

differences in the evaluation of sources, such as the Gospel of Thomas, Q and Mark, and highlights the criterion of dissimilarity and the 'double criterion of similarity and dissimilarity' as proposed by Wright. He also points to a major methodological difference by noting that, whereas some scholars try to include a maximum amount of historical data (Wright, Sanders), others base their portraits on a minimum of data that seem most reliable (Crossan, Jesus Seminar). Powell also directs our attention to the related issue of whether one should start with a piecemeal approach to the data, first judging the reliability of each saying or event and then constructing a hypothesis (a method employed by scholars as diverse as Meier and the Jesus Seminar), or whether one should begin with an overall hypothesis and then interpret the data in the light of it (Sanders, Wright). Although the issues involved in these alternatives are more complex (cf. e.g. the epistemological problems mentioned by Wright in *The New Testament and the People of God*), to focus the problem in this way nevertheless helps the non-specialist to get an idea of some of the major differences between the third questers.

All in all, Powell's book is a helpful guide for everyone interested in recent developments in the third quest for the historical Jesus.

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Rhetoric and Galatians: Assessing an Approach to Paul's Epistle **Philip H. Kern**

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Cambridge University Press, 1998, xiv +
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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Philip Kern geht es darum, die durch Betz und Kennedy stark verbreitete Einstufung des Galaterbriefes als rhetorisches Kunstwerk zu hinterfragen. Er tut dies vor allem dadurch, dass er zeigt, dass die rhetorischen Handbücher der Antike nicht auf den Galaterbrief anwendbar sind. Sie setzen in aller Regel gerichtliche Szenen voraus und sind nicht für eine Übertragung auf andere Situa-

tionen konzipiert. Allenfalls lässt sich vermuten, dass man sowohl die Handbücher als auch den Galaterbrief mit Formen mündlicher Darbietung in Verbindung setzen kann, aber das bedeutet noch lange nicht, dass der Galaterbrief nach den Kriterien der Handbücher geschrieben worden sei. Vielmehr stellt sich heraus, dass aus dem Blickwinkel klassischer griechisch-römischer Rhetorik die paulinischen Briefe eher durch Grobschlächtigkeit auffallen und auch seitens der Kirchenväter entsprechend eingestuft wurden. Konsequenterweise dürfte es bei der Interpretation dieser Briefe nicht darum gehen, rhetorische Klassifizierungen anzuwenden, sondern der theologischen Aussage ihr volles Gewicht zukommen zu lassen. Kerns These überzeugt zumindest in ihren Grundzügen. Man könnte aber nachfragen, ob er seine Kritik der Anwendung rhetorischer Kategorien auf den Galaterbrief nicht etwas überzeichnet hat.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur considère la thèse de Betz et Kennedy qui voient l'épître aux Galates comme un chef d'œuvre rhétorique. Il montre que l'épître ne correspond pas à ce que l'on trouve dans les manuels de rhétorique de l'antiquité. Ceux-ci présupposent généralement des scènes de procès qui ne sont pas conçues pour être transposées à d'autres situations. On peut bien sûr supposer que les manuels de rhétorique ainsi que l'épître peuvent être mis en relation avec des formes orales, mais il ne s'ensuit nullement que l'épître a été écrite en suivant les règles des manuels. Au contraire, il est clair que les épîtres pauliniennes tranchent par leur style peu raffiné avec la rhétorique gréco-romaine classique et se rattachent d'avantage aux œuvres des premiers pères de l'Église. Par conséquent, il n'est pas approprié de faire appel aux catégories classiques pour l'interprétation de ces lettres, mais il est préférable de leur accorder leur propre valeur théologique. La thèse de Kern est convaincante, tout du moins dans sa perspective générale, mais sa critique de l'application des critères rhétoriques est peut-être excessive.

Rhetoric and Galatians seeks to challenge the kinds of assumptions about Paul's use of rhetoric in Galatians which were introduced into Pauline scholarship (and accepted by many) by scholars such as Betz, Kennedy and others. This book is the result of a Sheffield PhD investigation under the supervision of L. Alexander. In its single-mindedness it is a

typical 'PhD-type' monograph, but in other ways it is not. For instance, it is not customary in PhD dissertations to make attacking scholarly approaches one's main objective. If one does, it is imperative that one has a strong argument indeed. Does Kern have one? And how does he develop his line of reasoning? Let's start with the conclusion: Kern's major contention is that, contrary to the assumptions of Betz and others, Paul's use of structure and language in Galatians does not conform to what we know of Greco-Roman rhetoric. Previous attempts to claim the opposite ignore some fairly basic categories for studying rhetoric. We need to distinguish between different levels or spheres of rhetoric. To show similarity between documents on one level does not mean that we can confidently postulate correspondence on another level. This is where things went wrong in the past. So what are these levels or spheres which Kern suggests?

First, the level of *universal strategic communication*; secondly *oratory*; thirdly *Greco-Roman rhetoric* and fourthly *handbook rhetoric*. The first level is about persuasion, the second about the mode of persuasion (such as oratory), the third about the cultural environment of verbal discourse and the fourth about the particular venues of communication. The importance of distinguishing between these levels is clear when one observes, for instance, that Hellenistic handbook rhetoric tended to originate almost entirely from forensic settings such as courtroom scenes. In other words, the applicability of such rhetoric was seen to be restricted in terms of venue almost from the start. This simple fact has too often been ignored in studies of the rhetoric of Galatians. Such mistakes have occasionally led to attempts to fit Paul into the kind of rhetorical straightjacket that was never envisaged by the handbooks in the first place. It is not that previous scholars have failed to see the courtroom milieu from which the handbooks originated, rather, they employed different strategies to avoid the obvious conclusion that Galatians is not based on handbook rhetoric. Betz' strategy, for instance, was to interpret Galatians by linking it to a fictitious courtroom setting. Kennedy, on the other hand, argues that it takes little effort to build a bridge between the rhetoric of the handbooks and that of Galatians, even though the settings are quite different.

Kern is not totally opposed to some of the proposals of the scholars already cited, but he argues that their conclusion that Paul applied Greco-Roman rhetorical conventions holds water only up to level two, not to levels three or even four. To that extent the work of such scholars is flawed by a category mistake. If one wants to continue to argue along the lines of Betz or Kennedy, one ought to be keenly aware of the limitations of classifying Galatians under a range of rhetorical species. It will not do to label Galatians *deliberative* (Kennedy) or *epideictic* (not often claimed for Galatians) or *forensic* (Betz) *rhetoric*. These are the categories of the handbooks – not of Galatians. It is not enough to shift one's preference (as many scholars have done) from Betz' construal of rhetoric in Galatians to that of Kennedy. The very use of the rhetorical handbooks for interpreting Galatians and more specifically the use of functional categories for determining rhetorical species need to be challenged. This challenge gains further weight when it is considered that the classically trained Church Fathers as well as the most significant post-patristic rhetoricians saw no reason to regard Galatians either as oratory or as the product of significant rhetorical skill. If anything, we find in their writings about the epistles a certain embarrassment by Paul's crudeness of style. Paul clearly did not employ language appropriate to oratory.

It is normally dangerous to take on major scholarly approaches as part of a PhD dissertation but Kern was justified in making his case. His treatment of other scholars strikes me as fair. There is, for instance, plenty of admiration for the way in which Kennedy (Betz perhaps a little less so) has advanced our understanding of the significance of handbook rhetoric for studying the biblical literature. As far as Betz is concerned, many have suspected for some time that his treatment of Galatians is somewhat of the Procrustean variety. Kern has provided the evidence to back up such suspicions. One might take issue with the full-blooded way in which Kern dismisses the relevance of classical handbook rhetoric (or even all ancient rhetorical conventions?) for interpreting Galatians. There is at least scope for trying out interpretative scenarios such as, for instance, the fictitious courtroom setting suggested by Betz. Not all such endeavours are designed to obfuscate the issue of rhetorical species. One gets the impression that Kern shuts the door on any such venture. I don't think that is necessary.

More importantly though, the criticisms directed by Kern at the scholars cited (and of course others who have attempted to apply handbook rhetoric to Galatians) are largely well taken and extremely relevant. *Rhetoric and Galatians* really is an important contribution to our understanding of the relationship (if there is one) between Greco-Roman rhetoric and Paul's letters.

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Justice and Christian Ethics

E. Clinton Gardner

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Wie dem Titel nicht unbedingt zu entnehmen, handelt das Buch mehr vom ideologischen Hintergrund der amerikanischen Verfassung als von Gerechtigkeit. Es enthält Kapitel über Gesetz und Religion, die Vorstellung von Gerechtigkeit bei Aristoteles und Thomas von Aquin, das biblische Konzept des Bundes, die Kategorie des Bundes in puritanischen Ideen zu Gesellschaft und Gerechtigkeit, die Wichtigkeit religiöser Einflüsse auf Locke und die amerikanische Verfassung, sowie ein Plädoyer, den Bundesgedanken in heutigen Kontexten fruchtbar zu machen. Das Buch ist nicht ausführlich genug, um das wichtige Thema befriedigend darzustellen.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage traite d'avantage de l'arrière-plan idéologique de la constitution américaine que de la justice. Il aborde les thèmes de la loi et de la religion, la compréhension de la justice chez Aristote et Thomas d'Aquin, la notion biblique d'alliance, la catégorie d'alliance dans la conception puritaine de la société et de la justice, l'importance des influences religieuses sur la pensée de Locke et sur la constitution américaine. Il plaide aussi pour que l'on applique la notion d'alliance dans les contextes modernes. L'ouvrage ne nous paraît pas suffisamment détaillé pour aborder ces différents thèmes de manière satisfaisante.

Despite its title, this book is more a historical review of the ideological background to the American constitution than a discussion of justice. After an introductory chapter on the relationship of law and religion, Chapter 2 discusses the notions of justice in Aristotle and Aquinas. They saw justice as the most important of the virtues, and held that the implementation of justice required both a virtuous and charitable judge.

Chapter 3 summarises the biblical view of covenant. It is based on God's grace and sovereignty. It creates a community, in which obedience to God's will expressed in the law is paramount. In this framework justice is both relational, it determines behaviour between one covenant member and another, and also eschatological, for only God's intervention will bring complete justice.

Biblical notions of covenant were fundamental to the Puritan approach to society and justice (Chapter 4), and they were obviously central to the first American colonists who established the Puritan states of New England. The ideas of these colonists were perpetuated and moderated in a secular direction as a result of the Enlightenment and writers such as John Locke.

However in Chapters 5 and 6 Gardner insists that neither Locke nor the American constitution were as secular as is often supposed. For instance, the separation of church and state in the federal constitution arose not because of opposition to the establishment of religion, but because different churches were established in different states that made up the union.

In the final chapter Gardner argues that biblical notions of covenant are still of use today. They enable us to see each member of society as made in God's image and therefore entitled to justice, yet at the same time all are knit together in community bound by promises and obligations as well as the law.

This book tackles an interesting and important topic, but is ultimately disappointing. It is not detailed enough either in tracing the evolution of the American constitution or in its application of covenant principles of justice to modern society to be satisfying. Finally, in discussing biblical covenants Gardner seemed unaware of modern approaches that would lead his synthesis to be questioned.

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