the person who has said or done this” (Herm, *Ex* 3.8); George A. Kennedy, trans. And ed., *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 77.

<sup>34</sup>I include Hermogenes’ Greek terminology for each rhetorical unit of an Elaboration (*exergasia*; *Ex* 3.7-8) as the language that Luke or the Writer of Hebrews would have been taught as the description of the inventional task of this portion of the Word of Exhortation synagogue homily format.

<sup>35</sup>An Encomium was an epideictic form of rhetoric that focused on lauding values to be commended much like a modern eulogy. When praising individuals, an *Encomium* formulaically would recount “virtues” and the “deeds;” see Burton L. Mack, *The Rhetoric and the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 75-76. For a recent argument that the entire Epistle to the Hebrews should be considered an ancient synagogue homily see Gabriella Gelardini, *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods—New Insight* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 107-127.

<sup>36</sup>Andrew Lincoln, *Hebrews: A Guide* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2006), 14. Lincoln also finds that the author of Hebrews is rhetorically well-trained and examines a number of the authors use of stylistic techniques (e.g., synkrisis, amplification, anaphora, alliteration, inclusio, chiasm, exempla, and hyperbole), pp. 19-21. The majority of modern critics, even those who are more conservative, consider that Hebrews was composed as a sermon; e.g., William L. Lane, *Hebrews*, 2 vols. (Dallas: Word Books, 1991), Vol. 1: lxx-lxxv. Gareth Lee Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 76-77; Johnson reviews efforts to analyze Hebrews rhetorically as a form of Deliberative rhetoric; Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012), 12-15.

<sup>37</sup>See Walter Übelacker, *Der Hebräerbrief als Appell. I. Untersuchungen zu exordium, narratio, und postscriptum (Hebr. 1-2 und 13:22-25)*, CBNT (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1989). Übelacker argues that Heb 1:1-4 is an *exordium*, 1:5-2:18 is a *narratio*, and 2:17 states the *propositio*, 3:1-12:29 is the *argumentatio* that includes the *probatio* Proofs, and that 13:1-21 is the *peroratio*. Olbricht argues that the genre of Hebrews is Demonstrative (epideictic), but adds that it is arranged by a series of Demonstrative arguments each of which is followed by a substantive unit of Exhortation. See Thomas H. Olbricht, "Anticipating and Presenting the Case for Christ as High Priest in Hebrews," in *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts: Essays from the Lund 2000 Conference*, edited by Anders Eriksson, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Walter Übelacker (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002), 355-72. He had already argued for the importance of attending to the Aristotelian understanding of "amplification" in Hebrews in a previous essay, Olbricht, "Hebrews as Amplification," in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*, edited by Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht (Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 375-87.

<sup>38</sup>Lincoln, *Hebrews: A Guide*, 17.

<sup>39</sup>My use of the progressive parallelism notation (**1-2, 1'-2'**) to visualize the relationship of a Semitic metrical *dichoree* in some of the rhetorical units of this Word of Exhortation is a version of Kugel's conception of the **1-2** form Semitic parallelism. Kugel describes this conceptual form of movement as offering a "For not only... but what's more..." structure of thought. Beyond its use in the Psalms and the prophets, this *noetic* sensibility of Semitic reasoning had been deeply shaped by the narrative poetics of its sacred literature, while Greek

literate thought, shaped by literate reasoning conducted by its fifth century philosophers, became more adept at using literate syntax to hypotactically subordinate one idea to another. See James Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History* (Baltimore: John's Hopkins University Press, 1981), 57; Samuel Terrien, *The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 36-41; George W. Anderson, "Literary forms in the Gospels," *The New Oxford Annotated Bible, NRSV* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), NT394.

<sup>40</sup>Black, "The Rhetorical Form," 12.

<sup>41</sup>Note that George Kennedy identified that Gal 2:15-21 "constitutes an epicheireme, or argument with the parts fully stated." George Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 148. The Epicheireme in the Rom 1:18-32 offers an example of a Proof with the Embellishment fully Elaborated by means of expositio: the Rom 1:24-31 Embellishment (Topic, 1:24; Reason, 1:25; Topic Restated, 1:26a; Comparison, 1:26b-27; Contrary 1:28; Example, 1:29-31).

<sup>42</sup>Wills had suggested that *I Clem* clearly made use of the Hellenistic synagogue homily form that had been appropriated by Christian writers. Wills, "The Form of the Sermon," 283. Examples of the form are readily observed in *I Clem* 24:1-27:7 (Call to Hear, 24:1a; Topical Claim 24:1b, Exemplum-A, 24:2; Exemplum-B, 24:4-5; Exemplum-C, 25:1-5; Judgement, 26:1-3; Exhortation, 27:1-7); 1 Clem 37:1-38:4 (Call to Hear, 37:1-2; Topical Claim 37:3-4, Comparison, 37:5-38:2a; Contrary, 38:2a; Judgement, 38:2b; Exhortation, 38:3-4). He also makes use of the Pan-Hellenic Thematic Elaboration form ~~as well~~. For example, ~~at~~ the climax of his argument in 1 Clem 51:1-53:5 is organized as ~~an~~ Refined Amplification: Topical Claim, 51:1; Reason, 51:2; Claim Restated, 51:3a; Contrary, 51:3b-5; Comparison w/Scriptural Examples, 52:1-4; Example, 53:1-5; Judgement, 54:1-4.

<sup>43</sup>Black, *Rhetoric of the Gospel*, 138.

<sup>44</sup>Black, *Rhetoric of the Gospel*, 141.

<sup>45</sup>Black, *Rhetoric of the Gospel*, 146.

<sup>46</sup>Black, *Rhetoric of the Gospel*, 148.

<sup>47</sup>Craddock originally called his approach to preaching inductive rather than deductive, but that would have made his preaching logic more Socratic rather than thesis driven. His artful circling the central concept of grasping the actual gospel realization of a text was theoretically grounded in a Kierkegaardian indirection and

the emerging shift to a narrative theology rather than continuing a propositional approach to theology. See Fred B. Craddock, *Overhearing the Gospel: Preaching and Teaching the Faith to Persons Who Have Heard It All Before* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978). Lowry's model of preaching in this mode was based in narrative theory, but it was committed more to the concept of emplotment than to implementing narrative indirection; Eugene L. Lowry, *Doing Time in the Pulpit: The Relationship Between Narrative and Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985).

<sup>48</sup>These terms of discursive syntax, *hypotaxis* and *parataxis*, are roughly equivalent to how the Greeks distinguished what they called the 'knit together' periodic style (*lexis katestrammenēa*), in which clauses are subordinated to one another, from the 'strung together' loose style of a one-thing-after-another coordination of clauses (*lexis eiromenē*). See Denniston, *Greek Prose Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 60.

<sup>49</sup>This distinction was still maintained by John Broadus whose homiletics textbook written in 1860 was still being used as a primary textbook for preaching throughout the first half of the twentieth century and beyond. He urged preachers to engage in expository argument throughout the sermon in order to make appeals to the listener's mind (pp. 139-213), then conclude the sermon with a "persuasive" application of these ideas designed to make "appeals to the affections and the will" (282). John A. Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Philadelphia: Smith and English, 1871). Just as we would no longer separate appeals to the mind and the will, we hopefully also no longer consider reasoned argument to be somehow distinct from persuasive discourse.

<sup>50</sup>See Brian McLaren's 2001 essay "Dorothy on Leadership," which was originally published in *Rev Magazine* (November/December 2000), but can now be readily "Googled" by this simple title.