UNWORLDLY FRIENDSHIP:
THE 'EPITOME OF STRAW' RECONSIDERED

by

Alicia Joan Batten

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emmanuel College
and the Biblical Department of the Toronto School of Theology.
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Theology awarded by the
University of St. Michael's College.

Toronto, 2000

© Alicia J. Batten
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.
UNWORLDLY FRIENDSHIP:
THE ‘EPISTLE OF STRAW’ RECONSIDERED
Ph.D. 2000
Alicia J. Batten

Submitted to the Faculty of Emmanuel College and the Biblical Department of the Toronto School of Theology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Theology awarded by the University of St. Michael’s College

Abstract

This dissertation examines the presence and purpose of language and concepts associated with the ancient ideal of friendship within the epistle of James, and pays specific attention to how the friendship ideal is used within the letter’s rhetorical strategies.

A survey of friendship within a variety of contexts is initially provided in order to illustrate the precedents for some of James’ language and ideas related to this topos. Next, the justification for studying James as a rhetorically sophisticated letter is set forth, followed by an examination of the rhetorical nature of three sections of James in which the language and ideas of friendship appear. It is argued that James presents an image of God as a true friend, and uses the notion of friendship with God to motivate the audience to various forms of ethical behaviour. In particular, Jas 4:4 is understood to be a saying of Jesus recast in the language of friendship, functioning in the letter as theological proof that the demands of Jesus, God and the author of the letter are identical.

We then ask what type of rhetorical situation the use of friendship language could address. By the first century it was common for patrons and clients to mask their relationship as one of friendship, despite the fact that they did not manifest any of the
ideals of friendship. James objects to this sham by deliberately describing God as the true friend and benefactor, in contrast to the wealthy. Such a juxtaposition of friend and patron forces the audience to see that liaisons with the rich are nothing in contrast to friendship with God. The rhetorical situation thus includes the exigence of patronage, which James wants the audience to resist. Patronage appears to have been a problem for early Christian churches in Rome, and given the parallels between James, 1 Clement and the Shepherd of Hermas, it is possible that James’ audience included a community in Rome, although the origin of the letter was likely Palestine.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments iv

Chapter 1. Introduction 1

Purpose 1

Method 3

Context 3

Some Main Characteristics of Friendship 6

Rhetorical Analysis 9

Friendship with God 10

Community Friendship 12

Chapter 2. Friendship in Antiquity 15

Introduction 15

Greek Friendship 20

A. Archaic Period 20

1. Homer 20

2. Hesiod, Theognis, Sappho 25

3. Conclusion 29

B. Classical Age 29

1. φιλία and φίλος 30

2. Tragic Poets 32

3. Xenophon, Plato 37

4. Aristotle, Theophrastus 41

5. Conclusion 50

C. Hellenistic Era 52

1. Non-Philosophical Literature 52

a. Papyri, Inscriptions, Letters 52

b. Dionysius of Halicarnassus 56

c. Poetry and Novels 57

d. Lucian 60

2. Philosophical Literature 63

a. Epicureanism 63

b. Stoicism 67

c. Neopythagoreanism 70

d. Plutarch 72

3. Conclusion 77

Roman Friendship 78

1. Cicero 80

2. Friendship and Patronage in the Roman World 84

3. Conclusion 88
### Jewish Friendship
1. Hebrew Bible 88
   2. LXX 88
      a. Friendship with God 92
      b. Ben Sira 93
   3. Philo 98
   4. Other Jewish Sources 100
   5. Conclusion 102

### Friendship in the New Testament
1. Paul 105
   3. John 112
   4. Conclusion 115

### Friendship in Early Christian Literature
1. First to Third Centuries 116
   2. Fourth Century 118
   3. Conclusion 125

### Conclusion
127

### Chapter 3. Rhetoric and Friendship in James
129

#### Introduction
129

#### James as a Letter
129

#### James and Rhetoric
132

#### Friendship Language and Rhetoric in James
141
   A. Introduction 141
   B. James 1:2-18 142
      1. Common Features of the Exordium 142
      2. James 1:2-18 as an Exordium 145
      3. Friendship within the Exordium 154
   C. James 2:14-26 161
   D. James 3:13-4:10 167
      1. The Argumentation of Jas 3:13-4:10 173
      2. Conclusion 200

#### Conclusion
201

### Chapter 4. Friendship as a Social Ethic
203

#### Introduction
203

#### Patronage
205
A. Patronage in the Ancient Mediterranean 205
B. Patronage and Benefaction 210
C. Patronage, Benefaction and Friendship in James 215
   1. James 1:2-18 217
   2. James 2:14-26 224
   4. Other Glimpses of Friendship vs. Patronage in James 228

Patronage as an Exigence 230
Audience 233
Rhetorical Constraints 244

Chapter 5. Conclusion 247

Bibliography 252
Many people have contributed to the completion of this dissertation. First, I would like to express my gratitude to my dissertation supervisor, Dr. John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, who has consistently provided clear and constructive criticism throughout the various stages of this project. It was an honour and a pleasure to work with Dr. Kloppenborg Verbin.

I have also learned much from Dr. Leif E. Vaage, with regard to both scholarship and teaching. Although biblical studies requires focused and detailed work, Dr. Vaage has a way of reminding one to think about the "big picture," so to speak. Such a reminder was very helpful to me as I went through the stages of the doctoral programme.

Dr. Terry Donaldson, Dr. Dorcas Gordon and Dr. Stephen Patterson also read through the dissertation and I am grateful to them for their criticisms and insights during the oral defence. Although he was not involved in the dissertation process, I would also like to thank Dr. George P. Schner, SJ, for his support over the years.

During the doctoral programme at the Toronto School of Theology, I was fortunate to receive financial support from various sectors. In particular, I wish to thank Emmanuel College for several teaching assistantships, a position as an adjunct instructor, as well as the Trevor H. Davies Award, and the Bloorlands Finishing Scholarship. Thanks are due to the Ontario Government for three years of graduate scholarships, and to the Toronto School of Theology for the John M. Kelly Award. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in a few research projects, including the Hellenistic Texts Seminar, under the direction of Dr. John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, which received a SSHRC grant, Dr. Bradley H. McLean's project on epigraphy, and Dr. Leif E. Vaage's research project on cynicism. Finally, I wish to thank the
University of St. Michael's College for the opportunity to teach as an adjunct instructor.

Throughout the research and writing of this project, I learned much about the ideal of friendship, but I think that I have also been fortunate to experience aspects of this ideal with various people. My spouse, Terry Rothwell, has been an engaging conversation partner and source of support. Again, he forced me to think about the wider implications of some of the materials I was reading. I would like to thank some "old friends" from undergraduate days, Mary Foster and Alissa Malkin, as well as some newer friends from the Toronto School of Theology: Richard and Mary-Lynne Ascough, Caroline Whelan-Donaghey, John McLaughlin, Bob and Cindy Derrenbacker, Gail Allen, Colleen Shantz, Lee Johnson, Joan Campbell and Anna Janzen. Dodie Smith, of Emmanuel College, also deserves a special mention. While in Toronto, I lived for several years at the Centre for Christian Studies, and I thank the many people there who made it an interesting and nurturing environment.

Much of this dissertation was written while I was teaching at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN, and I would like to thank several people there who provided encouragement and who warmly made us feel welcome: Sherry Jordon and Bill Eaves, Elizabeth Burr and John Landgraf, Seán Hughes, Corrine and John Patton, David and Shannon Landry, Rev. David Smith, Susan and Jerry Windley-Daoust, Cathy Cory, Terry and Mabel Nichols, Michael Hollerich, and Joseph Hallman. My new colleagues at Pacific Lutheran University were also very supportive as I approached my dissertation defence.

My parents, Richard and Aileen Batten, have been particularly supportive throughout my studies. Perhaps what has been most pleasant for me is the fact that they share a keen interest in biblical and theological studies such that we have had many rich conversations about a variety of issues. My brother Andrew keeps me entertained with
his "Friday Poems" and he and Debbie Smith have offered their hospitality on many occasions. My brother Mark and sister-in-law Stephanie Hedley-Smith enthusiastically continue to share their teaching expertise and wisdom. Finally, I would like dedicate this project to my recently departed grandfather, Stanley Wilson Palmateer, who by example, taught me about the importance of the imagination, and to my grandmother, Lydia Beatrice Palmateer, who always encouraged me, whether she agreed with me or not!
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Hellenistic topos of friendship has been a subject of considerable interest to a variety of disciplines including that of biblical studies. In recent years, a programme unit of the Society of Biblical Literature, the Hellenistic Moral Philosophy and Early Christianity Group, has focused its sessions on exploring friendship within the New Testament and a variety of other Jewish and Graeco-Roman literary contexts. Two collections of essays have emerged from those sessions, revealing to what extent concerns and issues related to friendship were shared by early Christian writers and their non-Christian contemporaries.¹

Although the letter of James refers explicitly to a philoxē only twice, language and themes which in Graeco-Roman contexts are part of discussions of friendship appear

with an intriguing density in this compact document. For example, God is portrayed as a frank friend and benefactor, Abraham proves his friendship with God through testing and the offering of hospitality, and those who are not friends with God are "double minded" or "double souled," and unstable. Similarly, James uses language related to friendship in his instructions about community life. The readers are exhorted to be consistent in faith, speech and action - consistency being a characteristic of a true friend - they are not to be covetous and they should speak with simple honesty - the latter both aspects of ideal behaviour between friends. Moreover, James incorporates some conventions of friendship in the way that he communicates to his audience, for example, in his use of affectionate language, references to the audience as "brothers," and frank speech or παρηγορέω.

The purpose of this investigation is thus to examine the type and function of the vocabulary and themes related to the ancient topos of friendship within the letter of James, in order to determine its function in the letter. I will propose that these as well as other illustrations of friendship themes in James suggest that he uses the topos of friendship as a moral paradigm;2 that friendship, for James, represents a certain kind of ethos. I will not claim that friendship is the key to the interpretation of the letter; but, insofar as friendship language solidly appears in James, it deserves a thorough investigation. As yet, no such investigation has been pursued.3

---


Method

This project will begin with an excavation of friendship in a variety of ancient contexts, including early Christian literature. By offering a survey of friendship in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman world, we will be better able to observe to what extent James borrows from Jewish and Graeco-Roman views of the *topos*. For example, do James’ views on friendship emerge solely from a Jewish milieu, or are there traces of Hellenistic or Roman influence?

Secondly, the project will explore how friendship figures in James’ rhetoric. Using the formal constraints of ancient rhetoric, an analysis of specific passages in which friendship language is most explicit will not only elucidate James’ argument, it may clarify the nature of the situation which he is addressing. Thus, by assessing James’ distinctive use of an ancient *topos*, both in light of social context and rhetorical function, we can make suggestions about the social location of the letter.

Context

The problems of authorship and geographic location will not be tackled directly, however, it is necessary to study the document within the broad parameters of the focus upon the language of friendship throughout the entire letter.

---

social and cultural context of the ancient Mediterranean world. More specifically, I will examine in what ways James' use of friendship fits within or challenges the larger discussions of morality and friendship that existed in the early centuries before and after the beginning of the Common Era. How, for example, is friendship connected with the institution of patronage - an institution which James appears to challenge? By raising such questions, therefore, we are better able to locate James' rhetoric upon the ancient social and literary landscape.

That the author of this letter would have been familiar with ancient notions of friendship is almost incontrovertible. James exhibits features of Hellenistic epistolary style, he incorporates the Greek form of popular preaching, or diatribe, into the overall letter structure, and uses Hellenistic rhetorical techniques. Moreover, the letter


As the next chapter will show, discussions about friendship were widespread in antiquity.\footnote{Three important and easily accessible histories of friendship in antiquity are L. Dugas, \textit{L'Amitié Antique} (2nd ed., Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1914); Jean-Claude Fraisse, \textit{Philia: La notion d'amitié dans la philosophie antique. Essai sur un problème perdu et retrouvé} (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1974), and Luigi Pizzolato, \textit{L'idea di amicizia: nel mondo antico classico e cristiano} (Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1993). Franz Dirlmeier's dissertation, \textit{ΦΙΛΟΣ und ΦΙΛΙΑ in vorhellenistischen Griechentum} (München, 1931) will also be important for this discussion.} Although Aristotle was the first to offer a systematic analysis of the relationship between ideal friends,\footnote{See the eighth and ninth books of Aristotle's \textit{Nichomachean Ethics} and the seventh book of his \textit{Eudemian Ethics}.} one finds perceptions of friendship as early as the writings of Homer, Theognis and Hesiod.\footnote{See John T. Fitzgerald, "Friendship in the Greek World Prior to Aristotle," in \textit{Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship}, 13-34. See also, K. Treu, "Freundschaft," \textit{RAC} 8 (1972) 418-34.} Pythagoras, after all, was attributed with saying that "friends have everything in common"\footnote{Diogenes Laertius, \textit{Lives of Eminent Philosophers} 8.10.} and founded a community of friends,\footnote{As Johan Thom ("'Harmonious Equality': The Topos of Friendship in Neopythagorean Writings" in \textit{Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship}, 77) puts it: "[i]t was still proverbial in late Antiquity to call good friends Pythagoreans (Iamblichus \textit{VP} 230), which is an indication of the important and recognizable role friendship played in Pythagorean relationships throughout Antiquity."} while Plato also discussed friendship, especially in the \textit{Lysis}.\footnote{See Horst Hutter, \textit{Politics as Friendship: The origins of classical notions of politics in the theory and practice of friendship} (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1978) 93-102.}

Aristotle's treatment of friendship had an enduring impact, but various philosophers and moralists subsequent to him developed their own notions of this particular kind of relationship. The dissertation will examine some of these main trends in...
attitudes towards friendship as found among the Epicureans, Stoics, and Cynics, and then focus more intensely on authors such as Cicero, Plutarch, and Lucian who have written essays explicitly on the subject.16

There is much evidence, as well, that notions of friendship were discussed within the world of Hellenistic Judaism. I will review the references to friends and friendship in the Septuagint,17 to which James is certainly indebted, as well as Philo,18 Qumran literature,19 the Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides,20 and others.

Some Main Characteristics of Friendship

During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, one of the chief attributes of true friends was that they speak frankly with one another; that they each possess παρρησία.21 Plutarch called παρρησία the "most potent medicine in friendship, always needing, however, all care to hit the right occasion, and a tempering with modera-

16. Cicero, Laelius on Friendship; Plutarch, How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend; On Having Many Friends; On Brotherly Love; Lucian, Tóxaris.


21. Looking out for the best interests of one's friend through frank observation and correction was also characteristic of friendship in the classical period, but παρρησία was understood as a political right to "freedom of speech" as opposed to the later notion of it as a private quality of personal sincerity. See David Konstan, "Patrons and Friends," 334.
Friends were to speak sincerely and simply (ἀληθῶς), but not too harshly, for mean words could easily slide into cruelty and potentially damage the friend instead of improving him (or her). Angry fault-finding was not in order, but rational correction based on goodwill.

Not only must the friend be able to speak with παρρησία; he must be able to submit to it. Among some Epicurean communities, for example, the friends must confess their errors to one another and willingly yield to the correction of others. Philodemus' treatise, On Frank Criticism, encourages the person to "follow the example of medicine and put himself entirely in the power of the doctor," meaning that he should reveal his sins to his friend or teacher and allow the other to correct him.

Another characteristic of friendship is the "testing" period. Friends had to prove their sincerity and devotion to each other not only through words, but through actions. Sirach 6:7-8 states that friends must be gained through testing (ἐν πειρασμῷ) for one cannot always be sure that the prospective friend will provide support when disaster strikes. Although it is probably satirical, Lucian's Toxaris repeatedly gives examples of great friends who have risked their lives for one another or who are willing to lose their families for the sake of their friend.

22. Plutarch, How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend. 74D.

23. The texts of this period deal almost exclusively with male relationships and thus it is impossible to know the nature of friendships between women. Plutarch (Advice to Bride and Groom 19) even says that "a wife ought not to make friends of her own, but to enjoy her husband's friends in common with him" (!). The Cynic Hipparchia and her husband Crates may have been an example of a male-female friendship (Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers 6, 96-98) and the Stoics may have included women in their notion of the wise person, but the evidence is too insufficient to draw any firm conclusions. See Elizabeth Asmis, "The Stoics on Women," in Feminism and Ancient Philosophy (ed., Julie K. Ward; New York and London: Routledge, 1996) 68-92. See also, Julie K. Ward, "Aristotle on Philia: The Beginning of a Feminist Ideal of Friendship?" in Feminism and Ancient Philosophy. 155-71.

Friends must also be constant and loyal. Unlike the flatterer, who is fickle and changing like a chameleon, the friend is steady and consistent in behaviour and speech. The friend thus has integrity - his actions and words conform in their intent. Indeed, hypocrisy was considered by some to be the enemy of friendship.25

Another common descriptive feature of friendship is that friends should be of "one mind" or "one soul" (μιᾷ ψυχῇ). This characterization goes back to Aristotle,26 who also insisted that true friends must be equals. John Fitzgerald observes, for example, that Paul uses this characterization of friends in Phil 1:27 where the apostle urges the Philippians to work together with μιᾷ ψυχῇ for the faith of the gospel.27

Moreover, for many writers, friendship could only be possible among good people. Cicero particularly emphasizes that friendship must be based upon virtue. "Virtue knits friends together" he writes, and "friendship cannot exist except among good men."28 A vice like covetousness (γαλανός) was inimical to friendship for friends should be able to bear one another's successes and failures with equanimity.29

Finally, friends were thought to have all things in common. They should create κοινωνία by sharing their goods. As stated above, this view apparently went back as far as Pythagoras, and was shared by Plato and Aristotle30 among others. Such an ideal community of friends equally dividing all things rarely succeeded in surviving, however. An ethic of giving and receiving among friends often deteriorated into a rela-


29. Plutarch, How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend 54C.

tionship based upon utility, which, according to Aristotle, was a lower form of friendship.\textsuperscript{31} At any rate, it is important to keep the original ideal in mind, even if it was rarely lived out.

The above observations on friendship are by no means exhaustive nor do they characterize every ancient source on the subject. They are, however, sufficiently widespread to warrant their inclusion as main features of this specific relationship between people. And it is surprising to see to what extent the letter of James embodies them.

\textit{Rhetorical Analysis}

The study will then isolate specific rhetorical units within James that display explicit friendship language. For example, the opening section of the letter, Jas 1:2-18, which I will argue is the exordium, depicts God as one who gives simply (\(\alpha\pi\lambda\omega\varsigma\)) and without reproaching (\(\mu\eta\ νειδ\ιζ\iota\nu\tau\iota\varsigma\)), characteristics typical of a friend, contrasted with a "double-souled" (\(\delta\iota\psi\chi\varsigma\varsigma\)) human being in Jas 1:5-8. How does this juxtaposition of a generous God, an ideal friend, and a fickle person, the opposite of a friend, figure in James' rhetoric? Jas 3:13-4:1-10, which I think is a unified section, includes explicit friendship language regarding humanity's relationship with the world and with God (\(\eta\ φιλία\ το\upsilon\ κόσμου\ \varepsilon\chi\theta\rho\alpha\ το\upsilon\ \thetaε\o\upsilon\ \varepsilon\sigma\tau\iota\nu\)) and again refers to the "double-souled" person. What kind of rhetorical effect does this text attempt to make and does it bear any relation with the unit in chapter 1? How does the designation of Abraham as a "friend of God," moreover, function rhetorically within Jas 2:14-26?

Once these passages are examined according to the rules of ancient rhetoric, social and theological issues with which the text is engaged will become clearer. I will argue that James’ attention to friendship is related to his rejection of the behaviour promulgated by patronage. Discussions of friendship and patronage were intimately connected in antiquity, and often a patron-client relationship disguised itself as one of friendship, even though many writers considered these two types of association to be markedly distinct from one another.

The rhetorical study of specific units will also lead to a more tightly controlled study of other friendship language in James. When James’ use of explicit friendship language is better understood, we can search the rest of the letter to see to what extent friendship language may be operating in a more subtle way. At first glance, one can observe potential friendship language at different levels, both moral and theological. Most clearly, such language appears in the rapport between humanity and God; but I will suggest that this type of relationship with God requires a particular moral position, which in itself, bears similarities to the behaviour of ideal friends.

**Friendship with God**

The two times that James uses the word φιλαθες both refer to the relationship between human beings and God. Abraham is designated a "friend of God" in Jas 2:23 and then in 4:4, James draws a clear contrast between "friendship with the world" and "enmity with God." Yet what should this friendship be like? And is it even possible to

32. See Kloppenborg Verbin, "Patronage Avoidance in James"; Troels Engberg-Pedersen ("Plutarch to Prince Philopappus on How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend," in *Friendship, Flattery and Frankness of Speech*, 61-79) has suggested, moreover, that Plutarch’s treatise is intended to promote an ethos of friendship, based upon trust, loyalty, etc ... as opposed to one of patronage in which many people become flatterers in order to get "a piece of the pie."

33. See Konstan, "Patrons and Friends."
be friends with God, for such a friendship seemingly opposes the notion that friends were equals.

In his characterization of God in 1:5, James states that God gives ἀπλῶς ("simply") and without reproaching (μὴ ὁνειδίζοντος). Such a depiction fits well with the image of a frank friend and benefactor. Similarly, God will bestow wisdom upon those who ask for it, but they must be earnest in their faith. A generous friend, God gives to those who equally show their sincerity.

James does not claim that human beings are of "one mind" with God, but he does use the word διψυχος to characterize the "double-minded" or "double-souled" person who is also ἀκατάστατος ("unstable") and as a result will receive nothing from God. Διψυχος is a curious word, which James may well have invented. Regardless, I suggest that James may be using the word in order to describe the opposite of a friend of God - a διψυχος person as opposed to a friend who is μία ψυχή.

It is also interesting to observe how "testing" fits into James' letter. At the beginning of the letter (1:2-3) James exhorts his audience to take joy in their trials (πειρασμοῖς) for such trials will produce steadfastness. Then in 1:12, James blesses the man who bears testing (ὑπομένει πειρασμόν) and who, because he has stood the test, will receive a "crown of life" from God. Thirdly Abraham, who is declared a "friend of God" in 2:23, precisely merits such a name because he has stood the test. He has proved his faith through works by offering Isaac upon the altar.

Finally, James encourages his audience to submit to God (4:7), which echoes Philodemus' calls for openness and yielding to the instruction of the friend or teacher. The addressees are to draw near to God and then God will draw near to them (4:8). Notably, this is the same chapter in which James refers to "friendship with the world"

34. See Stanley E. Porter, "Is dipsuchos (James 1,8; 4,8) a 'Christian' Word?" Bib 71 (1991) 469-98.
as being "enmity with God" and in which he again refers to those who are "double-souled" (δύψυχοι) and who need to purify their hearts.

James thus appears to draw upon some common features of friendship when he describes the ideal relationship between humanity and God. Although some Greek writers objected to the possibility of friendship between humans and gods on the grounds that the two were not equal, it appears that some Stoics spoke of friendship with God, presuming a measure of equality between the two. The notion of friendship between humanity and God is present in the LXX, and in other Jewish texts. These observations thus all support the claim that James is drawing from a rich and complex tradition of friendship that was undoubtedly flourishing by the early centuries of the Common Era.

Community Friendship

It is clear that the letter of James is about ethics. He admonishes his audience to live a specific kind of life as a community. Yet again, these ethics conform with ancient characterizations of friendship.

35. Erik Peterson ("Der Gottesfreund: Beiträge zur Geschichte eines religiösen Terminus," ZKG 42 [1923] 161-202) has argued that there were two strands of Greek thought on this issue. Aristotle clearly denied that there could be friendships between human beings and gods because they were not equal whereas other writers like Xenophon, Plato, and Epictetus allowed it. David Konstan ("Problems in the History of Christian Friendship," JECS 4 [1996] 87-113) has recently challenged Peterson's reading of the majority of the second set of texts and concluded that the notion of friendship with God in Christian literature must have emerged from the biblical texts alone.


37. Exod 33.11 says that God spoke to Moses face to face, as to his friend (φίλος). See also, Wis. 7:14; 27. See Johnson, The Letter of James, 244.
First, James emphasizes consistency between faith and action (1:22-27; 2:14-26). His readers are not only to be listeners but doers. They should both speak and act as those who will be judged under the law of liberty (2:12).

The readers are also exhorted three times not to have covetousness (ἡλθός) (3:14,16;4:2) in their hearts. Such jealousy would cause disorder and fighting (3:16; 4:1-2) in the community and as Plutarch made clear, is not a good ingredient for friendship. Moreover, community members are not to compete (3:16) nor speak evil against one another (4:11) nor even to take oaths (5:12). Here, it is noteworthy that Plutarch characterizes the flatterer as one who takes oaths "over and over again." Friends, however, "omit many of the trifling formalities." 38

James spends a good deal of time admonishing the recipients of the letter on the proper way to speak. That James has a deep mistrust of the tongue is clear for he states that the tongue can both bless and curse (3:10), and that it cannot be tamed (3:8). He warns that not many of his audience should become teachers, like him, for teachers will be judged more harshly (3:1). Yet James also prescribes the proper use of speech. Speech should be simple and honest, "let your yes be yes and your no be no" (5:12), it can be used in order for members to confess their sins to one another (5:16) and to save wandering souls from straying from the true path (5:19). Discussions of friendship often express concern about the destructive aspects of gossip and flattery, but also the benefits of honesty, frank speech and praise. Thus James' focus upon speech fits well with the topics discussed by friendship literature.

Finally, James firmly urges the audience to not show partiality, especially towards the wealthy (2:1-7). Here, I will join others in arguing that the author challenges his readers to resist behaving as the typical clients of a rich patron would act,

38. Plutarch, How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend 21. Lucian, however, describes friends who seal a promise of friendship with oaths of their own blood.
giving the best seat to the affluent newcomer and condescending to the poor person.\textsuperscript{39}

Again, James may be alluding to the image of twittering, changeable flatterers, who make a big show of honouring the wealthy person despite the fact that it is these very rich who drag them into court (2:6).

Moreover, James viciously attacks the wealthy and exploitative patron in 5:1-6. Clearly, James does not endorse the kind of behaviour which patronage engenders in people, namely exploitation on the part of the rich patron (5:1-6) and obsequiousness on the part of the client (2:1-7).

These two types of relationships, both with God and within the community, are simply vehicles for tagging the different ways in which friendship language may be working in James, both on a moral and theological level. Analysis of this vocabulary and constellation of ideas in light of the letter's rhetorical use of explicit friendship language will further reveal to what degree friendship is an important matter for James. Such a project, performed in the context of ancient Mediterranean cultural and moral peculiarities, will thus illuminate this somewhat enigmatic and largely neglected ancient document.

\textsuperscript{39} See John S. Kloppenborg, "Status and Conflict Resolution in Early Christian Groups." (paper delivered at the Toronto School of Theology Biblical Department Seminar, September, 1995) 16.
CHAPTER 2

FRIENDSHIP IN ANTIQUITY

Introduction

As with any ancient "concept," the study of friendship in antiquity is a complicated enterprise, for notions of what it meant to be friends and discussions of *with whom* one could be friends, were varied. Although many authors spent considerable energies in explaining how true friends should behave, it is difficult to form a universal definition of friendship in the ancient Mediterranean. Rather, we must remain content with a spectrum of views, just as different assessments of the concept have emerged in subsequent ages.¹

Scrutiny of ancient friendship must also be subject to the caveat that we not impose modern assumptions upon early ideas. If we readily admit that there are disparities between contemporary western perceptions of personhood and the good life, and those of antiquity, then we must also acknowledge the implication that our predecessors understood associations between human beings differently.²


2. This is not to say, however, that there are no continuities in thought between moderns and ancients, as contemporary western culture is largely built upon the legacies of the Greeks. For a discussion of the similarities and differences between the two, see Bernard Williams, *Shame and Necessity* (Sather Classical Lectures, Vol. 57; Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1993).
For example, the modern acceptance of the individual self, the inner and private "real me," defined in opposition to or in alienation from society at large, would be incomprehensible to ancients. As Christopher Gill has carefully explained, when ancient writers do discuss *euthumia*, or the notion of being content with or true to one's self, they do not portray the deeper self as asocial, or detached from engagement with the community. Building on the work of Alasdair MacIntyre, Gill points out that for ancient thinkers, virtue cannot be understood without reference to the performance of social roles and practices. In so far as ethical life requires further grounding, this is to be found in a conception of human nature, understood as a focus for shared ethical aspirations, rather than a conception of a purely private (and supposedly "true") self.

This is not to say that ancient people did not have independent thoughts, or were not critical of their societies and institutions (sometimes to the point of repudiating public life, as is the case with some philosophical schools), but that their understanding of the deepest self was partly shaped by an awareness of a shared humanity. "Self-realisation" in antiquity would not be a purely private self-creating act divorced from any sense of common humanity, as promoted by some post-Enlightenment thinkers, most notably Friedrich Nietzsche. It would take for granted the bonds with other people, and not assume, as is often the case today, that we are all separate from one another.


Feelings of separateness which people experience today have contributed significantly to modern ideas of friendship. Some argue that separateness produces a lonely angst which undercuts people's ability to make friends.\(^7\) Certainly, such individualism promotes the need for self-disclosure.\(^8\) Friends need to trust one another and they prove their trust by revealing aspects of their private lives, their personal interests, and often their fears and insecurities. In antiquity, however, such a confessional stance was not a requirement for friendship. Honesty and frankness of speech were important, to be sure, but there is no evidence that friends had to divulge their inmost secrets to one another. As David Konstan writes, "[p]lainspokenness and the liberty to express dangerous views ... are not the same as the injunction to self-disclosure."\(^9\) Nor does one receive the impression from ancient literature that friendship was an antidote to loneliness, as if only a true friend could rescue another person from her or his isolation.

Secondly, the socio-political, economic and cultural dissimilarities between modern western life and that of the ancient world have naturally had a powerful impact upon the complexion of human relationships. All of these differences cannot be detailed here, but one contrast which many contemporary researchers on friendship note is the shift from the essentially pre-industrial society of the ancient world to the highly industrialized present. Agriculture was one of the main sources of wealth in antiquity whereas industry, although an important part of the ancient economy, was not large

---

7. Stuart Miller (Men and Friendship [Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc., 1983] 21-22) claims that modern philosophy, with its emphasis upon the individual, has contributed to the demise of friendships among men.

8. This aspect of modern friendship is acknowledged by most sociologists and psychologists writing on the subject. See Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 14-15.

scale and could not generate a large profit for further investment. There was no "class of entrepreneurs who [were] both capable of perceiving opportunities for profit in large-scale organization of manufacture and prepared to undergo the risks entailed in making the necessary investment." Thus, the market was not the vast anonymous entity that it is in capitalist societies today.

Some thinkers have determined that this change from pre-industrial to industrialized, commercial society has improved the nature of friendship. Certain 18th century Scottish Enlightenment writers understood the purpose of friendship in pre-commercial society to be simply that of helping friends and harming enemies.

Where vital resources are not created and distributed impersonally by markets and bureaucracies, one has no choice but to be in [Adam] Ferguson's disapproving phrase, "interested and sordid' in all interactions, concerned only with whether they "empty [or] fill the pocket," because in such settings vital resources are obtained largely through what modern culture and theory see as personal relations.

According to these Scots, the onset of commercial society provided a clear contrast between the world of business relations, a world of strangers or at the most, acquaintances, in which one was expected to act equitably but out of self-interest, and the private world of family and friendship, where one offered unconditional service and love. Commercial society was beneficial, they argued, precisely because it made this distinction between the formal and impersonal relations of the business world and the

12. Allan Silver, "Friendship in Commercial Society: Eighteenth-Century Social Theory and Modern Sociology," American Journal of Sociology 95 (1990) 1484. Silver notes Plato's Meno 71.E, in which Meno says that a man's virtue is "that he be competent to manage the affairs of his city, and to manage them so as to benefit his friends and harm his enemies, as to take care to avoid suffering harm himself."
informal and intimate world of friends and family. It thus promoted "personal relations that [were] normatively free of instrumental and calculative orientations." 13

Critics of commercial capitalist society have viewed its impact upon personal relations in another way. Marx and others have argued that "commodification renders personal relations alienated and morally corrupt." 14 A person's worth becomes determined more by her economic value, that is, by how she can benefit the factory or the business, than by other characteristics. This view of a person as a commodity spreads and infects other forms of human associations, including families, religious groups and clubs. 15

Whether a supporter or critic of capitalist society, however, one needs to appreciate that friendship existed in many forms in pre-industrial civilizations. It is inappropriate to stereotype ancient friendship as a purely "help friends and harm enemies" concept, 16 nor as a relationship entirely free of instrumentalism, which commerce and industry have subsequently corrupted. Friendship "in any society is bounded by a set of alternative relationships that mark off its specific dimensions and properties," 17 but these alternative relationships are many and complex in all periods of history. There is no single narrative or development of friendship, rather, it ebbs and flows, as does the nature of the human community.


15. Stuart Miller (Men and Friendship, 20) argues that intimacy and friendship "are remorselessly undercut by modern civilization."

16. Although the notion that one would support one's friends and rejoice in the ruin of one's enemies is a consistent presupposition in Greek thought. As Mary Whitlock Blundell (Helping Friends and harming Enemies: A Study in Sophocles and Greek Ethics [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989] 27) states, "unlike most of us, [the Greeks] realistically acknowledged that it is also human to be pained by our enemies' success and take pleasure in their downfall."

This chapter will explore the ways in which Greek, Roman, Jewish and Christian writers understood friendship, a bond that was indubitably important in antiquity, as witnessed by the number of writers who discuss it. We will examine both the differences among the respective authors' comprehension of the concept, as well as the similarities between them. Is there, for example, a common vocabulary, or set of ideas and values which is consistently associated with ancient friendship? Is intimate friendship always viewed positively, or is it sometimes perceived as a threat to the wider community? Can genuine friendship only exist among social equals? These are a few of the key issues which the following discussion of friendship in antiquity will address.

**Greek Friendship**

_A. Archaic Period_

1. Homer

Friendship has a long and rich history among the ancient Greeks, reaching far back into the archaic period and possibly even earlier. Homer's poetry, however, is the oldest extant evidence of friendship language and ideas, and there is great disagreement among classical scholars as to precisely how the poet understood this type of relationship.

Homer does not use the word φιλία, but he does employ φίλος in both the _Iliad_ and the _Odyssey_. However, there is an ongoing debate among philologists as to precisely how Homer applies φίλος. Many argue that he uses it in one or both of the

---

18. As Homer's works contain materials that predate the poetry's present form, which was established around the 8th century B.C.E., the friendships and friendship language which appear in them may reach far back into the dark age.
following ways: in the possessive sense of referring to one's own, and/or as an emotive adjective, as in "dear" or "loving." 19 When it comes to Homer's substantive use of the word, disagreement falls along similar lines. Scholars who interpret the adjective φίλος in a possessive sense understand it substantively to be either someone who is one's own, one's relative or a member of one's group. Other classicists who attribute an emotive sense to the adjective φίλος likewise think that the noun means "friend." 20 contrary to the first set of interpreters who claim that this notion of a φίλος only emerged later within Greek literature.

Despite the battles among scholars about the use and meaning of the word φίλος in Homer, most would agree that the poet is familiar with some notion of friendship, as exemplified by the relationships he depicts. In the Iliad, the bond between Achilles and Patroclus is a famous example of an association between two people which far exceeds in intensity their associations with others. Homer does not describe these two characters primarily as φίλοι but as ἐταῖροι, which has been translated as "friends" but can mean a variety of things, including comrades and shipmates, 21 and thus the mere designation

19. For a survey of the scholarly positions on the use of φίλος, see John T. Fitzgerald, "Friendship in the Greek World Prior to Aristotle," Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship, 13-34; and James Hooker, "Homeric φίλος," Glotta 65 (1987) 44-65. Hooker (64) argues that φίλος went through changes in meaning throughout the development of the epic traditions: "the meaning of φίλος in Homer ranges from a strongly-marked affectionate use, through a strongly-marked possessive use, to a weak possessive use." David Robinson ("Homeric φίλος. Love of Life and Limbs, and Friendship with One's θυμάς," 'Owls to Athens. Essays on Classical Subjects Presented to Sir Kenneth Dover [ed. E. M. Craik; Oxford: Clarendon, 1990] 97-108) takes a different view, stating that Homeric φίλος is never possessive, but either emotive or used to describe one's ητρό, κηρ, and θυμάς as friends. Arthur W. H. Adkins, ("Friendship and 'Self-Sufficiency' in Homer and Aristotle," CQ 13 [1963] 33) emphasizes the possessive nature of φίλος although he grants that there is some degree of affection for things that are φίλοι (yet he will not accept the English words "dear" or "friend," and all that they entail, as accurate equivalents). Adkins writes that for the ancient Greek in Homer's world, the φίλοι "are his [the Greek's] own: all else is hostile or indifferent, and the possessive affection he feels for what is φίλον is based on the need and desire for self-preservation." Jean-Claude Fraisse (Philia. La Notion de l'Amité dans la Philosophie Antique, 39) states this more emphatically: "Est philon ce qui ne peut être séparé de moi sans que je cesse d'exister, ou du moins de mener l'existence qui est ma raison d'être."

20. For an outline of the scholarly positions, see Fitzgerald, "Friendship in the Greek World." 16-18.

21. See Franz Dirlmeier, ΦΙΛΟΣ und ΦΙΛΙΑ im vorhellenistischen Griechentum, 22.
\textit{étaîrō} does not distinguish Achilles and Patroclus' friendship from their associations with other warriors. However, Homer does describe Patroclus as Achilles' πολὺ φίλτατος ἑταῖρος "dearest companion by far" (17.411,655), and as many scholars have observed, there is plentiful evidence of the depth of feeling between Achilles and Patroclus, from Apollo's wonder at Achilles love for Patroclus (24.44-52), to the "metaphorical assimilation" (for example, Patroclus dies in Achilles' armour) between the two which "calls to mind Aristotle's image of the friend as another self." When Patroclus is slain, Achilles goes back to the front lines only because he wants to avenge the death of his friend. This "private motive" for returning to the battle points, in Konstan's view, "to a latent tension in the ancient conception of friendship that in later times takes the form of a conflict between loyalty to friends and duty to others." 

Achilles re-enters the war not because he thinks it is his duty, but because he loved Patroclus.

Classical Greek writers interpreted the affection between Achilles and Patroclus as evidence for a paederastic relationship between the two. If this were the case, then it would disqualify Achilles and Patroclus as friends in the classical Greek sense, as friends had to be equals, whereas paederasty required one person to be dominant (active), and the other submissive (passive). However, there is no clear evidence that such was case between Achilles and Patroclus, and as "long as we, too, continue to read the \textit{Iliad} in the light of later Greek culture - to say nothing of modern sexual


categories - we shall continue to have trouble bringing the friendship between Achilles and Patroclus into sharper focus."26 Suffice it to say that Achilles and Patroclus had an exceptional bond, perhaps somewhat explicable by Achilles' passionate disposition,27 which surpassed their bonds with others and which clearly embodied a great deal of affection.28

The poet does not limit feelings of affection to the human plane either. Certain individuals in the Homeric epics, particularly kings and other leaders, enjoyed a special association with the gods, as Franz Dirlmeier has shown.29 This is not to say that they were friends in the manner in which Achilles and Patroclus were, but simply that they were more "dear" or more "loved" by certain gods than most people. Often, those more dear to the gods had semi-divine parentage or had made considerable sacrifices to the gods.30 Maurice Vidal, moreover, argues that φίλόσης was given to Homeric heroes not to indicate some sort of mystical bond between the god and the human, but to underline specific qualities of the hero, such as strength or beauty or wisdom.

Dès lors, tout homme supérieur par quelque côté aux autres mortels sera par là semblable aux dieux (θεοιδής, ἀμφόθεος, ἵδοθεος), divin lui-même (θειός), de race divine (διογενής, διορφηής) et aimé des dieux (Διὕ φίλος): tels Pâris et Hélène pour leur beauté, don d'Aphrodite, Agamemnon ou Achille pour leur force et leur royale prestance .... ."31

Thus, there could be great affection between gods and humans, but such affection did not constitute a friendship of equals nor even a like-mindedness between the two.

26. Halperin, One Hundred Years of Homosexuality, 87.

27. This is Konstan's (Friendship in the Classical World, 42) suggestion.


Indeed, in most cases being loved by the gods reflected the particular outstanding characteristics of the hero in question.

Returning to the wholly mortal realm, Homer recognizes a form of friendship which did not require affection, and that is \( \phi\lambda\alpha\xi\epsilon\nu\alpha \), or "guest-friendship." Such a friendship could be formed between people of very different social stations and between strangers, or \( \xi\epsilon\nu\alpha \), and it had very pragmatic goals, including political and family alliances that could last for generations. As "reciprocity and gift-giving formed a central social institution"\(^{33}\) in the world of Homer, the giving and receiving of hospitality and friendship were expected. Such relationships and practices were not necessarily devoid of affection, but they were also not built on affection, rather, on the mutual practical benefits that such ties could bring.

Such reciprocity existed not only between friends, however, but between enemies. One was expected to avenge the harm which another person or group had inflicted and there was no shyness about rejoicing in the destruction of one's enemies. As Mary Whitlock Blundell has stated, "the death of a Homeric hero consoles his own victims and their bereaved relatives."\(^{34}\) In the \textit{Iliad}, during the battle between Euphorbos and Menelaus, Euphorbos states that if he could return Menelaus' head to his family, who were mourning the death of Euphorbos' brother (killed by Menelaus), then their grieving would stop as they would be avenged (17.38-40). Some moderns may find this unabashed satisfaction at the misfortunes of enemies offensive but it was entirely acceptable among the ancient Greeks and remained part of the background of many writings on friendship.

---


John T. Fitzgerald has observed how other aspects of friendship in Homer anticipate some of the major components of this bond in subsequent Greek literature. For example, the notion that friends are of the same mind or think the same thing, which became an important facet of friendship later on, appears in the *Iliad* with reference to the relationship between Agamemnon and Odysseus (4.360-61), and also in the *Odyssey* when Nestor describes his friendship with Odysseus (3.126-29).\(^35\) Thus we see that although Homer does not seem to have developed an explicit nor specific vocabulary for friendship, friendships, including intense emotional friendships, thrive in his poetry, and there are clear glimpses of friendship traits which come to the fore in the ensuing ages of Greek civilization.

2. Hesiod, Theognis, Sappho

Hesiod, who probably wrote near the end of the 8th century B.C.E., inhabited a slightly different world from Homer, but some of his views on relationships bear resemblance to those of the earlier poet. As a peasant farmer, Hesiod realized the need for cooperation and mutual aid among neighbours, especially when they faced the pressures of the wealthy aristocracy above them. He thus tends to view bonds between people from a practical perspective, akin to Homer’s portrayals of guest-friendship.\(^36\)

Yet there is a section from the *Works and Days* which suggests that Hesiod was aware of a deeper type of association between people:

Do not make a friend on a par with a brother; and if you make one, do not do him ill unprovoked, or offer false tongue-favour. But if he is the one who gives you a disagreeable word or deed, make sure he pays for it double. And if he brings you back into his friendship and is willing to make amends, accept them.

---

\(^35\) Fitzgerald, "Friendship in the Greek World," 21-23.

\(^36\) Pizzolato (*L’idea di amicizia nel mondo antico classico e cristiano*, 16-18) particularly emphasizes the economic dimension of Hesiod’s concerns about *amicizia*. 
It is a worthless man who keeps changing his friends [φιλαν]: let your disposition not disgrace your appearance (707-14).37

As Konstan has remarked, this passage discusses a relationship with a person who is neither a relative, neighbour nor comrade, and "the context, moreover, suggests the deliberate acknowledgement of a special bond that can be broken for cause but must otherwise be cherished and respected."38 There is a clear indication that friends should be loyal to one another, a characteristic of friendship which has continued to be central in the modern era.

The importance of loyalty is presupposed in another collection of ancient poetry, known as the Theognidea, the assemblage of which is attributed to the poet, Theognis of Megara, who lived in the 6th century B.C.E. Theognis offers a substantial number of complaints and pieces of advice about friends who have been duplicitous or disloyal. In fact, it appears that for Theognis, friendship has broken down. "Few philoi have a trustworthy mind ... [and] the poet seeks in vain for a pistos hetairos free of deception (dolos) like himself."39 So often does Theognis decry the disloyalty of these persons, that it can be assumed that loyalty must have once been a prized feature of true friendship. Now, according to Theognis, such faithfulness is a rarity. As Fitzgerald observes, Theognis’ views likely contributed to the notion that one could only have a few loyal friends, as opposed to the larger groups of comrades and shipmates who appear in Homer’s epics.40

Walter Donlan has given specific attention to Theognis’ views on friendship and argues that Theognis is despairing at the moral disintegration of the aristocratic classes

38. Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 43.
of the Greek city states, Megara among them. For Donlan, the nature of friendship had changed from that of the Homeric epics; it had become much more fragile and loyalty could no longer be assumed. Theognis' complaints are therefore a distillation of archaic aristocratic alienation in a time of flux, when the complexities of a society in change had rendered epic friendship a nostalgic and formal vision contained only in the poetic memory.  

Although Konstan agrees with Donlan concerning Theognis' frustration at the corruption of the aristocracy, he counters him on the issue of whether Theognis looks to the past with nostalgia. For Konstan, the poet testifies not so much to a memory of former integrity as to the vision of a dispossessed class which projects its own forms of solidarity - coteries of faithful comrades bound by personal ties - onto an idealized past.  

For Konstan, the difference between Theognis and the traditions of Homer and Hesiod does not concern the quality of relationships, but with whom one could cultivate ties of trust and loyalty. For Homer it was often one's comrades or family while for Hesiod, it was largely, but not exclusively, neighbours. The difference for Theognis, argues Konstan, is that although friendship "is still predicated on personal affection and trust ... these dispositions are now identified as the virtues of a specific class."  

Kin, comrades or neighbours are no longer the key people with whom one formed faithful bonds, but those who thought in a similar way, in Theognis' case, an aristocratic class which had lost some of its power. And as we will see, this notion of friendship with like-minded people was to become a significant aspect of later discussions on the issue.

It is also important to mention the extant writings of another 6th century poet, Sappho. Her poetry may offer us a rare glimpse into friendships between women in the ancient Greek world. Sappho's poetry is filled with emotion and longing for female  


φιλαί and ἡταῖραι. To be sure, much of Sappho's poetry may reflect her homoerotic relationships with women, but these relationships may have been more egalitarian than their equivalents among men, which, as mentioned earlier, required subordination and domination. As Konstan suggests, if "the structure of female homoeroticism differed from male pederasty, then Sappho's poetry may open a window upon an erotic construction of friendship distinct from masculine conventions." It could be that for the women around Sappho, a free and equal friendship included an explicit sexual dimension, whereas for men in the classical Greek age, these two kinds of unions were mutually exclusive. But as what little evidence there is for women's friendships is largely formulated by male writers, it is very difficult to know much about the nature of women's friendships in ancient Greece.

Another example of friendship during the archaic period which remains somewhat ambiguous is the friendship associated with Pythagoras. It is certain that Pythagoras existed (ca. 570-490 B.C.E.), and was active in southern Italy, but it is not clear as to whether he was directly responsible for founding the community known as the Pythagoreans. In addition, much of the information about Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans is found in much later sources, which may be projecting ideas back onto these early figures. We know that Pythagorean groups must have had a significant presence on the 5th century B.C.E. landscape as there was a massive persecution of

44. Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 47-48.

45. Eva Cantarella, (Bisexuality in the Ancient World [trans. Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992] 84) argues that female homosexuality in antiquity has been perceived as a paederastic relationship because it has only been discussed by male writers: "My feeling, in short, is that female homosexuality, which in the thiasoi found the widest possibilities for expression as a free bond of affection, was constructed from outside - which is to say, by men - on the model of pederasty."

46. See Hutter, Politics as Friendship, 48-49.
them around 450 B.C.E., but it is difficult to appreciate precisely what their views on friendship were. The saying attributed to Pythagoras, that "the possessions of friends are in common," circulated widely in antiquity but most of the sources for his words are from Classical and Hellenistic times. Thus, instead of including Pythagoras within the discussion of friendship in archaic times, I will discuss Neopythagorean writings further on in this chapter, despite the possibility that the Neopythagorean writers may well be reflecting some of what was true of Pythagoras and the first Pythagoreans.

3. Conclusion

Apart from the poems attributed to Theognis, no extant treatise devoted to the nature of friendship survives from archaic Greece, nor does there seem to have been a specialised vocabulary associated with this relationship. However, as this brief survey of the literature has shown, friendship was important in this period, be it an intense, affectionate bond or a more practical way of securing allies and political partners. Moreover, the archaic literature anticipates several elements of friendship which were to become crucial during the classical age, including the expectation of mutual loyalty and trust, and the notion that two friends somehow shared a "oneness" or singleness of spirit. The classical age, as we will observe, develops these notions as systematic theories of friendship emerge.

B. Classical Age


Before examining the wealth of classical Greek literature on friendship, there is a lexical issue to clarify, namely, the difference in meaning between \( \phi \lambda \omega \) and \( \phi \lambda \iota \alpha \) in the classical period.

It is widely appreciated that "friendship" is too specific a translation for \( \phi \lambda \iota \alpha \) because this word can encompass a variety of relationships. One can have \( \phi \lambda \iota \alpha \) for one's family and relatives as well as for friends. That there is \( \phi \lambda \iota \alpha \) between two or more people need not connote friendship but simply a trusting or loving relationship. As we saw with Homer, \( \phi \lambda \iota \alpha \) can exist between humans, but also between gods and humans. It need not connote an exclusive relationship nor one that can only exist between non-kin.

Many scholars who examine ancient friendship, in fact, the majority, think that the noun \( \phi \lambda \omega \) is also applicable to a wide variety of relationships. That is, not only can a loyal friend be a \( \phi \lambda \omega \), but a brother or a sister, or a mother or a father. Thus \( \phi \lambda \iota \alpha \) and \( \phi \lambda \omega \) are often discussed together, as if they both refer to the same range of meanings. For example, in explaining why the help friends/harm enemies code is much broader than it may first seem to moderns, Whitlock Blundell states that

the Greek \textit{philos} (translated as 'friend,' 'beloved' or 'dear') and \textit{philia} (translated as 'friendship' or 'love'), go well beyond our concept of friendship to cover a complex web of personal, political, business and family relationships, each of which when violated may turn to enmity.\textsuperscript{49}

Similarly, in his dissertation on \( \phi \lambda \iota \alpha \) and \( \chi \acute{a} \rho i \zeta \) in Euripidean drama, S.E. Scully talks about \( \phi \lambda \iota \alpha \) and \( \phi \lambda \omega \) interchangeably, assuming that they refer to the same domain of associations.\textsuperscript{50}

\textsuperscript{49} Whitlock Blundell, \textit{Helping Friends and Harming Enemies}, 39.

\textsuperscript{50} See especially, pages 15-51 in Scully, \textit{Philia and Charis in Euripidean Tragedy}. For a discussion of other writers who make the same assumption, see David Konstan, "Greek Friendship," \textit{AJP} 117 (1996) 71-72.
Recently, David Konstan has challenged the previous consensus that this breadth of relationships is signified by both nouns. Konstan argues that φιλία can denote affection between both kin and non-kin but that the "concrete noun philos (distinguished more or less unambiguously from the adjective meaning 'dear' when modified by the definite article) applies specifically to the more narrow bond of friendship."

Even the adjective, φιλός, can apply to a wide variety of kin and non-kin who are "dear" to one another, but when the noun appears, indicated by the article in front of it, it denotes a much more specific association which can only exist between non-kin.

Konstan has analysed a variety of classical sources and found that the authors were very careful to make distinctions between family members and those who are not biologically related. "Where kin and acquaintances unrelated by family ties are contrasted, philoi clearly designates the class of friends." Aristotle, who as far as we know was the first to produce a methodical study of friendship, includes many types of bonds, familial and otherwise, within the category of φιλία, but when he discusses mother-child φιλία, he avoids the noun φιλός altogether:

As has been said, there are three kinds of philia, according to virtue, utility, and pleasure, and these in turn are divided into two, the one set according to equality, the other according to surplus. Both sets are philai, but friends [philai] are those according to equality; for it would be absurd for a father to be a friend [philos] to his child, but of course he loves [philei] him and is loved [phileitai] by him (Eth. Eud. 7.4.1-2 [LCL]).

Thus φιλία can encompass a diversity of relationships, but φιλός, when used as a noun, generally refers to a biologically unrelated person. Sometimes, as we will see, family members can prove to be true φιλοί, "but that does not mean that the noun

---

51. Konstan, "Greek Friendship," 75.
52. Konstan ("Greek Friendship," 84, n.31) acknowledges that occasionally there are exceptions.
53. Konstan, "Greek Friendship," 73. See also, Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 53-56.
philos normally includes kin. " Although this study will include a discussion of φιλία, it will focus on the more narrowly defined idea of a φίλος.

2. Tragic Poets

Unlike the philosophical works, Greek tragedy contains no sustained analysis of morality and the good life, rather, it raises moral questions by depicting the acute and complicated predicaments in which human beings find themselves. What the writers thought about topics like friendship must be deduced from how the characters behave and how things turn out for them in the end. In this brief survey, we will see that friendship, although not a central issue for all of the poets, was considered to be an important element of human society.

Aeschylus deals with friendship the least. However, he does think that friends have certain obligations to one another. For example, in Prometheus Bound, Prometheus, lashed to the rocks as a punishment for saving humanity from Zeus' plan to annihilate the human race, laments Zeus' doings, for he, Prometheus, had assisted in securing Zeus' victory as the king of heaven. Although Prometheus is aware of his wrongdoing in thwarting Zeus' destructive plan, he is still enraged that he, a φίλος of Zeus (306), should be treated so harshly. His statement that he is a friend of Zeus may be ironic, but it reveals the presupposition that friends had an obligation to help, not punish, one another. After Zeus had doomed him to eternal suffering, Prometheus cries out in agony upon the rocks,


Such profit did the tyrant of Heaven have of me and with such foul return as this did he make requital; for it is a disease that somehow inheres in tyranny to have no faith in friends (φιλωσ) (Prometheus Bound 223-28 [LCL]).57

Thus it appears that Zeus’ actions are proof that the king of the gods did not place sufficient trust in his friends. Friends were supposed to be reliable, and to offer support which was expected to be reciprocated. In this case, Zeus is so angered by Prometheus’ care for humanity that he disregards the help that Prometheus had extended to him in the past and thus fails, at least in Prometheus’ view, to be a proper friend.

The idea that friends should aid one another is plain in Euripides’ plays as well, notably in Orestes. In this tragedy, Orestes makes statements about the importance of mutual aid between friends in times of trouble. He tells Menelaus that “in desperate need, ought friends to help their friends. When Fortune gives her boons, what need of friends.”58 The true test of friendship is whether they will help when needed most. As Jean-Claude Fraisse states, for Euripides, “si l’ami est un bien, il l’est au moment où tous les autres biens disparaissent.”59 Friends should go the limit, even to the point of giving their life for the sake of their friend. Orestes refers to Agamemnon, who “verily sold his life for thee [Menelaus], as friends (φιλωσ) should do for friends (φιλους) . . . .”60 This statement reveals that a family member may indeed act as a friend, although the definition of a friend does not normally include kin.

This latter point is underlined in the play when Orestes celebrates the loyalty of his friend, Pylades, who arrives to help Orestes after the latter had been condemned to death for the murder of his mother, Clytemnestra. When Pylades indicates that he

59. Jean-Claude Fraisse, Philia. La Notion d’Amitié das la Philosophie Antique, 77.
60. Orestes 652.
wishes to stand by Orestes, Orestes declares, "Herein true is that old saying - 'Get thee friends [έρωτος] not kin alone.' He whose soul to thy soul cleaveth, though he be not better than a thousand kinsfolk this is for thy friend [φίλος] to win."61 Orestes is indicating that a true friend, someone who will prove reliable in a time of need, is more likely not related by blood, although, as Konstan grants, "kinsmen might qualify."62

Although friendship is assumed to be a noble bond in Euripides' work, he also reveals the dark side of such loyalty. As Scully observes, Euripides shows how actions or relationships, although they are grounded in friendship or gratitude or some generally accepted principal, can create insoluble problems: they can prove to be intrinsically ambivalent or evil and potentially or actually destructive of human goodness and life.63

In Orestes, Pylades and Orestes may be remarkably loyal to one another, but this fidelity becomes "pathological" when it is "elevated above all other ties and obligations."64 In this case, the pair plan to murder Orestes' aunt, Helen, take Menelaus' daughter hostage and destroy the Argos palace, all because these people refuse to support them. For Orestes and Pylades, personal bonds of friendship exceed all other bonds.

It is possible that Euripides may be reflecting some the developments in late fifth century Athenian politics whereby younger members of the aristocracy were vying for more political power.65 However, one should not assume that groups of φίλοι represented the small conspiratorial oligarchies which attempted to overthrow the dēmos during this period. Despite the claims of Horst Hutter, who argues that friends

61. Orestes 804-06.
63. Scully, Philia and Charis in Euripidean Tragedy, 44.
64. Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 60.
formed political groups and that the "meaning of politics lay in the fulfillment of friendships," there is not much evidence for φίλοι playing a formal role in politics. This is not to say that political supporters could not be friends with a leader, nor that those who plotted to destroy a democracy could not view one another as friends. The notion of help friends/harm enemies was indeed a central presupposition of classical Greek society. Euripides' *Electra*, for example, depicts those who are supportive of the rebellious children of Agamemnon as φίλοι, while in *Orestes*, as we saw, those against Orestes and Pylades are enemies. But it does not follow from these examples that politics was run by small groups of official φίλοι. Hutter equates a φίλος with a ἔταξιφος, as if the two were interchangeable, whereas a ἔταξιφος was a comrade or companion, and not necessarily an affectionate friend. Groups of Athenian ἔταξιφοι were active as "oligarchical cells" near the end of the fifth century but according to the rhetor, Hypereides, they were subsequently banned. They continued to exist in the fourth century, but at this time they served primarily as social clubs which fostered mutual aid between private individuals. Despite the wealth of classical philosophical writings on friendship, there is little evidence that it was a political concept.

One might think that Sophocles' *Antigone* could challenge this latter statement. In this play, Creon, the ruler of Thebes, declares.


...I condemn the man who sets his friend (φιλον) before his country. For myself, I call to witness Zeus, whose eyes are everywhere, if I perceive some mischievous design to sap the State, I will not hold my tongue; nor would I reckon as my private friend a public foe, well knowing that the State is the good ship that holds our fortunes all: farewell to friendship, if she suffers wreck (Antigone 182-88 [LCL]).

In this instance Creon is worried that friends of the dead Polyneices will band together and return to sack Thebes. He has stated succinctly that civic loyalty lies far and above loyalty to φιλον, as if friendship could be a threat to state stability. "Such suspicion of personal attachments among one's subjects is part of the characterization of the tyrant, who sees plots brewing in all associations not directly under his control." Creon's anxiety is not evidence that pockets of friends regularly attempted to usurp the state, but a testament to his tyrannical paranoia, for "[e]very dictator and tyrant is aware of the potential threat of friendship."

Antigone raises the interesting issue of what φιλια consisted, whether it applies to friends alone or also family. Some, like Malcolm Heath, have interpreted the notion to be essentially an "entirely objective bond of reciprocal obligation [void of] affection and emotional warmth." Heath thus thinks that Antigone is about the conflict between the demands of φιλια and the demands of the state. He argues that Creon experiences this conflict in that he must either live up to the demands of φιλια and bury his nephew, Polyneices, or he must remain loyal to the state and let his nephew rot, as Polyneices had lead a revolt against Thebes and was thus an official enemy. However, as Konstan has pointed out, "[n]owhere is Creon taken to task for neglect of his duty towards his nephew; the issue of his relationship to Polyneices is never raised in the

---

73. Hutter, Politics as Friendship, 9.
Moreover, Creon never anticipates that Antigone, a woman in his household, would wish to go against his wishes and bury her brother Polyneices. Antigone wishes to bury Polyneices out of φιλία for him, but if this φιλία were merely a sense of objective obligation to kin, one would think that Creon would anticipate her wishes. Moreover, Konstan has shown how other classical Greek texts, notably the orations of Isaeus, make a clear distinction between ties of kinship and ties of affection. For Sophocles, φιλία is more than an objective responsibility, it is love and affection.

For the tragic poets then, friendship was an important relationship which promoted loyalty between people. Such a bond could conflict with other values, as is the case with Pylades and Orestes, but this is an extreme example, and generally there is little indication that friendship was antagonistic to political or family obligations.

3. Xenophon. Plato

The wealth of philosophical literature on friendship reveals to what extent it preoccupied classical Greek thinkers. Aristotle alone devotes considerable time to analysing what it means to have proper relations with other people, and specifically what it means to be friends. But before we discuss Aristotle, it is important to mention the writings on friendship of two of his predecessors, Xenophon and Plato.

Xenophon was not a philosopher but some his writings depict the life and teachings of one of his philosopher friends, Socrates. In the Memorabilia, which is essen-

---

75. Konstan, "Greek Friendship," 91.


77. Konstan ("Greek Friendship," 87) states that a "strict and almost schematic distinction between affection and kinship is maintained systematically throughout the speech [of Isaeus]. Family ties are one thing, personal intimacy another, and the speaker asserts the priority of his position in respect to both kinds of bond."
tially a defense of Socrates, Xenophon presents a conversation which the great teacher had about friendship. It is hard to say if this conversation truly took place, but despite the question of historicity, the dialogue reveals some of the ideas current at the time.

Firstly, it is clear that friendship is an important bond, for as Socrates states, "surely there is no other possession that can compare with a good friend (φίλος ἄγαθος)." Socrates makes this statement because he is dismayed by people who neglect their friends. He laments the fact that people do not take proper care of their friends and forget them in times of need. A good friend is one who offers aid and support, no matter what the situation.

If generosity is called for, he does his part: if fear harasses, he comes to the rescue, shares expenses, helps to persuade, bears down opposition: he is foremost in delighting him when he is prosperous and raising him up when he falls (Mem. 2.4.6).

In this sense, Xenophon's report concurs with the tragic poets' requirement that friends be faithful and loyal.

Xenophon then continues on to describe a conversation he claims Socrates had with Critobulus over how to determine or test the qualities which make a man worth having as a friend. A desirable friend must be a good person; he must be self-controlled, loyal and fair. One must also examine how the potential friend treats other people - not what he says, but what he has done (ποιεῖ). If the individual proves worthy, then one must set about procuring his friendship, not by flattering him (which would repel him) but by being a good person oneself. Socrates thus says to Critobulus. "Courage, Critobulus; try to be good, and when you have achieved that, set about

---


79. Mem. 2.6.5.
catching your gentleman.\^{80} Two friends, therefore, must both be virtuous people. A bad person cannot be friends, even with a good person.

Xenophon grants that human beings have a natural propensity for evil, but despite their susceptibility to strife, envy, jealousy, anger and hatred, friendship still slips in, and "unites the gentle natures."\^{81} Included in this section of the discussion is a wonderful description of friendship in which friends share their food, drink and wealth, do not allow anger to get out of control, reject jealousy (ό φθαντος) and supply one another's needs.\^{82} As Suzanne Stern-Gillet remarks, Xenophon's conception of friendship is "that of a tie which centrally engages the inner emotional life of the partners and makes serious moral demands on their character."\^{83} However, because one is extraordinarily moral in one's treatment of friends does not mean that one cannot have enemies. The notion of helping friends and harming enemies is still very present. Socrates, planning to aid Critobulus in obtaining friends, tells him that he must let Socrates inform the prospective friend that Critobulus has made up his mind "that a man's virtue consists in outdoing his friends in kindness and his enemies in mischief."\^{84} Thus, despite the outpouring of goodness that is required for friends, Xenophon remains in a world which enthusiastically promoted the deception of enemies.

Another defender of Socrates, Plato, presents a different Socratic perspective in the Lysis, although there are some continuities with the Memorabilia. In this dialogue, Socrates observes that he does not know how one person becomes a friend of another.

\^{80} Mem. 2.6.28.

\^{81} Mem. 2.6.21-22. For a brief discussion of this section, see Fraisse, Philia, 113-14.

\^{82} Mem. 2.6.22-23.

\^{83} Suzanne Stern-Gillet, Aristotle's Philosophy of Friendship (SUNY Series in Ancient Greek Philosophy; Albany: SUNY, 1995) 7.

\^{84} Mem. 2.6.35.
although he acknowledges that there are people, like the two boys Lysis and Menexenus, who are friends. What ensues is an inquiry into how people become friends in which Socrates begins by leading Menexenus through a series of questions centering on the adjective $\phi\lambda\omega\zeta$, which can have both active and passive senses, "loving" and "loved". Socrates rejects the notion that $\phi\lambda\iota\alpha$ can exist when only one side of the relationship is loving or being loved as well as a relationship in which there is reciprocal love. Socrates' rejection of mutual love as a basis for friendship is not clearly argued, but he discards it all the same and this point of the discussion ends in failure.

The Socrates of the *Lysis* continues on, resorting to the notion that like is attracted to like and in moral terms, that the good are attracted to the good. The bad cannot be friends with the bad, he argues, for they simply do harm to one another. Therefore, only the good can be friends, an idea reminiscent of Xenophon and possibly a true opinion of the historical Socrates. However, if the good are self-sufficient, as Socrates thinks they are, how can they be friends when they do not need one another nor miss one another when absent? This statement is followed by a series of complicated arguments in which Socrates attempts to solve this dilemma. It is noteworthy that throughout these arguments $\epsilon\pi\theta\nu\mu\iota\alpha$ "twice accompanies the term $\phi\lambdai\alpha$, as if it made little difference which [was] used." Plato does not distinguish

---


86. W. R. M. Lamb (*Lysis*, 39, n.2) notes that "Plato cannot be said to have disposed of this third proposition [mutual love as a basis for friendship]."

87. Plato, *Lysis* 214E.


89. Plato, *Lysis* 215B.

these terms, as he does in other writings,\(^9\) and at a certain point appears to conflate ἔρως, ἐπιθυμία and φιλία when he states that the aim of these three things is to acquire what is oἰκεῖος "one's own" or "akin" to one. But then he again focuses upon friendship, claiming that if Lysis and Menexenus are friends to one another, or φίλοι, then they must be oἰκεῖοι to one another. This "akin-ness" must be reciprocal, however, which would mean that like would be friends with like, or the good with the good. Socrates had already rejected this notion earlier on, and thus the discussion ends in failure, for "what a 'friend' is, we have not yet succeeded in discovering."\(^9\)

Despite the disappointing end of the Lysis, Plato has presented a number of features of friendship which were important throughout the classical and hellenistic ages. The notion that only good people could be friends, which was also raised by Xenophon, became common, as did the idea that friends have a certain "akin-ness" or affinity, although other writers did not use the term oἰκεῖος. Moreover, Plato has raised the important problem of what friendship can contribute to someone who has achieved εὐδαιμονία, a word that is difficult to translate but approaches something like "happiness" or the "objective, optimal condition for human beings."\(^9\) Why should such a person need friends? As we'll see, this issue was not a problem for Plato's great successor, Aristotle.

4. Aristotle, Theophrastus

---


92. Plato, *Lysis* 223B.

Aristotle was the first to offer a systematic analysis of ἀγάπη, or the character of loving ties between people. One of the varieties of ἀγάπη which he discusses is that between friends or φίλοι. He explores this subject in book 7 of the Eudemian Ethics, books 8 and 11 of the subsequent94 Nichomachean Ethics and parts of the Magna Moralia, the Rhetoric and the Politics. Thus, as the examination of ἀγάπη absorbs significant sections of Aristotle’s ethical writings,95 there is today an abundance of secondary literature on the topic and many points of swirling debate. All of these debates cannot be rehearsed here;96 rather, I will present what are deemed to be the most salient aspects of Aristotle’s thoughts on the matter.

Aristotle states at the beginning of Book 8 of the Nichomachean Ethics that friendship "is one of the most indispensable requirements of life. For no one would choose to live without friends."97 According to Aristotle, human beings are political creatures (πολιτικόν) and are meant to share their lives with one another.98 Like many ancients prior to the rise of Christian monasticism, Aristotle probably would have perceived life in isolation, separate from the rest of society to be "the extreme of suffering."99 Essential to a happy life is to live with other people, to care about them as they

94. The common view is that the Eudemian Ethics is the earlier set of lectures and was later replaced by the Nichomachean Ethics (Julia Annas. "Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism." Mind 86 [1977] 532).


98. Eth. Nic. 9.9.3.

care about you and to participate in building a good society. Friendship figures importantly in the expression of such a life; "the happy man requires friends."  

Aristotle made distinctions between three kinds (eiðoç) of friendship based upon the grounds for the friendship. Two people could have a friendship rooted in utility, in pleasure or in character. These three types all require mutuality but there is a certain hierarchy among them in that character friendship is the perfect form, for it exists between persons of virtuous character. Friendship based upon utility or pleasure are based on how useful or pleasurable one friend can be to another. The friends "do not love each other in themselves, but insofar as some benefit accrues to them from each other." Character friendship, on the other hand, grounds itself in wishing the best for the friend for the friend's sake, and not for the sake of what the friend can do for you. Indeed, a character friendship brings mutual usefulness and pleasure to the relationship, but these benefits are not the basis for the tie.

Thus for Aristotle, the best friendship is that between two good people. However, one might ask, could such a friendship exist between any two good people, or is there something more specific which draws particular human beings together? Aristotle states quite clearly that character friendship is rare, for there are not many virtuous people, but he also says that one cannot have too many friends as such a situation would inevitably lead to conflicting loyalties. Moreover, he argues that the intimacy present within friendships of character takes time to develop and is a difficult thing to obtain. Presumably then, one could not simply become intimate friends with the

100. Eth. Nic. 9.9.3.


102. Eth. Nic. 8.3.1

103. Eth. Eud. 7.6.3.

next good person whom one meets, for such a friendship would require considerable
time and effort to develop.\textsuperscript{105}

Aristotle is fully aware of the issue Plato raised concerning whether a happy, self-
sufficient person has need of friends, for he raises it explicitly in both of his major ethi-
cal treatises.\textsuperscript{106} However, this issue is not problematic for Aristotle as his understand-
ing of a happy person is a person who has friends. He writes,

But it seems strange that if we attribute all good things to the happy man
\((\epsilon\nu\delta\alpha\iota\mu\omicron)\) we should not assign him friends, which we consider the greatest of
external goods. Also if it be more the mark of a friend to give than to receive
benefits, and if beneficence is a function of the good man and of virtue, and it is
nobler to benefit friends than strangers, the good man will need friends as the
objects of his beneficence \((\text{Eth. Nic. 9.9.1}).\)

For Aristotle, having friends not only proffers obvious joys and pleasures, it facilitates
mutual benefaction. Friendship promotes goodness in people for they have someone \textit{to be good to}. Jonathan Powell suggests that for Aristotle there may be "a particular
\(\alpha\rho\epsilon\tau\eta\) that goes with friendship, the quality of being a good friend to one’s friends."\textsuperscript{107} Friendship is thus not incongruous with a self-sufficient, good life but an essential com-
ponent of that life.

Aristotle uses strong language to describe friends: a friend is another self \((\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron \alpha\iota\tau\omicron\varsigma)\) and a person should feel "towards his friend in the same way as towards him-
self."\textsuperscript{108} Aristotle quotes the proverb, "Friends have one soul \((\mu\iota\alpha \psi\nu\chi\eta)\) between

\textsuperscript{105} As Konstan \textit{(Friendship in the Classical World, 76)} writes: "The idea that one might transfer one’s
love to the next more virtuous person who comes along is not Aristotelian, though such a man will
normally be the object of good will on the part of others."

\textsuperscript{106} \textit{Eth. Eud. 7.12.1; Eth. Nic. 9.9.1.}

\textsuperscript{107} Powell, "Friendship and its Problems," 37.

\textsuperscript{108} \textit{Eth. Nic. 9.4.5.}
them, which was apparently well-known. In the Eudemian Ethics, this phrase underlines the fact that a man should relate to his friend just as he relates to himself:

And wishing for the other to exist, and associating together, and sharing joy and grief, and ‘being one spirit’ (μία ψυχή) and being unable even to live without one another but dying together - for this is the case with the single individual, and he associates with himself in this way, - all these characteristics then belong to the good man in relation to himself (Eth. Eud. 7.6.8-13).

Such an understanding of friendship has many ramifications for how friends should be treated. For example, a friend must forgo money if it means that his friend will gain, he must give up honours and offices for his friend’s sake, and indeed, friends should surrender their lives for one another, just as they should for their country.

According to Aristotle, friendship did not pose a threat to the political world of his day. On the contrary, "a man who was loyal to his friends [was] assumed to be a good citizen." we remember, describes all kinds of mutual affection, including kinship ties, civic ties, and intimate bonds between φίλας. Sometimes treaties between nations were called φίλας, just as a foreign ally could be called a φίλος. For Aristotle, the closer the ties of φίλας, the stronger the claims of justice, for feel-

109. Eth. Nic. 9.8.2; Eth. Eud. 7.6.10.

110. Electra describes her brother, Orestes, as her μία ψυχή in Euripides’ Orestes 1046.

111. The notion of a friend as another self also has consequences for the understanding of Aristotle’s moral philosophy as a whole. Some scholars argue that ultimately, Aristotle is interested in each person achieving his or her own εὐδαιμονία and thus that his moral theory is egoistic, whereas others think that Aristotle is interested not only in personal εὐδαιμονία but the εὐδαιμονία of friends as well. This interpretation understands Aristotle as an altruist. The idea that a friend is another self and thus should be treated as well as one treats one’s own self is often used in support of the second interpretation. See Dennis McKerlie, "Friendship, Self-Love, and Concern for Others in Aristotle’s Ethics," Ancient Philosophy 11 (1991) 85-100.


ings of affinity promoted justice and fairness. He could not envisage friendship in conflict with the state because in his view, one was coextensive with the other. Political authority in Aristotle’s day was understood to be the "institutionalized will of the δῆμος," and not a remote force, disinterested in the general will of the populace. If a man was delinquent in his duties to the state, he was likely neglectful of his friends as well. Political conflicts were not caused by allegiances to personal friendships, but by a deficiency of moral substance. Indeed, Aristotle thought that "civic, and not just personal, friendship [was] an essential component in the flourishing human life" and comments that a good leader is one who promotes friendship among citizens of the state.

Not all members of the state are equals and Aristotle grants that φιλία may exist between unequals, as is the case in φιλία between a father and son, for example, or between a husband and wife. Aristotle states at one point that the three types of friendship between φίλοι which he has distinguished, namely those based on utility, pleasure or character, are friendships of equality, "for both parties render the same benefit and wish the same good to each other." However, he also recognizes that disparities arise between friends and that friends may not always be equal, because one

117. As Konstan ("Friendship and the State," 7) notes, "a good person will be responsive to obligations wherever φιλία obtains, whether in personal friendships or in the realm of civic society."
120. Aristotle reflects the standard view of women as inferior to men. Julie K. Ward, however, thinks that Aristotle’s views on friendship, despite his obvious sexism, have the potential to inform contemporary feminism. See her article, "Aristotle on Philia: The Beginning of a Feminist Ideal of Friendship?" Feminism and Ancient Philosophy, 155-71.
friend may give much more than he receives and vice versa. Aristotle thus spends considerable time discussing proportional friendship and its relationship to the law, prompting Frederic M. Schroeder to comment that Aristotle "paves the way for the obligation between patron and client and a redefinition of friendship along these lines in the postclassical period." This is not to say that patronage and friendship were confused, at least in rhetoric, at the time of the Athenian democracy, for as Paul Millet has written:

It seems a plausible hypothesis that the democratic ideology, with its emphasis upon political equality, was hostile to the idea of personal patronage, which depended on the exploitation of inequalities in wealth and status. All Aristotle is saying is that if a huge disparity emerged between two φιλόσω, whether it be economic or in the realm of character, their friendship would inevitably break. Likewise, humans cannot be friends with gods, who are far superior, and princes cannot be friends with people below their stature. Although Aristotle may have some wonderful things to say about friendship, his ideas of who one can be friends with are limited by his deeply hierarchical society.

Theophrastus of Eresus was a student of Aristotle's and succeeded him as the head of the school at Assos in the late third century. He is said to have written a three volume work, On Friendship, pieces of which have been preserved by various authors, most notably Aulus Gellius in his Attic Nights.


123. Paul Millet, "Patronage and Its Avoidance in Classical Athens," Patronage in Ancient Society, 17. Millet does grant, however, that patronage and friendship could be confused in practice for friendship was "one of the obvious ways in which patronage could be disguised in order to make it acceptable" (p. 33).


125. See W. W. Fortenbaugh, P.M. Huby, R.W. Sharples and D. Gutas, eds., Theophrastus of Eresus: Sources for his Life, Writings, Thought and Influence (vol. 2; PhilAnt 54,2; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992) 353-73.
Not surprisingly, Theophrastus' writings mirror many of his teacher's ideas. For example, he accepted Aristotle's taxonomy of friendship, that is, the categories of friendship such as character friendship, pleasure friendship and utility friendship. However, Theophrastus did argue that these types of friendships could exist when one friend was superior to the other. Aristotle had rejected character friendship between a prince and his subjects, whereas Theophrastus suggested that the ruler and the ruled may also become virtuous friends, and in other respects they will be friends, but while being friends they will maintain what is lawful, the one being inferior to the extent dictated by law, and the other being superior. Similarly, friendships based upon pleasure or utility could occur between superior and inferior people - even a husband and wife could be friends!

Unlike his teacher, Theophrastus had a burning concern for what to do if one's allegiance to the law - to the state - conflicted with loyalty to a friend. For Theophrastus, there was no simplistic answer, rather, one must use practical wisdom in each set of circumstances to determine whether the advantages to the friend outweigh the damage to one's reputation. If they did, then one should support the friend; if they did not, one's "honour has without doubt the greater weight." Theophrastus' reasoning here is not particularly striking or surprising but what is significant is the fact that he addresses the possibility of such a scenario at all. It could be that he thought Aristotle had left this issue undeveloped, and thus attempted an

---


128. There are a few references to women as φίλη in the classical age, but generally, the word applies to men. See Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*, 90-91. If a woman was described as a φίλη to a man, however, she was likely a courtesan and thus "respectable" men and women avoided such descriptions.


elaboration of the problem, however, changes in the political climate of Greece likely had a significant impact as well. We remember that for Aristotle, friendship ties and loyalty to the state were generally coterminous. "Social relations, including friendship, were not separated off from political obligations in classical Athens because the distinction between society and the state was, like the state itself, inchoate." Theophrastus, however, lived on the cusp between the classical and Hellenistic periods, a time of momentous political changes in Athens. At the end of the fourth century before the common era, the Athenian δημοκρατία had lost its power to Macedonian supported powers, and in 317/16 Demetrios of Phaleron, a "Macedonian-backed puppet dictator," who had studied with Theophrastus at the Lyceum, came to power. No longer could all well-to-do Athenians engage in politics, rather, many felt disenfranchised from the world of the state, as it was now held up by foreign might. Participation in national politics was not perceived by all as a natural endeavour but more of a duty, and the focus of many lives became the personal as opposed to the public. As Peter Green suggests, "the movement toward a private rather than a public existence may have been intensified by the removal of full political freedom, by subservience to autocratic (and more often than not, external) government... ." Green goes on to point out that there were many factors contributing to such a movement and that it was not universal - not everyone felt alienated from politics. However, the shifts in authority no doubt played a role in discouraging many from the political realm.


134. Green, Alexander to Actium, 40.
Moreover, with the decline of the δήμος, separate institutional domains, such as the museum and the law courts, emerged and represented "instances of distinct realms of knowledge and authority." Formerly, the δήμος had expressed this authority and laws and art had been subservient to it, but during the Hellenistic and Roman periods this "centre" had disappeared, to be replaced by multiple spheres of authority and culture. Likewise friendship "came to be represented as a separate domain of relations in potential conflict with duty and ... with obligations to the state." Although Theophrastus was likely quite sympathetic to Demetrius (remember that Aristotle had tutored Philip of Macedon), he must have sensed that civic loyalty no longer came easily to all. In such an atmosphere, antagonism between loyalty to friends and duty to the state could readily emerge.

5. Conclusion

Although this overview of friendship in the classical age has only surveyed a small number of authors, we have seen that friendship began to develop its own vocabulary. Φιλία was understood to be affection in the general sense, whether it be toward family members, other citizens or intimate friends, whereas φίλος was more specific, referring to a person who was unrelated by biology. This φίλος was expected to be loyal, even to the point of sacrificing one's life for one's friend, and, at least in the philosophical literature, a good person. The notion that two friends had a certain affinity also emerges in the philosophical literature, with Plato's discussion of how a

137. There are others who wrote of different dimensions of φιλία. For example, the fifth century philosopher Empedocles, represented φιλία (love or affection) as a cosmological force. See Pizzolato, L'idea di amicizia, 24-25 and Fraisse, Philia, 84-87.
friend must be ὁικεῖος to his friend and Aristotle’s striking description of a friend as ἄλλος αὐτὸς and μία ψυχή.\(^\text{138}\)

Aristotle, whose ideas on friendship were to have a lasting impact, indicated that one could only have a few friendships based upon character, for good friends were hard to find and much energy was required for their nurture. One might have more friendships based upon utility or pleasure, however, as these types of friendships did not require as much concentration.

Groups of φίλοι did not play a central role in the politics of classical Greece although Aristotle does promote civic φιλία as essential to the good life. It is one thing to say, however, that φιλία existed within the δῆμος and quite another to say that the δῆμος was run by small groups of φίλοι, which was not the case.\(^\text{139}\) As Konstan affirms, "[f]riendship in the classical city was not embedded in relations of economic exchange (however informal in comparison to the modern market) any more than it was entangled in political alliances."\(^\text{140}\)

The fact that Theophrastus raises the quandary of what to do if one’s civic duty conflicted with loyalty to friends indicates that he saw this issue as unresolved by Aristotle and/or that attitudes toward political participation were changing. The latter phenomenon seems likely, for as the Hellenistic era dawned, some philosophical fig-

\(^{138}\) For more on these two descriptions of friends, see Gottfried Bohnenblust, Beiträge zum Topos ΦΙΛΙΑΣ (Inaugural Dissertation, Universität Bern; Berlin: Gustav Schade [Otto Francke], 1905) 39-40.

\(^{139}\) Occasionally, there are references to high officials and advisors as φίλοι during the classical age. For example, Xenophon calls the supporters of King Cyrus φίλοι but it is not clear that he means an institutional position or simply a friend and supporter who also holds a specific rank. Because two people are in a "professional" relationship, it does not follow that they may not be personal friends, with a bond based upon trust, loyalty and mutual affection. See Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 96-97; and Gabriel Herman, “The ‘Friends’ of the Early Hellenistic Rulers: Servants or Officials?” Talanta 12/13 (1980-81) 112.

\(^{140}\) Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 82.
ures began to concentrate on the good life *apart* from the polis. Friendship, however, remained a central part of this good life.

**C. Hellenistic Era**

1. Non-Philosophical Literature

To be sure, Aristotle’s discussions of friendship had a lasting impression on subsequent generations, but with the development of the Hellenistic kingdoms throughout the Mediterranean world, and the rise of distinct philosophical schools, friendship took on different emphases. In this first section I will examine some of the non-philosophical sources, including papyri, inscriptions, letters, history, poetry, novels and satire, to observe some of the changing conceptions of friendship in the Hellenistic age.

a. Papyri, Inscriptions, Letters

**Official Usage**

Different types of evidence reveal that φιλος was used both as an official and non-official term during the Hellenistic period. Katherine G. Evans has surveyed a random sampling of Greek documentary papyri and inscriptions for the use of the words φιλος and φιλίας. Out of an examination of 18,000 documents, only 203 used friendship terminology, and some of these texts were composed well beyond the Hellenistic period. However, Evans did find evidence that the word φιλος was used to describe

---

141. Some of the texts which I discuss in this section are from the imperial period, but I deal with them here as they are written in Greek and influenced by Greek philosophical movements and ideas which emerged during Hellenistic times.
officials in Ptolemaic Egypt in the last three centuries before the common era. These officials included "first friends" and "friends" of the king who served as advisors and in various administrative capacities throughout the Egyptian dominion. Evans also found evidence for the Roman use of φίλος as an official position. Three papyri mention the "friends" of the Roman prefect, each of which indicate that the φίλος of the prefect served in advisory and judicial positions in deciding the outcomes of legal proceedings.142

Gabriel Herman has also called attention to honorary decrees in which specific persons at court are referred to as φίλος. Herman points out that it is not always clear what φίλος means when it appears in these decrees; does it refer to an equal person, which φίλος usually implies, or to an inferior who performs services for the ruler?143 It seems to Herman that sometimes φίλος is understood to be a technical term, referring to a servant or official of the king, while other times it may be an informal friend. The official notion of φίλος appeared in evidence from the Hellenistic kingdoms, and was often applied to ethnic Greeks, who, finding themselves in foreign lands, were dependent upon their leaders for their survival:

[the philoi ... held their wealth and status almost entirely at the rulers’ discretion; for the Greek déracinés in particular, it was a matter of life and death to maintain a ruler’s favour.144

Many Greeks were highly critical of this hierarchical relationship in which the φίλοι would do their best to keep their rulers happy, and thus much philosophical and satirical literature lampoons these φίλοι as flatterers and parasites. The connection between friendship and flattery will be discussed in more detail further on, but it is interesting to

142. Evans, "Friendship in Greek Documentary Papyri and Inscriptions," Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship, 188-89.


note for the time being that the same people who are honoured in decrees as φιλαν of rulers are simultaneously caricatured and ridiculed by other Greek writers. These φιλαν may be high-ranking officials and generals, but they still receive biting criticism from many authors. As Herman comments, "to have a high rank in a king's court meant to be rated low in Greek public opinion." ¹⁴⁵ Certain thinkers, such as Plutarch, disapproved of the designation φιλαν to those who ingratiated themselves to their superiors. ¹⁴⁶ But despite this criticism, the official rank of friend is to be found in many Hellenistic courts. ¹⁴⁷ As Konstan observes, this "institution of royal friends - in whatever degree of official formality - is a striking instance of the application of the language of friendship to distinctly hierarchical relations between people of different social station." ¹⁴⁸

**Unofficial Usage**

The papyri surveyed by Evans also reveal that friendship language was used in business transactions and personal exchanges between individuals. It is not always clear what the precise nature of the friendship is, but friends are named in commercial papyri as proxies in business transactions, and in wills as those who will carry out specific responsibilities after an individual has died. ¹⁴⁹ Thus the friend does not have an official


¹⁴⁶. Plutarch, How to tell a Flatterer from a Friend 51D.

¹⁴⁷. Frank Walbank, "Monarchies and Monarchic Ideas," Cambridge Ancient History 7.1 (eds. F.W. Walbank, A.E. Astin, M.W. Frederiksen, and R.M. Olgivie; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 69. Walbank discusses one of the earliest references to a friend as an official of the king, which is in a letter from Lysimachus to the city of Priene, which Walbank dates to approximately 285 BCE.


¹⁴⁹. Evans, "Friendship in Greek Documentary Papyri and Inscriptions," 190-93. Although wills give specific responsibilities to friends, they do not often name them as recipients of money or property.
rank, but he has particular duties allotted to him. Sometimes personal letters offer stern reminders of one friend’s debt to another, and even threats of what will happen if the friend does not carry out his obligation.\textsuperscript{150}

Letters of friendship, or \textit{φιλικός}, an ancient letter type,\textsuperscript{151} manifest more affection and deep feeling between the friends, as they express their longing to share one another’s presence and thoughts. These personal papyri are solid evidence of the affection and intimacy that existed within many friendships. There are epitaphs, moreover, upon which friends commemorate the departed (both men and women) as well as statements of devotion in which individuals offer devotions to a god on behalf of or with a friend.\textsuperscript{152}

Finally, John S. Kloppenborg Verbin has examined several inscriptions from the hellenistic era which refer to members of small associations as \textit{φιλαλοι}. When there is no mention of a patron, this use of \textit{φιλαλοι} "probably does connote a measure of equality" as opposed to the hierarchies of dependence found in patron dependent associations.\textsuperscript{153} Kloppenborg Verbin explains how these non-élite associations promoted the honour and dignity of their members. Such solidarity and mutual assistance would aid the members in resisting various types of exploitation, including patronage from elite members of society.\textsuperscript{154}

\textsuperscript{150} Evans, “Friendship in the Greek Documentary Papyri and Inscriptions,” 195.


\textsuperscript{152} For more examples of dedicatory inscriptions, see Kloppenborg Verbin, "Patronage Avoidance in James," 777 n. 75.

\textsuperscript{153} Kloppenborg Verbin, "Patronage Avoidance," 777.

\textsuperscript{154} Kloppenborg Verbin, "Patronage Avoidance," 779.
In sum, the evidence from papyri and inscriptions indicates that friendship language was used in the daily life of ancient people, both in business transactions and in personal exchanges and dedications. Moreover, inscriptions from various non-élite associations indicate that friendship language may have been used to promote mutual assistance and symmetry among people. In contrast, friendship was also invoked in the hierarchical settings of imperial courts, where the "friends" of the king were in official advisory or judicial positions. Some Greek writers, however, often associated these royal friends with the image of the flatterer, and ridiculed them as insincere and parasitical.\footnote{155} This latter fact indicates that despite the variety of settings and purposes of friendship language, friendship was generally associated with equality, sincerity, and mutual assistance.

b. Dionysius of Halicarnassus

Friendship language was also used in attempts to create and preserve alliances between nations. The Greek historian, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who lived and wrote in Rome near the end of the first century B.C.E., describes the conversations between the Roman king Tullus, and the Alban general Fufetius.\footnote{156} The Romans had been at war with the Albans but the two leaders decide to settle their disputes, agreeing that reconciliation is the best thing for friends. But the Roman king argues that in order to be friends, they must trust one another and if the Albans want to prove their

\footnote{155. Herman ("The ‘Friends’ of the Early Hellenistic Rulers," 122) writes that in various Greek satirical anecdotes, the "whole range of royal servants was indiscriminately assigned to the flatterer type. No distinction was drawn between generals, diplomats, bodyguards, jesters, and philosophers, Greeks or Macedonians. Scholars writing prosopographical studies on one friend or another have been surprised, time and again, to find out that many of the individuals presented in the anecdotes as mean and despised courtiers and jesters were in fact important generals and administrators."

156. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, \textit{Rom. Ant.} 3.8-21.}
trust, they will move to Rome and therefore put an end to competition between the two cities. As David L. Balch observes, the Romans are willing to be friends and forgive everything if their rival submits to them.\textsuperscript{157} The Albans do not submit and there is an ensuing battle between six cousins - three are Roman and three are Alban - which secures a Roman victory. A sister of one of the victorious Roman fighters had been engaged to one of the Albans and, distraught, she tears at her clothes and insults her brother. Angered by his sister's lack of respect for her country, the brother kills her and that night his father celebrates the Roman victory, and forbids the burial of his daughter. It appears that love of Rome is promoted as "the supreme value in this story"\textsuperscript{158} and although friendship language is appealed to in various attempts to create peace, Rome will not be friends unless the Albans submit.

c. Poetry and Novels

There are glimpses of friendship in some Greek poetry of the Hellenistic age. Theocritus' bucolic \textit{Idylls} "all feature social outsiders, needy for friendship in an unstable, mobile world."\textsuperscript{159} His \textit{Idyll} 15 is particularly interesting because it features a friendship between two women, both Syracusan settlers in Alexandria, who have been cut off from their kin and traditions and rely upon each other for comfort and affirmation in an alien city. Through reminiscences of their common past and shared complaints about the dangers of the city and estranged husbands, the two women build up


\textsuperscript{158} Balch, "Political Friendship," 127.

\textsuperscript{159} Joan B. Burton, \textit{Theocritus's Urban Mimes: Mobility, Gender, and Patronage} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) 35.
their friendship and solidarity.\footnote{160} It is easy to appreciate the importance of friendship in such a world, in which so many people had been displaced from their homes due to wars and political upheavals.

Chariton, a Greek fiction writer, also betrays a knowledge of friendship characteristics in his romantic novel, \textit{Callirhoe}.\footnote{161} Although \textit{Callirhoe} focuses upon the love story between a young man, Chaereas, and his wife, Callirhoe, throughout the entire story, Chaereas is continually protected and repeatedly saved by his friend, Polycharmus. When Chaereas believes that he has accidentally killed his wife (thinking, wrongly, that she had committed adultery) and wants to commit suicide, Polycharmus, "his closest friend [φιλος ἕξαιρετος], as in Homer Patroclus was of Achilles,"\footnote{162} prevents him from doing so. As Ronald F. Hock has shown, throughout the entire novel, Polycharmus shows all the signs of a true friend: he accompanies Chaereas on dangerous expeditions, he protects Chaereas from external harm, continually comforts him, and on more than one occasion restrains the distraught young man from killing himself.\footnote{163} Polycharmus also expresses his willingness to die with Chaereas, a characteristic of friendship discussed by Aristotle and other authors, as we will see below. Moreover, "[t]hat only Polycharmus among Chaereas’ friends shared his many reversals in fortune (8.8.7) underscores the rarity of true friendship, another

\footnotesize


\footnote{161} Chariton’s dates are debatable, ranging from the first century BCE to the second century CE. See C. Ruiz-Montero, “Chariton von Aphrodisias: Ein Überblick,” \textit{ANRW} 2.34.2 (1994) 1006-54, for a discussion of the problems related to dating this work.


\footnote{163} Hock ("An Extraordinary Friend," 148-57) details all of these aspects of Polycharmus’ friendship with Chaereas.
familiar convention." At the end of the story, having rescued Callirhoe from Babylon, Polycharmus, Chaereas and Callirhoe return to their home in Syracuse, where Polycharmus is publicly declared a "loyal friend" (φίλος πιστός) of Chaereas and Chaereas presents his friend with gifts (including Chaereas’ sister for a wife!).

Hock has also observed other types of friendships in this novel. For example, political alliances are described in friendship terms, as we encountered in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and there are friendships between women, namely between Callirhoe and some of the women she met during her stay in Babylon. She calls Statira, the Queen of the Persians, her "dearest friend" (φιλτάτη) and another woman, Rhodogyne, is her "first friend among the Persians" (πρώτη μοι φίλη Περσίδων). There are also friendships with slaves, which bear closest resemblance to Aristotle’s category of a friendship based upon usefulness. Moreover, Hock perceives, as does Konstan, that there is equality between the two lovers, Chaereas and Callirhoe. But Hock goes further than Konstan in that this equality is manifested in a friendship as well as a romantic relationship. Both Chaereas and Callirhoe are of equal age and experience, and Callirhoe appears to be an educated woman (πεπαιδευμένη). For Hock, this evidence supports his suggestion that "what was inconceivable to Aristotle is now held out as a possibility in the romances: a husband and wife living out the highest form of


friendship." As many argue that Callirhoe was written during the early phases of the Roman empire, such friendship between husband and wife, or at least, their conjugal happiness, also reflects the idealization of the Roman family as a sentimental "haven from the outside world" which was typical of the time.

d. Lucian

If Chariton is offering an ideal picture of friendship, Lucian, a hellenized Syrian writing in the second century CE, may be mocking it. Lucian's Toxaris consists of a conversation about friendship between a Greek, Mnesippus, and Toxaris, a Scythian. Toxaris states that the Scythians hold friendship in the highest esteem, and accuses the Greeks of being better at praising friendship than putting it into practice. Mnesippus is indignant and the two decide to settle their argument by each recounting five stories of friendships among their respective countrymen. Whoever describes the better friendships wins and the other must suffer seriously; Toxaris will lose his right hand and Mnesippus will lose his tongue. As it turns out, the two forget to declare a judge and their dialogue concludes with them swearing friendship for one another. Richard I. Pervo states that this frame to the dialogue is not meant to be serious for the story "concludes with a perfectly happy ending, like an epic encounter in which the antagonists exchange armor and leave in peace." Pervo and others think that the Toxaris


174. Pervo cites G. Anderson, (Studies in Lucian's Comic Fiction [Mnemosyne Suppl. 43: Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1976]) as another scholar who does not take the Toxaris as a serious work, but full of "preposterous or absurd" (Pervo, "With Lucian," 165) stories.
is not a serious reflection about friendship, but rather a parody of the type of Greek friendship found in philosophical literature and popular fiction.

The notion that the *Toxaris* is a parody is supported, in the first place, by the fact that despite swearing up and down that all they narrate will be true, Toxaris and Mnesippus depict such fabulous friendships and exploits that they are difficult to believe. For example, one of the Scythian's stories is about two friends, Belitta and Basthes, the latter who is attacked by a lion while the two are on a hunting expedition. Belitta distracts the animal from Basthes by provoking it to maul him and succeeds in stabbing it before he dies. Basthes dies as well and all three, the two friends and the lion, are buried together. This tale is "clearly fictitious" and Pervo notes that there are fables of a similar nature.

Secondly, the types of friendships in the stories are extreme and usually one-sided; they are not the relationships of mutual care and concern which Aristotle described. For example, Mnesippus' first tale is of Agathocles and Deinias who had been friends during childhood but became distanced from one another as Deinias turned out to be very rich. Deinias spends much time drinking and carousing with companions, flatterers, and spurns Agathocles, who disapproves of such behaviour. The flatterers convince Deinias that a married woman, Charicleia, is in love with him and the wily Charicleia takes economic advantage of the young man, leaving him penniless. In desperation, Deinias turns to his old friend, Agathocles, explains his situation and Agathocles sells all he has and gives it to Deinias. Charicleia re-enters the picture, and one evening when Deinias attempts to visit her, her husband springs out, menacingly, and Deinias kills both the husband and Charicleia. As punishment, Deinias is exiled to

---


the island of Gyaros and Agathocles goes with him, supporting Deinias through manual labour,\textsuperscript{178} nursing the fellow through illness, and even remaining on the island after Deinias dies as he was "ashamed to desert his friend even after his death."\textsuperscript{179} Agathocles displays great loyalty for Deinias, to the point of "wretched excess,"\textsuperscript{180} and as is clear, Agathocles receives no reciprocal generosity or attention from Deinias. Pervo doubts that readers would have approved of such a relationship,\textsuperscript{181} and it is difficult to take such a tale of unrequited loyalty as a serious tale of friendship. Although Polycharmus is exceptionally devoted to Chaereas in \textit{Callirhoe}, at least he is rewarded by his friend at the end. Agathocles receives no such reward.

Pervo offers a good description and analysis of the other stories which the Greek and the Scythian narrate, all characterized by extreme feats of loyalty which were possibly distasteful to Lucian’s audience. Konstan, as well, admits that the stories are one-sided,\textsuperscript{182} at least those of Mnesippus are. It may be that Pervo is correct in arguing that Lucian, writing in the second century CE, is jeering at the philosophical and popular sentimental notions of friendship which he now considers to be outdated in an age of increased emphasis upon family life, civic duty, and possibly an improved status of women. Moreover, in describing such excessive displays of loyalty of one man for another, Lucian may be taking a shot at homoerotic relations, "of which he does not seem to approve."\textsuperscript{183} Indeed, Lucian supplies us with another window to the world of

\textsuperscript{178} Pervo, ("With Lucian," 167 n.23) notes that Agathocles’ labour, diving for shells, is "arduous and shocking toil for one of gentle birth."

\textsuperscript{179} Tox. 18.

\textsuperscript{180} Pervo, "With Lucian," 168.

\textsuperscript{181} Pervo, "With Lucian," 168.

\textsuperscript{182} Konstan, \textit{Friendship in the Classical World}, 118-19.

\textsuperscript{183} Pervo, "With Lucian," 179-80.
ancient Greek friendship, as many of the traditional elements are there, albeit to an exaggerated degree.

2. Philosophical Literature

Historians have observed how the decline of Athens, political turmoils, and the displacement of peoples affected the way in which individuals perceived the good life during the hellenistic age. As Green observes, "[t]he loss of external political freedom inevitably drove men inward on themselves. Not all were looking for the same thing, but a remarkable number of those who did not opt for financial, material success (and indeed, some who did) were on a quest for freedom of the soul."\textsuperscript{184} This quest was not solely caused by the changed political conditions, but they were a factor, as many were disillusioned with political life and saw no opportunities for participation in government. Civic ties no longer possessed the important position which they had held for Aristotle's conception of human flourishing, and space opened up for the development of intimate friendships within the various philosophical schools.

a. Epicureanism

One such school was in the garden of Epicurus, in Athens, where Epicurus taught his pupils that the supreme end of life was happiness and tranquility. The philosopher counseled that people should avoid engagement in politics for "political life is a rat race

\textsuperscript{184} Green, \textit{Alexander to Actium}, 53.
or 'prison' from which a wise man will keep well clear,"\textsuperscript{185} and instead, focus on a life full of pleasure and serenity.

This hedonistic life was not to be lived alone, however, for Epicurus placed a high value upon friendship. There are not many references to \textit{philia} and \textit{philia} in Epicurus's extant works but those comments which he does make are notably affirmative. In one fragment he says, "Friendship goes dancing round the world proclaiming to us all to awake to the praises of the happy life" (\textit{Sent. Vat.} lii). Other sayings underline the reliability that is expected of friends and the pain that disloyalty can bring. For example, together two fragments read,

The wise man is not more pained when being tortured [himself, than when seeing] his friend [tortured]: [but if his friend does him wrong], his whole life will be confounded by distrust and completely upset (\textit{Sent. Vat.} lvi-lvii).

As well, Epicurus understands friendship to be a source of practical aid: "He is no friend who is continually asking for help, nor he who never associates help with friendship,"\textsuperscript{186} although usefulness is not the basis for friendship: "All friendship is desirable in itself, though it starts from the need of help."\textsuperscript{187} Moreover, Diogenes Laertius attributes Epicurus with saying that on occasion, the wise man will die for a friend.\textsuperscript{188}

These sayings have perplexed contemporary scholars of Epicurus, for on the one hand, the notion that the friend is useful and enjoyable coheres well with Epicurus's focus upon a life of pleasure, while on the other, Epicurus asserts that friendship has value for its own sake, and suggests that a person should endure great pains for a


\textsuperscript{186} Epicurus, \textit{Sent. Vat.} xxxix.

\textsuperscript{187} Epicurus, \textit{Sent. Vat.} xxiii.

friend,\(^{189}\) even to the point of death, ideas which are seemingly at odds with a life devoted to minimizing pain and maximizing pleasure. Authors differ on how to solve this problem. Some conclude that ultimately Epicurus does not have a noble conception of friendship; that his understanding of friendship is essentially based on what friends can do for him rather than what he can do for them, while others argue that Epicurus's notion of friendship is indeed altruistic and thus contradicts his hedonistic philosophy.\(^ {190}\) Thus Epicurus is seen either as "consistent philosopher and bad friend, or as inconsistent philosopher and good friend."\(^ {191}\) David O'Connor solves the problem in another way, claiming that Epicurus has reconfigured friendship such that the "exquisite pleasure of peaceful tranquility"\(^ {192}\) is found at its heart. Epicurus understands friendship, claims O'Connor, as supportive fellowship which offers pleasure and protection but at the same time does not undermine self-sufficiency. Even a person's death would not cripple or depress the person's friends for they would be left with a "calming and pleasant remembrance of past intimacy."\(^ {193}\) It is difficult to say whether O'Connor is correct as such an evaluation would require a complete study of Epicurean philosophy, but what is clear is that friendship was important to Epicurus and to the type of community of \(\phi\ell\alpha\omicron\omicron\omicron\) which he formed and which continued to exist after his demise.

These later Epicurean \(\phi\ell\alpha\omicron\omicron\omicron\) have left behind texts which illustrate how friends are supposed to treat one another, and particularly, how they should speak to one another.

\(^{189}\) This latter point is made by Plutarch, \textit{Against Colotes} 8.1111b (LCL; trans. Benedict Einarson and Phillip H. De Lacy; London: Heinemann; Cambridge: Harvard, 1967).

\(^{190}\) These positions are outlined in David K. O'Connor, "The Invulnerable Pleasures of Epicurean Friendship," \textit{GRBS} 30 (1989) 30.

\(^{191}\) O'Connor, "The Invulnerable Pleasures," 165.

\(^{192}\) O'Connor, "The Invulnerable Pleasures," 166.

\(^{193}\) O'Connor, "The Invulnerable Pleasures," 175.
The first century B.C.E. Epicurean, Philodemus of Gadara, who lived at Herculaneum, wrote an essay on frankness, *Περὶ παρρησίας*,¹⁹⁴ which explains how one is to go about speaking firmly and honestly, but not cruelly, to fellow disciples or friends. This direct, and often reproving talk was intended for the edification of one’s friends and it was directly opposed to flattering speech, a thing detestable to many philosophers. The goal of frank criticism was the moral improvement of the addressee and the relationship of the speaker to the listener was somewhat akin to that of a physician and patient.¹⁹⁵ Philodemus uses the verb *θεραπεύω*, for example, to indicate that the friends must "treat" one another for their errors.¹⁹⁶ With some friends or pupils, one had to be harsher, depending upon their character, but one must be careful not to overly chastise the young, for example, because they "might become irritated" and hate everyone; indeed, "[t]he use of inconsiderate frank speech ... severs the social relations among friends of the community."¹⁹⁷ This frank criticism, although sometimes hard to take, was ultimately the "sign of a genuine friend," while the flatterer, in contrast, "gives himself away by a self-interested adulation that is exploitative rather than altruistic."¹⁹⁸

The diametric opposition between friendship and flattery was not always an issue in the history of Greek friendship. During the archaic and classical ages, flattery was considered to be a vice but it did not figure as a problem in friendship relations as

---

¹⁹⁴. All references to Philodemus's *Περὶ παρρησίας* are to the edition by Alexander Olivieri (Leipzig: Teubner, 1914).


¹⁹⁶. "... that he [the student] can be treated, either by us or by another of his fellow students" (*Περὶ παρρησίας*, fr. 79).


friends were generally equals. Moreover, παρρησία was understood more as a political right to freedom of speech rather than the personal quality of candour. As Arnaldo Momigliano put it, with the defeat of Athens by Philip of Macedon, "Menander replaced Aristophanes, and parrhesia as a private virtue replaced parrhesia as a political right."199 During Hellenistic times, however, friendships became common between unequals and were thus more susceptible to exploitation, that is, people would pretend to be friends to those either above or beneath them, but then prove themselves untrue when the so-called "friend" was in trouble. As Konstan explains, the main problem of this period became "the fair-weather friend."200 Such relations were further complicated by the system of patron-client relations, in which wealthier people would provide for a group of clients in exchange for services, labour or honours. A worrisome and somewhat irritating feature of this system was the fact that some clients would attempt to become friends with their patron through smooth talk, flattery, and sometimes even imitation of frank speech, for the sole purpose of seeking favours of the patron. Philosophers of friendship, such as Philodemus, found these flatterers particularly revolting, as not only were they selfish and deceitful, they threatened to undermine and pervert true friendship. Such hatred of flatterers became a thematic feature of writings on friendship from the Hellenistic period onwards.

b. Stoicism

Stoicism also emerged during the Hellenistic period under Zeno, and continued to thrive into the imperial age, with such notable sages as Epictetus, Seneca and Marcus


Aurelius. Thanks to Diogenes Laertius, we have information about some of the earliest Stoics, while lectures, letters, and reflections of later Stoics also survive.

The chief aim of life among the Stoics was to achieve εὐδαιμονία, as it was among many other ancient philosophers. However, in addition to wholeness and self-sufficiency, the Stoics placed particular emphasis upon virtue as an essential requirement for εὐδαιμονία for "virtue is the state of mind which tends to make the whole of life harmonious." The happy person, then, must be a virtuous person for whom all other things, including health, beauty, wealth, fame etc ... are a matter of indifference. These latter things are not rejected by the Stoics, rather, they simply do not rank as prerequisites for εὐδαιμονία in the manner that virtue does. For the Stoic, the wise person must be self-sufficient and as such, detached from the external changes in circumstances that life inexorably brings.

Although the Stoics accept and promote friendship, it is also ultimately a matter of indifference in comparison to virtue. However, only those who are virtuous, the wise, can have and be friends as they are the sole people capable of the moral commitment required for friendship.

Friendship, they [the Stoics] declare, exists only between the wise and good, by reason of their likeness to one another. And by friendship they mean a common use of all that has to do with life, wherein we treat our friends as we should ourselves. They argue that a friend is worth having for his own sake and that it is a good thing to have many friends. But among the bad there is, they hold, no such thing as friendship, and thus no bad man has a friend (Lives 7.124).

The Stoics, as is clear from Diogenes, echo many of the typical characteristics of friendship, including the notion of similarity between friends (they both must be virtuous) and the idea that one must treat one's friends just as one would treat one's

201. Diogenes Laertius, Lives 7.89.

self, even to the point of dying for the friend. Yet there is a seeming conundrum here. How is one to reconcile the notion of friendship with the austere self-sufficiency of the Stoic sages? "Would someone as free from affect as the sage care sufficiently about others to be a real friend or be likely to have others take him to be a friend?"

Glen Lesses argues that these two things, friendship and self-sufficiency, can accommodate one another within Stoic thought. Because friendship requires that both friends are virtuous, "one could infer that what a sage values in friendship is the moral virtue of another." Thus, not only could any moral person be friends with another moral person, "the individual and concrete personality of the friend becomes relatively unimportant for friendship." Friendship is rendered impersonal because its basis is moral virtue, and not powerful affection and attraction for another particular human being. Such a foundation for friendship therefore reduces the threat to one's self-sufficiency because 1) one friend cannot harm another as both must necessarily be virtuous, and 2) when one does something for a friend it is no different than "acting from a settled disposition to be virtuous" - one is no more vulnerable in acting on behalf of a friend than when acting from a sense of moral duty.

What about when friends die? For the Stoics, a wise person is again indifferent to life and death. The sage is not vulnerable to passionate emotions; he or she is immune to grief "seeing that grief is irrational contraction of the soul, as Apollodorus

203. Epictetus, Diss. 2.7.3. For more comparison between the Stoics and other Greek notions of friendship, see Hutter, Politics as Friendship, 124-25.


206. Hutter, Politics as Friendship, 128. The Stoics, unlike Aristotle and others, argue that one can have many friends if there are many virtuous people.


says in his *Ethics.* Moreover, grief is less likely to overcome a Stoic because the basis of his or her friendship for another is again, not the particular characteristics of the other person, not a result of spending time together and nurturing the friendship, as Aristotle would have it, but a proclivity for moral virtue. It may seem harsh in our context, but for the Stoics, when friend a dies, he or she can be easily replaced by another virtuous person. As Lesses aptly titles his article, the Stoics were "austere friends."

c. Neopythagoreanism

The Hellenistic age was the time of a Pythagorean revival, when numerous Pseudo-Pythagorean writings appeared. As mentioned earlier, no writings of Pythagoras survive, but sayings attributed to him, such as "Friends have everything in common." and "Friendship is equality," circulated widely. Traditions about him appear in classical writings, and small groups of Pythagoreans continued to exist until the first century BCE when the movement known as Neopythagoreanism appeared.

Neopythagorean writings span several hundred years from the first century BCE to the fourth century CE, and thus are subject to a variety of different philosophical, social and cultural influences. However, Johan C. Thom has surveyed these texts for

---


210. A good contrast to this Stoic perspective is the view of George Orwell ("Reflections on Gandhi," *The Penguin Essays of George Orwell* [London: Penguin, 1984] 469), who in his critique of Gandhi, wrote that part of the essence of being human is "that one does not seek perfection ... and that one is prepared in the end to be defeated and broken up by life, which is the inevitable price of fastening one's love upon other human individuals."


212. Diogenes Laertius (*Lives* 8.10) claims that the historian Timaeus of Tauromenium (4th-3rd century BCE) attributes these sayings to Pythagoras.

the *topos* of friendship and found them to be remarkably consistent. He observes that most of the materials on friendship offer practical, concrete suggestions as opposed to theoretical discussions. Not surprisingly, friends are expected to be loyal and to provide aid in times of need; here the friendships between specific Pythagoreans, Phintias and Damon, Cleinias and Prorus, are held up in Iamblichus’s *On the Pythagorean Life*\(^ {214}\) (which here relies upon the 4th century BCE source, *On the Pythagorean Life*, by Aristozenus) as exemplary.\(^ {215}\) According to Iamblichus, Pythagoras encouraged friendship of all with all:

friendship of gods for humans, through piety and worship based upon knowledge, ...
friendship of people for one another: fellow-citizens through a healthy respect for law, different peoples through a proper understanding of nature, a man with his wife and children and brothers and intimates through unswerving partnership; in short, friendship of all for all, including some of the non-rational animals through justice and natural connection and association; even the mortal body's pacification and reconciliation of opposite powers hidden within itself, through health and a lifestyle and practice of temperance ...(VP 229).

Regarding this point, Thom has made the very significant observation that in each case, \(\phi \lambda \iota \alpha\) requires specific virtues, whether it be piety, respect, justice or temperance, and that \(\phi \lambda \iota \alpha\) has transcended all limits and become "truly cosmic."\(^ {216}\)

There is evidence that this cosmic friendship did not translate into concrete friendships of the Pythagoreans with everyone. They did think that one should choose one’s friends carefully, after weighing the person’s character.\(^ {217}\) Furthermore, stories survive which reveal a strong element of exclusivity among Pythagoreans in that they would only befriend those who shared their unconventional lifestyle. Iamblichus and

\(^{214}\) I will use the translation of Iamblichus’s *On the Pythagorean Life* by Gillian Clark (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989).

\(^{215}\) Iamblichus, *VP* 234-240.

\(^{216}\) Thom, "‘Harmonious Equality,’" 97-99.

\(^{217}\) See Thom, "‘Harmonious Equality,’" 87, who refers to the *Sentences of Cliitarchus* 88.
Porphyry (in part)²¹⁸ relate the tale of two Pythagoreans, Myllias and Timycha, a husband and wife, who are captured by the tyrant Dionysios. Dionysios offers them the joint rule of his kingdom if they will tell him why Pythagoreans would rather die than tread on beans. The two refuse to tell him and Dionysios orders Myllias to be taken away and the pregnant Timycha to be tortured, thinking that she will easily relent without her husband to protect her. Timycha, however, bites her own tongue off so that she will not "spill the beans," so to speak, and the moral of the tale is that these Pythagoreans would risk anything in order to refuse friendship with outsiders, even kings.

Such anecdotes support claims that Pythagorean friendship may have consisted more of "sectarian solidarity"²¹⁹ than personal affection. Certainly, if the other claims about Pythagoreans are true - that they made a five year vow of silence, were strict vegetarians, and shared all their goods - it must have been difficult to extend bonds of friendship outside of the circle, for external relationships would undoubtedly threaten the solidarity of the group. It could be, as has been suggested, that the Pythagoreans' lofty notion of friendship of all for all was in reality only intended for members of their coterie.²²⁰

d. Plutarch

The first century Greek philosopher and moralist, Plutarch, is another key source for views of ancient Greek friendship. Plutarch was well read in Greek philosophy and

²¹⁸. Iamblichus, VP 192-94. For Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras*, see the translation by Edouard des Places (Collection des universités de France; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1982).


his writings reveal that numerous Greek ideas about friendship imbue his own thoughts on the subject. Yet Plutarch also lived and lectured for a time in Rome, and observed Roman conditions, including the highly established system of patron-client relations to which he appears to have reacted. He is therefore a good author to discuss as we leave the ideological world of Hellenism and enter the Roman world.

Many of Plutarch's compositions discuss friendship and echo the ideas of various Greek philosophers whom we have already encountered. For example, Plutarch does not think that one should have too many friends, for undoubtedly, some of those so-called friends will not be true friends, but those seeking some type of selfish gain. Consider the following excerpt from *On Having Many Friends*:

> In the houses of rich men and rulers, the people see a noisy throng of visitors offering their greetings and shaking hands and playing the part of armed retainers, and they think that those who have so many friends must be happy. Yet they can see a far greater number of flies in those persons' kitchens. But the flies do not stay on after the good food is gone, nor the retainers after their patron's usefulness is gone (94B [LCL]).

As Edward O'Neil observes, Plutarch may have the system of patron-client relations in mind here, as he describes people who appear to be friends but in reality are only out for themselves. True friends, according to Plutarch, are rare, for they must be constant and loyal. In friendship there "must be no element unlike, uneven, or unequal, but all must be alike to engender agreement in words, counsels, opinions, and feelings, and it must be as if one soul (μία ψυχή) were apportioned among two or more bodies." It is thus not possible to have many friends, for one cannot share so much with so many people without becoming like a chameleon or cuttle-fish, which takes on the colour of

---


223. *On Having Many Friends* 96E.
whatever rock to which it clings.224 Because friendship "seeks for a fixed and steadfast character which does not shift about," a genuine friend is "something rare and hard to find."225 In this sense, Plutarch is quite similar to the classical writers, especially Aristotle.

O'Neil has surveyed the themes or τόπος in Plutarch's writings on friendship which the moralist shares with many other philosophers of friendship.226 Rather than reiterating all of these themes, I want to focus upon Plutarch's adamant distinction between friends and flatterers, which he makes most forcefully in his essay, How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend.227 Here again we see the nexus of friendship, frankness and flattery which we observed in the writings of Philodemus.

For Plutarch, the true friend is someone who will use παραφεικέα in a tactful, considerate manner for the benefit of his or her friend.228 The flatterer (κόλαξ), however, is a fake; a person who pretends to be friends, who may use frank speech in order to convince the listener that he or she is a sincere friend, but who is in fact a dangerous individual.229 As described earlier, the flatterer is a chameleon-person who is fickle, changing all the time, eager to dance around swearing oaths and soliciting witnesses to support him whenever he is accused of anything. The friend, however, is the complete

224. On Having Many Friends 96F.

225. On Having Many Friends 97B.

226. O'Neil ("Plutarch on Friendship," 113-22) shows how Plutarch must have been familiar with some of the typical goods that are typical of true friendship, including goodwill, intimacy, frankness, kindness, pleasure, usefulness and like-mindedness.

227. I will use the translation by Frank Cole Babbitt (LCL; London: Heinemann; Cambridge: Harvard, 1928).

228. Flatterer 71B.

antithesis of the flatterer, and does not require such formalities or ministrations.  The language of noble friendship is simple (ἀπλούς) and void of phoniness and posturing.

Flatterers, moreover, are obsessed with, and covetous of, status and will dishonestly seek to improve their reputations or gain wealth by exploiting the trust and sincerity of other people through the emulation of friendly behaviour. Plutarch calls them apes. True friends, in contrast, do not possess envy (φθονος) for one another nor are they inclined to fall into emulation (ἡλος), for they bear one another's successes and failures with equanimity. In fact, as Troels Engberg-Pedersen argues, Plutarch appears to regard true, honest friendship to be the "apogee" of a moral system; "the place where that system is realized." Frank speech or criticism is a means towards this end of friendship, whereas flattery is destructive of it; flattery "perverts" friendship and the moral system which it represents.

For Engberg-Pedersen, "How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend" is a plea for a moral expression based upon trust, permanence of character, loyalty and sincerity - all things that are constitutive of friendship. This expression faced the threat of erosion by the highly status-conscious practice of patronage, which placed all people within a hierarchy. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill has summed up this latter system of human relations:

230. Flatterer 62D.
231. Flatterer 62C.
232. Flatterer 52B.
233. Flatterer 54C.
234. Flatterer 54C.
From the point of view of the society, patronage represented a flexible method of integration and simultaneously of social control; that is not to say that it was always effective, nor indeed a particularly attractive system to live in. From the point of view of the individual patron, the ability to persuade others of his power to secure access to benefits was the basis of social credibility. The ideology thus both results from and morally underpins the social system.237

Such a scheme for society did not promote genuine friendship, for people were constantly scrambling to either climb up the status ladder or at least, not fall off of it - and they apparently employed all of the skills of the flatterer to do so. They fawned upon the wealthy and powerful, offering phony "sage" advice or sweet compliments if required, all in the hopes of obtaining some small favour or distinction, or of exploiting the generosity of the person whom they had lured into their nets. There was no place for trust, sincerity, intimacy, simplicity or loyalty here, only cunning and guile.

But what likely irritated Plutarch more than all else was the fact that within this world of patronage, patrons and clients were often described as φίλακτος. The flatterer imitated the friend, employing frank speech in his duplicity, and was therefore sometimes extremely difficult to detect, "as in the case with some animals to which Nature has given the faculty of changing their hue, so that they exactly conform to the colours and objects beneath them."238 According to Engberg-Pedersen, such a designation of patrons and clients as friends "should be seen as a sham. It reflects an attempt to conceal the real ties, which were strongly hierarchical and status-determined."239

In his emphatic demonstration of the differences between friendship and flattery, and of the need to be able to distinguish between the two, Plutarch may be engaging in a larger social and political argument within which friendship and flattery represent, indeed embody, opposite poles. Genuine friendship delineates a society of trust and


238. Flatterer 51D.

permanency, whereas flattery exemplifies the world of patronage in which people are obsessed with their own status and potential gains. As Engberg-Pedersen suggests, whenever we observe this nexus of friendship, flattery and frankness of speech within ancient texts, there is likely "a concern about the status system and a set of counter-values."240 This is not to say that Plutarch, a well-to-do person, wanted to equalize wealth or obliterate all status distinctions, but simply that he was frustrated by the threat flattery posed to his noble ideal of friendship and the behaviour which characterized such an association.

3. Conclusion

In this section we have seen that throughout the Hellenistic and into the imperial periods, Greek friendship was a varied phenomenon. For example, φίλος is used in the description of political relationships, of which we saw evidence in papyri and in the work of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Friendship language is also highly significant within philosophical circles. The Stoics perceived friendship in an impersonal way, such that the particularities of each person did not figure in the friendship - only the fact that they were both virtuous. Any virtuous person could be friends with another, and one was not supposed to grieve when a friend died.241 The Epicureans, on the other hand, remained self-sufficient even in the face of a friend's death, but they did so because they had the pleasant reminder of the friend's life. Both philosophical groups, therefore, appear to have been able to reconcile friendship with their fundamental principle of a life of self-sufficiency, the Stoics placing particular emphasis upon virtue and

241. Hutter (Politics as Friendship, 132) questions whether this Stoic conception of friendship can be truly called friendship.
the Epicureans on pleasure. Neopythagoreans are harder to characterize, as the sources are more varied, but they also highly valued friendship, and there is evidence that it may have become a means of preserving their sectarianism.

Some of the texts and authors discussed in this section lived during the Roman empire, as opposed to the Hellenistic period, but they still reflect Greek ideas. For example, the fictional writer Chariton reveals to what extent loyalty and altruism was valued within friendship relations, although he also presents the possibility that husbands and wives could be friends, perhaps reflective of the growing idealization of Roman family life. However, a later writer, Lucian, may be jeering at this absolute loyalty of friends, when he depicts tales of one-sided friendships, of friends swearing their allegiance with oaths of blood, and of exaggerated and fabulous circumstances.

Plutarch, one of our best sources, expresses worries at the growing use of friendship language within patron-client relationships. As various papyri and inscriptions indicate, friendship language was used in Hellenistic courts to describe relations between rulers and those who were beneath them, including advisors and courtiers. Plutarch seems to have been concerned about the pretensions to friendship in such circles. Genuine friendship, for him, manifests an ethic of honesty, trust and loyalty that is antithetical to behaviour encouraged by the patronage system. It is no surprise that he is so infuriated by flatterers who pretend to be friends in order to impress their patrons, for their cheap imitation perverts true friendship, and threatens to erode those values upon which it is based.

**Roman Friendship**

242. As Konstan ("Patrons and Friends," 333) writes: "The formal institution of an inner circle of friends who served the Hellenistic monarchs as a personal council of advisors doubtless contributed to the interest in proper relations between superiors and inferiors under the rubric of friendship."
Although Latin developed a separate vocabulary for patronage, this blurring of patron-client and friendship relations was also problematic for some Roman authors, just as it was for Plutarch. Unlike the Greek word φιλία, which describes relationships of affection between any two or more people, regardless of their biological connection, Latin had a more precise word for friendship, amicitia. This term refers to a relationship between two friends or amici, although the precise nature of the relationship could vary. Some scholars have claimed that amicitia was simply a practical association, void of affection and intimacy, or they have suggested that there is no distinction between a patron-client association and one of friendship. Others, such as Richard Saller, have argued that the distinction between a client and a friend is sometimes so small that they could both be examined within the framework of patronage. He writes:

To discuss bonds between senior aristocrats and their aspiring juniors in terms of ‘friendship’ seems to me misleading, because of the egalitarian overtones that word has in modern English. Though willing to extend the courtesy of the label amicus to some of their inferiors, the status-conscious Romans did not allow the courtesy to obscure the relative social standings of the two parties. On the contrary, amici were subdivided into categories: superiores, pares and inferiores (and then lower down the hierarchy, humble clientes). Each category called for an appropriate mode of behaviour, of which the Romans were acutely aware (Pliny, Ep. 7.3.2, 2.6.2; Seneca, Ep. 94.14). The central question of this paper is whether amici inferiores can appropriately be analysed under the heading of patronage. Resemblances between the behaviour of aristocratic amici inferiores and clientes suggest that such an analysis would be a reasonable way of proceeding.

Indeed, as Saller argues, there is some overlap between amicitia and clientela in the Roman world. Sometimes, both elements were present within a relationship as friend-

243. This is the view of Ronald Syme, The Roman Revolution (Oxford: OUP, 1939) 157.

244. Konstan ("Patrons and Friends," 328) refers to Nicholas Horsfall (Poets and Patron: Maecenas, Horace and the Georgics, Once More [North Ryde, 1981] 5) writes: "the line between amicus ‘friend’ and amicus ‘client’ should not be drawn, now or at any point later in the relationship."

ships could exist between persons of unequal stations in life. But Roman friendship is not wholly reducible to a patron-client association, nor to a mere practical association. Peter Brunt writes that

"The range of amicitia is vast. From the constant intimacy and goodwill of virtuous or at least like-minded men to the courtesy that etiquette normally enjoined on gentlemen, it covers every degree of genuinely or overtly amicable relation. Within this spectrum purely political connections have their place, but one whose all-importance must not be assumed."

The word amicitia may have been used broadly, but this does not mean that the characteristics of loyalty, honesty and trustworthiness were no longer important aspects of friendship, even in associations which were more political than intimate. Some Latin authors make it very clear, moreover, that they understand there to be a difference between amicitia and clientela. But before we turn to those writers, let us examine Cicero's Laelius de amicitia, which reveals to what extent intimate friendship based upon virtue prevailed as a noble phenomenon in the world of the late Roman Republic.

1. Cicero

Cicero, a first century BC Roman orator and philosopher, was clearly well-read in Greek philosophy, as were many of the Roman intellectuals. His fictional dialogue on friendship, the Laelius, is indebted to Greek philosophy as characteristics of Greek friendship regularly appear in this work. For example, he echos Xenophon's and the

246. See Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 136-37.


Stoics' conviction that friendship cannot exist except among good, virtuous people.\textsuperscript{249} For Cicero, friendship is based upon goodwill; "if you remove good will from friendship the very name of friendship is gone," and "without virtue friendship cannot exist at all."\textsuperscript{250} Like many philosophers before him, Cicero grants that such virtuous friendships are rare,\textsuperscript{251} for there is a "dearth" of people who are "firm, steadfast and constant," all required features of a genuine friend.\textsuperscript{252} These virtues of loyalty (\textit{fides}) and constancy (\textit{constantia}) are significant Ciceronian ingredients for a friendship, and he refers to these qualities on a number of occasions throughout his dialogue.\textsuperscript{253}

Another important element in determining whether a friend is genuine or not is a period of trial. A person may initially appear to be a friend through their generous offerings of goodwill and support, but in the end they may prove highly unreliable. As Cicero explains: "Hence it is the part of wisdom to check the headlong rush of goodwill as we would that of a chariot, and thereby so manage friendship that we may in some degree put the dispositions of friends, as we often do those of horses, to a preliminary test."\textsuperscript{254} The philosopher is not naive; he knows that many may deliver sweet words but are ultimately unreliable, even deceitful. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that he has a particular dislike for flatterers, whom he thinks hypocritical, counterfeit and fickle: "nothing is to be considered a greater bane of friendship than fawning, cajolery, or flattery."\textsuperscript{255} He refers to this vice more than once, and usually

\textsuperscript{250} Lael. 20, 21.
\textsuperscript{251} Lael. 64.
\textsuperscript{252} Lael. 62.
\textsuperscript{253} See, for example, Lael. 65.
\textsuperscript{254} Lael. 63.
\textsuperscript{255} Lael. 91.
when he is providing a contrast to the honest and forthright speech that is required of friends. Like Philodemus and Plutarch, Cicero considers frank criticism, intended for the betterment of one's friend, to be "characteristic of true friendship" and flattery its nemesis.

In his dissertation on the *topos* of friendship in antiquity, Gottfried Bohnenblust noticed Cicero's references to the idea of friends becoming one soul, and thus Bohnenblust included Cicero in his discussion of this particular feature of Greek friendship. Cicero writes that the friend is "another self" and that "the effect of friendship is to make, as it were, one soul [* unus animus*] out of many." He objects to fickleness and changeability of character precisely because such inconsistency would prevent the unification of souls, as there would be no enduring loyalty nor sincerity (*veritas*), "without which the word friendship can have no meaning." Like Aristotle and Plutarch, Cicero thought that two friends could mingle their souls, such that one soul could be made out of two.

Cicero was fully aware that advantages, often political advantages, were gained from friendship, but gain or privilege was not the sole purpose of such a bond, as the above excerpts from the *Laelius* should have made clear. However, the *Laelius* is principally a discussion of the highest form of friendship, that between virtuous people, whereas Cicero was aware that other, "ordinary" friendships could exist. These "ordinary" associations often materialized within the political arena, in which virtuous


258. *Lael.* 80; 92.


friendships were extremely rare, and could break down when the persons involved changed their dispositions or tastes, or, significantly, when disagreements arose about the state. The latter issue seems to have been of particular concern to Cicero, just as it was to Theophrastus. What was one to do when one's state allegiance clashed with one's friendships?

Although he discusses the problem with respect to ordinary friendships, Cicero was deeply familiar with Roman politics and undoubtedly witnessed men destroying deep bonds of friendship because of their political ambitions and loyalties. The assassination of Julius Caesar occurred during the last year of Cicero's life, and was probably another reason why he meditated upon the nature of friendship during that year, and as a result composed the *Laelius*. Ultimately, for Cicero, loyalty to friends could not justify a crime against the state. To violate or sin against one’s country was dishonourable and evinced a lack of virtue. He writes: "Therefore it is no justification whatever of your sin to have sinned on behalf of a friend; for, since his belief in your virtue induced the friendship, it is hard for that friendship to remain if you have forsaken virtue." And then:

> Therefore let this law be established in friendship: neither ask dishonourable things, nor do them, if asked. And dishonourable it certainly is, and not to be allowed, for anyone to plead in defence of sins in general and especially of those against the State, that he committed them for the sake of a friend (*Lael. 38; 40*).

Aulus Gellius tells us that Cicero had read Theophrastus' treatise, *On Philia*, but had not dealt as thoroughly with the problem of loyalty to friends versus loyalty to the state as had Theophrastus. Cicero does grant that a person may overlook certain kinds of dishonourable behaviour in friends, but there are limits to such allowances. Here Gel-

---

261. *Lael. 64*.

262. *Lael. 77f*.

lius wishes that Cicero would be clearer about what these limits are. We know that Cicero is against placing the value of a friendship over faithfulness to the state, but he does not spell out in detail the types of misdemeanors which he would tolerate in a friend.

2. Friendship and Patronage in the Roman World

Cicero's *Laelius* is solid evidence that the notion of a friendship based upon goodwill and virtue was a noble idea during the late Roman Republic. As mentioned above, however, *amicitia* had a broad range of meaning, and could encompass intimate associations or mutual relations of *politesse*. In Rome, friendships existed between persons of both equal and unequal statures and could involve an exchange of goods and services. It is for this reason that some scholars have stated that friendship in its Roman form could be indistinguishable from a patron-client relationship. For example, Barbara Gold writes that "[t]he word *amicus* is a perfect locus for discussing patronage, since it is a nicely ambiguous word which applies equally well to political allies or personal intimates, to the patron or the client." Indeed, Roman society was excep-

264. *Lael*. 61. Brunt (*Amicitia,* 380-81) points out that Cicero was representing the Roman tradition: "the good man was true to his friends, but not to the extent that he was bound to assist them in doing wrong, and above all not in dereliction of the supreme duty to the fatherland, than which there could be no graver example than the imposition of despotic rule."

265. As Konstan (*Friendship in the Classical World*, 128) writes: "...helpfulness is traditionally the mark of a friend and services may be interpreted as a sign of good will or amicableness. Mutual support is the point at which the vocabularies of friendship and exchange of benefits intersect, and Cicero moves naturally between the two issues, defending his integrity on both the counts of refraining from offending a supposed friend and of being conscientious in respect to any genuine debts of gratitude he may owe." Interestingly, in his treatise on benefaction (*De beneficis* 7.12 [LCL; trans. John W. Basore; Cambridge: Harvard; London: Heinemann, 1935]), Seneca states that one can make a gift to a friend, "although we say that friends have all things in common."

tionally stratified, and people were often vying for the attentions and friendships of the wealthy and powerful. Sometimes a client of a wealthy person was also a friend, especially among the poets and their "great friends" who gave the artists material wealth, fame and influence in exchange for "the gift of poetic immortality," that is, poetic tributes to the rich person's qualities.²⁶⁷

However, as discussed earlier, this does not mean that patronage and friendship were one and the same. Friendship required honesty and goodwill between the two amici,²⁶⁸ even if they were of separate social stations, or were not particularly close. Friends offered frank criticism; they did not flatter one another in order to gain advantages, as Plutarch made so utterly clear. Thus when both friendship and patronage existed together, tensions might surface as the friends could not always be sure whether the other's action sprang from bona fide friendship or another, possibly manipulative, strategy. Moreover, friends occasionally became clients, for as Peter White observes. "[a]n exchange that was badly balanced over time might also work to clientize a friend."²⁶⁹

David Konstan has examined the works of two Roman poets, Horace and Juvenal, with a focus upon this issue of friendship and patronage. In Juvenal's fifth satire, for example, the poet ridicules a certain Trebius, who fancies that he will attain the friendship of the wealthy patron, Virro. Juvenal exposes the fact that in reality, all Trebius will achieve is a client status and will "be as humble and indifferent to the eyes of Virro as the mob that lines up to salute him each day."²⁷⁰ Trebius is invited to


Virro's home for a meal but Virro treats him horribly, uncovering to what extent Virro
does not consider Trebius a friend, but a mere hanger-on, that he can humiliate and
exploit. Juvenal concludes his satire by informing Trebius what his imagined friendship
with Virro will be like: "If you can endure such things, you deserve them; some day
you will be offering your head to be shaved and slapped: nor will you flinch from a
stroke of the whip, well worthy of such a feast and such a friend."271

Some have interpreted this satire to equate friendship with patronage,272 whereas
Konstan has shown that Juvenal refers to friends and friendship throughout the satire
with his tongue firmly placed inside of his cheek. Part of Juvenal's humour resides in
his portrayal of the "friendship" between these two characters as an absurd tale of abuse
and manipulation. The irony lies in the tension between this absurdity and the notion of
friendship as "a relationship based upon mutuality and generosity."273 Trebius and
Virro play at being friends, but in reality their association is based upon utility. Virro,
the more powerful of the two, actually exploits Trebius, making their so-called friend-
ship all the more counterfeit. Rather than likening friendship to patronage, Juvenal lays
bare the hypocrisy of those who pretend to be friends but are in truth manipulating one
another for their own interests.

Horace's eighteenth epistle also underlines the contrast between friendship and
patronage. Horace spends the bulk of this letter advising its addressee, Lollius, a man
of candour (Horace calls him liberrime)274 on how to be an accommodating client. Lol-
lius' natural disposition is to be straightforward and unafraid of speaking with frank

1950).


274. Horace, Epistle 18.1 (LCL; trans. H. Rushton Fairclough; London: Heinemann; Cambridge: Har-
vard, 1942).
speech (*libertas*) but Horace is seemingly against such honesty and pushes him in the opposite direction "to the point of endorsing the kind of assumed expressions and attitudes characteristic of the flatterer." But then suddenly Horace changes his course and counsels Lollius to seek the quiet life; to read and to question the wise. He states: "Those who have never tried think it pleasant to court a friend in power; one who has tried dreads it." The poet exhorts Lollius to seek his own way, to be free from the anxiety and fears that catering to a patron produces. He asks Lollius, "What will make you a friend to yourself?" and states that the path, he, Horace, has taken is that of a secluded, unencumbered life, in which he may not "waver to and fro with the hopes of each uncertain hour."

This letter demonstrates, then, that a life of independence is not compatible with the life of a client; of someone who must indulge the whims of a patron and adjust his or her behaviour based upon the fancies of the wealthy and powerful. In the first part of the letter, Horace referred to Lollius' patron as a "rich friend," "great friend," and "worshipful friend" but again, the designation "friend" is likely ironic in the sense that this "friend" is far from the frank and good spirited person that an ideal friend is understood to be. Lollius may think that he has a friend in his patron, but in actuality he has only someone who will force him to quell his instinct to speak forthrightly, forcing him, instead, to speak in an ingratiating and pleasing manner.

---

281. *Epist.* 18.73.
Such behaviour is counter to Lollius’ disposition for independence and thus Horace ends the letter with a plea for the quiet life, dependent upon no one but one’s self.

3. Conclusion

In Rome, friendship was still perceived by some as a relationship based upon mutual goodwill and honesty, as Cicero’s reflections upon the subject illustrate. However, friendships did exist among people of differing social classes. It was common for patrons and clients to call one another amici even when the ideals of generosity and frankness did not manifest themselves in the relationship. It is this sort of pretension that the poets Horace and Juvenal sharply criticize, for they believe, like Plutarch, that it is hypocritical to call someone a friend whom one does not treat with genuine affection and goodwill. In practice, friendship could and did overlap with patronage, but they could not be conflated.

Jewish Friendship

1. Hebrew Bible

Gustav Stählin states that "the very fact that φιλος and φιλία occur predominantly in the originally Greek texts of the LXX shows that we have here a concept which is fundamentally alien to the OT world."282 It is true that φιλος appears 91 times in the apocryphal/deuterocanonical books, especially Sirach (which has a Hebrew original, albeit in fragments) and 1 Maccabees, while it is translated from a Hebrew

original 62 times, and the Hebrew word is not consistent.\textsuperscript{283} The most common Hebrew original is יר but this word is often translated into Greek as πλησίον which can connote a variety of things including "neighbour," "another," "friend," "companion," and "paramour."\textsuperscript{284} Other Hebrew original words include אהב (eg. Esth 5:10), מַרְאֶה (Prov 12:26), and זָרַע (Prov 16:28), andobar (Dan 2:13, 17).\textsuperscript{285}

Hebrew thus has no consistent vocabulary of friendship,\textsuperscript{286} but this does not mean that the idea of an intimate and loyal bond between people did not exist for the ancient Israelites. The relationship between Jonathan and David ranks as a great friendship, comparable to that between other famous pairs of friends, such as Achilles and Patroclus, because of its intensity. 1 Sam 18:1 states that the "soul (שם) of Jonathan was bound to the soul (שם) of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul (שם)."

This latter statement is repeated a few times in 1 Samuel (1 Sam 18:3; 20:17), and is reminiscent of Deut 13:7, which refers to "your friend (יר) who is as your own soul (שם)." Jonathan gives David his own robe, armour and weapons, thereby, in Stählin's view, making David the "alter ego of his friend [Jonathan]."\textsuperscript{287} This connection between wearing a friend’s armour and being their alter ego was discussed earlier in the examination of friendship in archaic Greece, with reference to the fact that Patroclus died in the armour of his great friend, Achilles. When David laments the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, he says of Jonathan, "I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan;

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{283} Gregory E. Sterling, ("The Bond of Humanity: Friendship in Philo of Alexandria," \textit{Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship}, 204, n.5) has provided a very helpful tabulation of the number of times in which φίλος appears in the LXX and the different Hebrew words from which it has been translated.
\item \textsuperscript{284} Johannes Fichtner, "πλησίον in the LXX and the Neighbour in the OT," \textit{TDNT} 6 (1968) 312-14.
\item \textsuperscript{285} The Theodotion text of Daniel uses φίλος for רַבּ but the LXX does not. For more discussion of the number of times particular Hebrew words are translated into φίλος, see Stählin, "φίλος, φίλη, φιλία," 154-56.
\item \textsuperscript{286} Pizzolato, \textit{L'idea di amicizia}, 222.
\item \textsuperscript{287} Stählin, "φίλος, φίλη, φιλία," 156.
\end{itemize}
greatly beloved were you to me; your love (אהבה) to me was wonderful, passing the
love of women" (2 Sam 1:26). Such a strong profession of love for a friend recalls the
intense relationship between Achilles and Patroclus, such that Achilles returned to
battle not because of the call of duty, but to avenge the death of his friend.

In a number of instances, the Hebrew Bible associates the quality of דוד, which
has been translated as "loving loyalty"288 or "faithful love," with friendships between
people and between humans and God. This is true of the friendship between Jonathan
and David, for when they make a covenant of friendship, Jonathan says: "If I am still
alive, show me the faithful love ( bạcות) of the Lord; but if I die, never cut off your
faithful love ( comunità) from my house" (1 Sam 10:14-15a). Norman Habel thus suggests
that "[i]n David's bond of friendship with Jonathan there was a strong relationship
between human hesed and the divine hesed of Yahweh expressed through a human
being towards a friend."289 The book of Job also links דוד with friendship, although
not the דוד of God. Marvin H. Pope has translated Job 6:14 as "A sick man should
have the loyalty ( דבר) from his friend (דבר), though he forsake fear of Shaddai."290
which indicates how, for the author of Job, human loyalty was a prerequisite for friend-
ship, even in moments of alienation from the divine.291 Unfortunately Job's friends
cannot live up to this requirement, and refuse to commiserate with Job in his anger and
frustration at God.

288. See William Hugh Brownlee, The Dead Sea Manual of Discipline (BASORSup 10-12; New Haven:

289. Norman Habel, "'Only the Jackal is my Friend.' On Friends and Redeemers in Job," Int 31 (1977)
230.

290. Marvin H. Pope, Job. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB 15; New York:
Doubleday, 1965) 49.

291. Habel ("'Only the Jackal is my Friend,'" 230) writes that for the author of Job, '[t]o be a friend is
to be cohuman in a dehumanized situation where a despairing man has lost his religion as a source of
inner support."
Throughout Proverbs there are various statements about friendship, including references to those who only pretend to be friends. Prov 18:24 states: "Some friends play at friendship but a true friend (בָּדָא) sticks closer than one's nearest kin." Fair weather friends are plentiful during prosperity (Prov 19:6) but when people face destitution, their friends disappear (Prov 19:7). The true friend, however, will stand fast despite the hard times that the other encounters. To hate a friend (יָד) is even to sin (נָא) according to Prov 14:21a while the second half of the proverb states that to have compassion on the poor is to be blessed. Such a pairing of ideas strongly suggests that to be a friend is to have compassion for others especially when they face poverty and despair.292

The notion of human friendship with God is also present in the Hebrew Bible. Exod 33:11 states that God would speak face to face with Moses, "as one speaks to a friend" (יָד), and 2 Chron 20:7 refers to Abraham as God's friend (בָּדָא), as does Isa 41:8 (בָּדָא is also used here in reference to Abraham). The Exodus reference to friendship may serve to emphasize Moses' role as a personal mediator between God and Israel, as throughout Exodus 32 to 34, "the twofold connection [of Moses] with Yahweh, as intimate friend and as designated mediator, is exhibited and exploited."293 The designation of Abraham as God's friend may find its origins in Gen 18:17 which describes the "exceptional character of Abraham's relationship to God."294 Abraham is also an exemplar of trust and faith in God, and it is likely for this reason, as we will

---


see, that the epithet, "friend of God," is applied to him more often in later Jewish and some early Christian literature.295

Finally, the idea of a "friend" as an official position appears in the Hebrew texts. 1 Kgs 4:2-6 delineates all of the dignitaries in Solomon's court including Zabud, a priest but also the "king's friend" (חכם). David's court includes Hushai, who is referred to as David's friend (חכם) in 2 Sam 15:37 and 16:16 but also as a servant to the king in 2 Sam 15:34; 16:19. These friendships do not embody the degree of affection that existed between David and Jonathan. Rather, they indicate a specific office, held by only one person, which, based upon the comparative evidence gathered by A. van Selms, may have began as a Canaanite concept of a "best man" who assisted the king at his wedding, but then later developed into a more focused political position.296 As with the Greek inscriptional and papyri evidence, therefore, the Hebrew texts reveal that the notion of friendship could be an emotional, affectionate bond or a fundamentally political tie.

Although the vocabulary to describe friendship in the Hebrew Bible is not consistent, that the ancient Israelites valued intimate, trusting bonds between people and between God and specific figures is indisputable. The notion of sharing a life or a soul (שדנ) with a friend existed for the biblical writers, as did the idea that friends maintain faithful love ( bağlı) for one another through thick and thin. Certain patriarchal heroes, particularly Abraham, even obtain the honour of being called God's friend, due to their undying faithfulness in the God of Israel.

2. LXX


The translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek and the creation and addition of other documents reveals that Hellenistic Jews expressed more interest in friendship. As mentioned above, the word φίλος appears 91 times in the apocryphal/deuterocanonical books while only 62 times as a translation of a Hebrew original. Some Hellenistic Jewish texts, such as the Maccabean books, refer to φίλος quite often but Sirach puts forth the "most extensive treatment of friendship within the Catholic canon of Scripture." Reflection upon friendship, although pervasive throughout the Graeco-Roman world, was thus of considerable interest to Middle Judaism.

a. Friendship with God

Before exploring these texts, the issue of friendship with God requires further examination. We have seen that the idea of friendship with God appears in the Hebrew Bible, and the Greek translators apparently found such a notion entirely acceptable. On the one hand, they translate the Exod 33:11 passage with the word φίλος - God spoke to Moses as one speaks to a friend, but even more compelling is Wis 7:27, which says that in every generation wisdom passes into holy souls (ψυχάς) and makes them friends of God (φίλους θεοῦ) and prophets (προφήτας). The passage continues on: "for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom" (Wis 7:28). To be a friend of God is to be beloved by God, but why does the passage include a mention of making people prophets? For David Winston, the reference indicates that wisdom is the source of prophecy; that "in each generation [wisdom is] guiding the friends of God

297. See Sterling, "The Bond of Humanity," 204 n.5.
and inspiring his prophets. "300 The emphasis is upon the power of wisdom; she can do everything, including making some humans friends of God and empowering others to speak as prophets.

Apart from indicating that to be a friend of God is to be loved by God, the Wisdom passage does not provide any other details about the relationship. In fact, most texts which refer to friendship with God do not elaborate a great deal on the subject. Moreover, there is some question as to whether non-Jewish and non-Christian Greek thinkers would have accepted such an idea at all. Is the notion of friendship with God then confined to the Jewish and Christian realm of ideas?

The classic study on the topic of friendship with God is the 1923 article by Erik Peterson, and his ideas have been used by subsequent authors.301 Peterson traced the idea of friendship with God through the classical Greek writings, the biblical traditions, and other Jewish and early Christian texts. He argued that that there were two streams of ideas in Greek classical antiquity, one accepting friendship between people and gods, and another, exemplified by Aristotle, which rejected it. Philo and later Christian writers, he says, were influenced by both the Greek classical traditions which supported the notion of friendship with God, as well as by the biblical traditions which endorsed it.302

Peterson's thesis has been recently challenged by David Konstan, who has offered a different interpretation of the Greek classical texts upon which Peterson depends to build his argument. Konstan contends that Peterson has based his discussion upon an

erroneous reading of the literature: Peterson has failed to distinguish between the adjectival and substantive use of the word φίλος. In Homeric times, we recall, mortals could be "dear" to the gods (Διὸ φίλος), but this did not mean that they were their "friends." Peterson, however, reads forms of φίλος substantively rather than as an adjective. For example, he refers to Plato's Timaeus 53D (ὅς ἄν ἐκεῖνω φίλος ἦι) as an instance of friendship between a man and God, but as Konstan explains, the passage refers to "whosoever may be dear to that one [the god]" not a "friend" of God. Similarly, Peterson cites a passage from Xenophon's Symposium, which refers to οὖτοι τοῖνυν οἱ πάντα μὲν εἴδοντες, πάντα δὲ δυνάμενοι θεοὶ οὐτω μοι φίλοι εἰσίν ὡστε διὰ τὸ ἐπιμέλεισθαι μοι οὕποτε λήθω (4.47-48). But again, this passage, as Konstan points out, does not refer to the gods as friends, but to the fact that they are friendly to the speaker; that the speaker, Hermogenes, is loved by the gods.

Peterson cites other similar examples that are easily refuted by Konstan, as well as some trickier ones, which are also analysed and rejected but on different grounds. For example, the phrase φίλος θεῶ appears in Maximus of Tyre, but Konstan and others charge that the expression is a marginal gloss that was subsequently added by a copyist who was comfortable with such an idea. Konstan does grant Peterson's point, however, that among the Stoics there was some talk of friendship between gods and mortals, for as a text from Pseudo-Plutarch's "Life of Homer," states: "the Stoics, who declare that good men are friends of gods (φίλους θεῶν τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἀνδρας),

305. Cited in Peterson, "Der Gottesfreund," 162.
took this too from Homer" (143). 309 Konstan also allows for the evidence from Philodemus' On the Gods: καλεῖτω καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς τῶν θεῶν φίλους καὶ τοὺς θεοὺς τῶν σοφῶν, 310 which in his view allows for the expression "friends of the gods" "in a restricted sense." 311 But he goes on to quote more of Philodemus, who says "we do not seem to call such things friendship," 312 as if it is very unusual to call mortals and gods friends. Konstan also deals with Peterson's references to Epictetus' use of φίλος τοῦ θεοῦ. In Epictetus' Discourses 2.17.19, a hypothetical young man says that he shall be satisfied if he can "look up to heaven as a friend of God (ὡς φίλον τοῦ θεοῦ)." 313 Then in 4.3.9 Epictetus claims that he is a "free man and a friend of God (φίλος τοῦ θεοῦ)." Peterson cites these examples as clear evidence for Greek acceptance of the idea of friendship with God, 314 but Konstan argues that in the first case Epictetus places ὡς before the expression, thereby softening it, while in the second example, Konstan argues that the Stoic is using very strong language because he is "playing here on his status as a former slave." 315

In my view, Konstan has not sufficiently refuted Peterson's evidence for the Greek acceptance of friendship with God. Peterson has overstated his claims for the classical Greek acceptance of the idea, but that there were various individuals, espe-


cially the Stoics, who sanctioned the concept is clear. Epictetus may be using strong language because he is freed from slavery, but all the same, he clearly says that he is a friend of God, meaning, as the passage continues, that he "shall obey Him of [his] own free will" (4.3.9). Moreover, Pseudo-Plutarch was aware that some Stoics accepted the idea of friendship with God, and Philodemus allowed for it, even if only in a narrowly defined way. Therefore, although the concept only appears solidly in a few Greek texts, Konstan has not entirely convinced me that the "Christian interest in friendship with God derives wholly from Biblical passages." Early Christian writers may have been influenced by a variety of traditions, and one must study each of them individually to determine to what extent biblical or Greek sources may have been influential.

b. Ben Sira

By far the greatest density of friendship language and reflection is within that category of writings known as Wisdom literature, and among these documents, the Book of Sirach gives the most consideration to the subject. Ben Sira depends upon a variety of sources, including non-Jewish literature, but he also vigorously oppose[s] any compromise of Jewish values and traditions (cf. 2:12) and pronounce[s] woe to those who forsook Israel's Law (4:18), with which wisdom itself, in his view, [is] to be identified (24:23).

316. It is interesting that in his subsequent book, Konstan (Friendship in the Classical World, 168) is a little less strong in his criticism of Peterson, claiming that Peterson "greatly overstated the case for friendship with the gods in early classical sources." In his earlier article ("Problems," 91) Konstan had bluntly stated that "Peterson ... is wrong about the classical materials."


Some of Ben Sira’s statements about friendship likely did not emerge from Jewish traditions, but judging from the attention he pays to the topic, it is entirely compatible with his Jewish identity and convictions.

Ben Sira’s advice about friendship, at least as it has been translated into Greek by his grandson, exhibits a number of similarities to Greek views of the relationship. First, as with many of the writings on friendship that we have encountered so far, Ben Sira refers to the rarity of faithful friends. A faithful friend (φίλος πιστός) is precious, provides shelter and is the medicine of life (φάρμακον ὕπη) (6:14-15). A true friend will never betray the confidence of his friend, for if he does, he has destroyed the friendship (27:16-21). Moreover, Ben Sira counsels that one should remain true to a friend when he is poor or in trouble, for when he is prosperous, he will share his wealth (22:13-26). In this instance it appears that the author has self-interested reasons for remaining true to the friend; as Patrick Skehan and Alexander A. Di Lella comment, the "advice Ben Sira gives on friendship is quite pragmatic and self-serving."322

Genuine friendship for Ben Sira does require, however, shared moral responsibilities. He states that firm friendship will be between two people who both fear the Lord (6:17). He gives instructions not only about loyalty to friends but on how one should speak to a friend. One should straightforwardly question a friend if there is reason to think that he had done something wrong, or said something injurious. If he had, the questioning would prevent him from doing it or saying it again (19:13-14). One thus has a responsibility to give a friend a chance to defend himself and to improve upon his behaviour, while at the same time to "make allowances for the friend’s fail-

320. Sanders (Ben Sira and Demotic Wisdom, 29-38) argues that Ben Sira’s sections on drinking and friendship show dependence upon Theognis.

321. Ben Sira appears to be referring to exclusively male relationships. As is well known, his attitude toward women is regrettable.

ure," for who has not sinned with his tongue (19:16b)? Friends should also be realistic and honest in the way in which they deal with one another, and remember that even if they "open their mouth against a friend" (22:22), they can be reconciled. But one should not make promises to a friend (ἐπαγγελλόμενος φίλῳ) out of shame, for this will lead to enmity (20:23), nor should one display contempt toward or betray a friend, for then the friend will leave (22:22). Although he does not explicitly refer to παρρησία, Ben Sira sounds a little similar to Philodemus, who emphasizes the correction of friends, but not to the point of insult and alienation.

The Jewish teacher is also deeply concerned that one not make friends too hastily. A person should test a new friend, and put him through a period of trial (πειρασμός) before trusting him (6:7). Probably the best test of friendship is to determine whether the prospective friend will be supportive in adversity, for Ben Sira states that we cannot know our friends in our prosperity (12:8). The sage is aware of those who behave as friends when one is successful but subsequently disappear when disaster strikes (6:8; 12:9), in other words, he is quite familiar with the notion of a "fair weather friend" and hence cautions against immediately placing confidence in people who approach with friendly words.

Scholars have argued that friendship is highly significant for some of Ben Sira's social, and particularly his theological, convictions. Friedrich V. Reiterer, for example, is convinced that although friendship is subordinate to the themes of the wisdom of the


324. Ingrid Krammer ("Scham im Zusammenhang mit Freundschaft," Freundschaft bei Ben Sira [BZAW 244; ed. Friedrich V. Reiterer; Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter] 198-99) has observed how Ben Sira brings together the concepts of shame and friendship several times throughout his work. She argues that for Ben Sira there is a concept of "rechte Scham" or proper shame which represents the loyalty and trust which one should have in order to preserve a friendship, as well as "falsche Scham" which is faithless and only serves to destroy relationships.
aged, and fear of God, it is central to Ben Sira's notion of a good society.\textsuperscript{325} William H. Irwin, moreover, has argued that human friendship is an analogy to Ben Sira's concept of the fear of God. Irwin demonstrates how Ben Sira's ideas of right relationship with God and right relationship with a friend are presented along similar lines, there being the requirements of faithfulness, trust, and a period of testing in both types of relationships.\textsuperscript{326} Furthermore, Jeremy Corley has observed that "although the sage's friendship pericopes do not often mention God, they have a theological underpinning which relates his teachings on the topic to Israel's faith."\textsuperscript{327} Friendship is obviously of great importance for Ben Sira, just as it is for his non-Jewish contemporaries.

3. Philo

Another Hellenistic Jewish writer who expresses an interest in friendship is the early first century CE philosopher and theologian, Philo of Alexandria. Philo does not provide a sustained analysis of the topic, but he refers to friendship repeatedly throughout his work and in such a manner that it appears to have been quite significant to him.

Gregory E. Sterling has paid specific attention to the role of friendship within Philo's works and found that the ancient writer is quite familiar with Greek notions of what this relationship entails. For example, Philo contrasts friends with flatterers in six

\textsuperscript{325} Friedrich V. Reiterer, "Gelungene Freundschaft als tragende Säule einer Gesellschaft," \textit{Freundschaft bei Ben Sira}, 133-69.

\textsuperscript{326} Irwin, "Fear of God," 551-59.

\textsuperscript{327} Jeremy Corley, \textit{Ben Sira's Teaching on Friendship} (Ph.D. dissertation; Catholic University of America, 1996) 342.
different texts, and in one instance explicitly states that "[f]rankness of speech (παραφεισία) is akin to friendship (φιλία)." Comparable to many Greek thinkers, Philo argues for an altruistic understanding of friendship in which one must desire goodwill (εὐνοεῖα) for the neighbour or friend for his own sake. He presumes there to be a strong connection between goodwill and friendship such that the two are interchangeable, just as they are in Middle Stoic and Middle Platonic traditions. Philo also shares the notion that friends possess similar souls. He cites Deut 13:7 when he states that "in Moses' view a friend is so near that he differs not a whit from one's own soul, for he says, 'the friend, who is equal to thy soul.'" Moreover, Philo describes the Essenes and Therapeutae as having their possessions in common, another typical way of describing friends.

Like the biblical writers, Philo is comfortable with the idea of a human-divine friendship. He says that the wise are friends of God (φίλαι θεοῦ), and he refers to specific individuals, such as Abraham and Moses, who are friends with God. Philo also wrote: "For if, as the proverb says, what belongs to friends is common, and the

328. Leg. 2.10; 3.182; Agr. 164; Plant. 104-05; Conf. 48; Migr. 111-12. Cited in Sterling, "The Bond of Humanity," 206 n.18.


330. Plant. 106.

331. See Sterling, "The Bond of Humanity," 209 n.34.

332. Her. 83.

333. For the Essenes, see Prob. 85-87; for the Therapeutae, see Contempl. 13-17.

334. Sterling ("The Bond of Humanity," 215) argues that Philo's presentation of the Essenes and Therapeutae in the "garb of Western philosophy" is "an apologetic device claiming that these groups practiced the highest ideals of the Greek philosophical tradition."

335. Her. 21.

336. Sobr. 56; Somn. 1.193-95.
prophet is called the friend of God (φίλος θεοῦ), it would follow that he shares also God's possessions, so far as it is serviceable."

This excerpt is similar to a syllogism attributed to Diogenes the Cynic, and its presence in Philo may be evidence that he was aware that there was a notion of friendship with God in non-Jewish circles.

Sterling maintains that for Philo, friendship is an important philosophical concept which enabled the ancient writer to express a Jewish universal understanding of humanity: when "Philo’s thought becomes universal he uses the language of friendship." Other authors, such as J. Massyngbaerde Ford, have noticed that Philo makes a "clear association between friendship and the covenant and, implicitly, redemption." Neither of these dimensions of Philo's perception and application of friendship language will be explored here, but the fact that scholars have observed such things confirms to what degree this Hellenistic Jewish author thought friendship was a crucial aspect of human and divine interaction.

4. Other Jewish Sources

Apart from Ben Sira and Philo, there is little focussed attention to friendship within Jewish writing, but there is evidence that the concept was widespread within Judaism. The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides state that "it is better to make a gracious friend (φίλος) than an enemy" and that one should "love your friends until death, for


faithfulness is a good thing.\textsuperscript{341} In a discussion of the destructive power of anger, the Testament of Dan states that the angry person will not acknowledge a friend.\textsuperscript{342} In Rabbinic Judaism, friendship is applied to the relationship between students and their teachers.\textsuperscript{343} The one who studies Torah is thought of as a friend. \textit{m. 'Abot} 6.1 quotes R. Meir, who said,

Whosoever engages in [the study of] the Law for its own sake, merits many things, and, not only so, he is [as it were] deserving of the whole world, and he is called friend (ψιλος), beloved [of God], lover or the Omnipresent, lover of humanity...\textsuperscript{344}

Study of the Torah is thus linked to the way in which one treats other people.

The notion of friendship with God appears in various Jewish texts. The Book of Jubilees states that those who do not commit sin or break the covenant "will be written down as friends" in the heavenly tablets.\textsuperscript{345} Similarly, Abraham was found faithful by God and for that reason was recorded in the heavenly tablets as a friend of God in \textit{Jub.} 19.9. In the Testament of Abraham, Abraham is called the friend (φιλας) of God, presumably because he "did all pleasing things before [God],"\textsuperscript{346} while in the Apocalypse of Abraham Abraham is called "beloved" by God because he "desired to search for [God]" and subsequently he is addressed as "friend of God" by an angel.\textsuperscript{347}

\textsuperscript{341} For translation and commentary, van der Horst, \textit{The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides}. 208, 252.

\textsuperscript{342} For translation and commentary, see H. W. Hollander and M. de Jonge, \textit{The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. A Commentary} (SVTP 8; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985) 278-80.

\textsuperscript{343} See Stählin, "φιλας, φίλη, φιλίας." 157.


\textsuperscript{346} \textit{Test. Abr.} A 15 (trans. Michael E. Stone; SBLTT 2 Pseudepigrapha Series 2; Missoula: SBL, 1972) 41.

Rabbinic literature also refers to Abraham as a friend of God, probably due to the influence of the biblical texts. The Damascus Document at Qumran, moreover, has been translated to refer to Abraham as a "friend [ידוהי] of God for keeping God's precepts and not following the desire of his spirit." Likewise Isaac and Jacob "were written up as friends of God" because they also kept God's precepts. Obedience and complete faith in God are the recurring qualities which earn various persons the epithet "friend" of God in this literature, although Abraham receives it most often due to its explicit association with him in the biblical texts.

5. Conclusion

Friendship was not foreign to Jewish writers, especially those who had been influenced by Hellenism. Both Ben Sira and Philo betray a thorough knowledge of the Greek characteristics of friendship, which they are able to incorporate into their own particular theological and philosophical perspectives. It is noteworthy that the concept of friendship between humans and the divine was much more common among Jewish authors, witnessed by the status of specific biblical heroes, such as Moses and Abraham, who are referred to as friends of God. This is not to say that such a notion

348. This is the view of Florentino García Martínez, "The Heavenly Tablets in the Book of Jubilees," Studies in the Book of Jubilees (eds. Matthias Albani, Jörg Frey and Armin Lange: Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997) 246. Rabbinic references to Abraham (and others) as a friend of God include b. Menah. 53b; t. Ber. 7.13; Sifre Num. 115; Sifre Deut. 352; Mek. Bo 18.22. In some cases, other biblical heroes are included as friends of God. See also, Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews 5 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1929) 207-08.


350. Recently, Wayne McCready ("Friendship and Religious Self-Definition" [Oral presentation made at the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies, Ottawa, 1998] 15-16) has made the suggestion that friendship was an important factor in the formation and self-definition of sectarian groups at the turn of the common era. The example he uses is the group at Qumran as exemplified by the Manual of Discipline. Thanks to Dr. McCready for permitting me to refer to his paper.
did not exist in the non-Jewish Greek world, but simply that it was much more prevalent in Jewish texts.

**Friendship in the New Testament**

Many have noticed that the New Testament largely favours kinship language over that of friendship. Friedrich Hauck has argued that the lack of an emphasis upon friendship in the New Testament is largely due to the new emphasis by the early church upon humanity’s relationship with God. Greek friendship concentrated upon human associations, whereas the early Christians were more concerned about their relationship with God.\(^3\) Hans-Josef Klauck, moreover, suggests that kinship language is preferred in the New Testament because brother-sister terminology is a more binding metaphor for relationships, and as the first Christian communities emerged from Judaism, they would have felt more united as sons and daughters of God.\(^2\)

Recently, Ann Graham Brock has suggested that φιλέω and φίλος were more significant for some early Christian groups than has previously been recognized. Many have supposed that the early Christians thought that ἀγαπάω represented a higher form of love than φιλέω, a supposition largely based upon the fact that Paul uses ἀγαπάω so often, and only uses φιλέω once.\(^3\) Brock, however, argues that φιλέω may not deserve to be in quite such a diminished position when compared to ἀγαπάω. Some early Christians may have even had a greater appreciation for the use of the φιλοι- and φιλέω-related words than has previously been considered.\(^4\)

---


Moreover, Alan C. Mitchell has demonstrated that although the New Testament writers rarely used φιλία and φιλος, such avoidance "has not deterred them from invoking friendship conventions associated with the normal sense of those words."\(^{355}\) The New Testament does not offer an extended treatment of friendship, but there is plenty of evidence that the writers were familiar with this popular philosophical concept.

1. Paul

It is true, as Brock and others have observed, that Paul almost entirely avoids the terms φιλος and φιλέω.\(^{356}\) Scholars have posited various reasons for this absence. J. N. Sevenster, for example, argues that Greek friendship was too anthropocentric an idea for Paul, who wanted his congregations to bond together in christocentric relationships.\(^{357}\) Abraham J. Malherbe also takes this view, and adds that Paul "thought of Christian relationships as determined by God's call and not human virtues."\(^{358}\) E. A. Judge believes that explicit friendship language would have been too closely associated with patronage and status distinctions, which Paul wants to avoid.\(^{359}\) Peter Marshall augments this latter observation by suggesting that in contrast to status language, Paul uses a vocabulary built upon the idea of unity "based on the notions of servitude and


\(^{356}\) Paul uses φιλήω in 1 Cor 16:22. To the question of why Paul would use φιλήω here and not elsewhere, Brock ("The Significance," 394) responds that this was an earlier liturgical tradition which Paul inherited. Such a tradition is evidence "of the early usage of the φιλήω word family in the vocabulary of at least some of the early Christian communities."

\(^{357}\) J. N. Sevenster, Paul and Seneca (NovTSup 4; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1961) 179.

\(^{358}\) Abraham J. Malherbe, Paul and the Popular Philosophers, 63.

subordination to Christ and to each other." Finally, Mitchell hypothesizes that because friendship was such a popular concept by Paul's day, Paul "could allude to it, practice it, and encourage it among his communities without naming it as such."

Whatever the explanation for the lack of explicit φίλος terminology, Paul often alludes to friendship, as various authors have noticed. First, it must be mentioned that Paul is aware of the Hellenistic friendly letter tradition and uses elements of it in a number of his letters, particularly 1 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans and Philippians. Secondly, the apostle uses specific friendship topoi within his epistles. Marshall has analysed the Corinthian correspondence in light of ancient Greek friendship and found that "it lies at the heart of [Paul's] conflict with the Corinthians." By exploring aspects of friendship, for example, the antithetical relationship of enmity, throughout the correspondence, Marshall argues that we can gain a much more accurate picture of the nature of Paul's struggles with the Corinthians. David E. Fredrickson has demonstrated how Paul repeatedly uses παρηγορία, both in the sense of speaking freely, and for the improvement of his hearers, the latter being key in relations between friends. Hans Dieter Betz has carefully outlined a string of friendship


362. Mitchell ("‘Greet the Friends by Name,’" 226-36) provides a very good outline of the role of friendship in Pauline letters.


themes in Gal 4:12-20, which include such topics as reciprocity between equals (v. 12),
the notion that friends should not do one another harm (v. 12), the portrayal of Paul's
opponents as flatterers (v. 17) and the loyalty required of friends even when they are
separated (v. 18). Marshall, moreover, has shown that the use of friendship *topoi* in
this part of the letter not only describes the friendship between Paul and the congregation,
it plays an important role in Paul's strategy to expose how his opponents have
exploited friendship traditions in order to endear themselves to the Galatians. Using
evidence from Gal 1:6-10, Marshall argues that the opponents have criticized Paul and
attempted to breed an anti-Paul sentiment among the Galatians. Such an endeavour is
characteristic of flatterers and it is this aspect of the opponents' nature that Paul tries to
reveal, while insisting upon his own sincere friendship. Authors have also noticed the
theme of dying for one's friend in Rom 5:6-8, although Paul alters the tradition somewhat by claiming that Christ died even for sinners and the ungodly. Furthermore, in
Rom 15:14-33, Benjamin Fiore has noticed friendship *topoi*, including the emphasis
upon sharing and support (vss. 26-27) and Paul's references to the Romans' goodness
and the fact that they instruct one another (v. 14), as friends often did.

But it is Paul's letter to the Philippians which invokes friendship the most. A
number of authors have argued that this letter conforms in some respects to a "friend-
ship letter," although all of Paul's letters are "mixed' in terms of their style and con-

367. For a full list of friendship topoi in this section of Galatians, see Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians*, 220-
37. Betz (*Galatians*, 298-301; 304-06) has also demonstrated how Paul appeals to friendship traditions in
Gal 6:2 (sharing burdens) and 6:6 (sharing things in common).


tent." John T. Fitzgerald believes that even if this letter does not fit precisely into the Gattung of a friendship letter, it is helpful to think of it in this way as it would highlight the importance of the hitherto unexplored presence of friendship topoi. These topoi occur in a variety of places throughout Philippians. For example, Paul repeatedly stresses his affection and desire to be with his friends in Philippi (1:7, 8; 4:1), a characteristic of friendship letters and of relations between friends generally: they long to be together. Paul emphasizes sharing, or κοινωνία, in this letter and in fact, uses κοινωνία or one of its cognates six times throughout Philippians (1:5, 7; 2:2; 3:10; 4:14-15). Paul also refers to the idea of being "one soul" (μία ψυχή) with the Philippians (1:27), he asks them to be "fellow souls" (συμψυχοι) in 2:2 and he ascribes to Timothy the status of being "of equal soul" (ισόψυχος) with himself (2:20). Related to the "sameness of soul" concept is the notion that friends think the same thing, and Paul uses this idea twice, in 2:2 when he asks the Philippians to complete his joy by being of the same mind, and in 4:2, when he requests the same of Euodia and Syntyche. "In both cases, he is using the cultural idiom to exhort the Philippians in general, and Euodia and Syntyche in particular, to be friends." L. Michael White, moreover, has interpreted the Christ hymn in Phil 2:6-11 to be a paradigmatic example of what true friendship is. Christ is the ultimate friend who is willing to lose his status,
suffer and even die for the sake of others. The ordeal which the hymn describes, suggests White, 'is being portrayed, at least in part, as an all-surpassing act of selfless love - that is, the supreme virtue of friendship.'

Recent studies on friendship in Philippians have drawn particular attention to chapter 4, in which Paul entreats Euodia and Syntyche to settle their differences and thanks the Philippians for helping him. Ken Berry has traced the friendship language throughout 4:10-20 and argued that here, Paul is not only emphasizing his sincere friendship with the Philippians, but also the fact that he sets a good example as "a model of self-sufficiency and concern for others without thought for personal gain." Moreover, Berry argues that Paul urges the Philippians to understand their friendship within the sphere of their relationship to God, for he assures them that God will supply all of their needs (4:19). Malherbe demonstrates that Paul's description of his self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) (vs. 11) recalls Greek philosophical discussions of the relationship between self-sufficiency and friendship. Truly virtuous friendships, such as that between Paul and the Philippians, do not proceed from need, but from virtue. Along similar lines, through an analysis of 4:1-10 and evidence from other parts of the letter, Fitzgerald deduces that "Paul's goal seems to be that of transforming their relationship with each other, and theirs with him, from one of utility to one of virtue."


379. Berry, "The Function," 123. Mitchell ("'Greet the Friends by Name,'" 234-36) also describes the position of Martin Ebner (Leidenslisten und Apostelbrief: Untersuchungen zu Form, Motivik und Funktion der Peristasenkataloge bei Paulus [FB; Würzburg: Echter, 1991] 331-64) who contends that Paul's statement in 4:19, that God will provide for every need, is the description of a true friend and thus Paul is promoting friendship between the Philippians and God.


Unlike Paul, Luke is much more inclined to use φιλος language; in fact, he uses it more than any other New Testament writer.382 There are several examples of Lukan Q material which use the word φιλος while the same material in Matthew does not.383 The book of Acts, like Luke’s gospel, contains a higher number of φιλω related words than ἀγαπᾶω ones, the latter which only occur once in Acts.384

Luke seemingly employs φιλος as a title for believers,385 and his is the only gospel with the Parable of the Persistent Friend (11:5-8). In Acts he uses the sayings associated with friendship: "all things in common" (ἀπαντακοινώ) (2:44; 4:32) and "one soul" (ψυχῆ μίαι) (4:32) to describe the early believers. Mitchell observes that these sayings circulated widely as friendship traditions (even if they were rarely lived out, especially the notion of sharing all material things in common) and thus he wonders how Luke understands them. In his close study of friendship traditions in Luke-Acts, he concludes that the evangelist deployed these traditions as a vehicle "to encourage upper status people in the community to benefit those beneath them."386 Luke promoted friendship within the early church communities to the extent that he


385. See Mitchell, "‘Greet the Friends by Name,’" 236 n.46, and Brock, "The Significance," 400.

386. Mitchell, "‘Greet the Friends by Name,’" 239.
wanted those of different degrees of wealth and status to bridge their differences and become friends with one another.

Concretely for Luke, friendship meant that those of more means would have to give up some of their wealth for the sake of the entire Christian community. Such a practice was not unheard of, but as has been mentioned, ἀπονετά κοινά, despite its wide circulation, did not necessarily manifest itself in the form of renouncing one's wealth for the sake of another. Philosophers such as Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca and Plutarch invoked the saying κοινά τὰ φιλαν, and advocated generosity toward others, but not to the extent that they would forsake their own personal wealth, nor in order to obliterate the status divisions which existed in their society. Theirs was an ethic of friendship, but one largely limited to a world of educated elites who wanted to preserve their ability to help their friends, and thus maintain their rights to private property. 387

Mitchell provides seven reasons in support of his thesis that Luke is going farther than the philosophers referred to above, and advocating a friendship community which destroys distinctions in wealth and status. 388 First, Luke expects wealthier Christians to help the less fortunate with no expectation of a return (Lk 6:34-35; 14:12-14; Acts 20:35). Next, in the two summaries in Acts 2:44-47 and 4:32-37, Luke uses egalitarian friendship language, such as the two maxims cited above, to emphasize unity and harmony in the Christian community. Third, in these summaries Luke alludes to traditions from the LXX, for example, the union of heart and soul (Deut 4:29; cf. Acts 4:32) which would place "the equality of the friendship ideal in terms of religious obligation." 389 Then, Luke uses the image of Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37), a landowner.

387. These philosophers' positions are sketched by Mitchell, "'Greet the Friends by Name,'" 244-46 and also in his article, "The Social Function of Friendship in Acts 2:44-47 and 4:32-37," JBL 111 (1992) 262-64.

388. Mitchell, "'Greet the Friends by Name,'" 248-57.

389. Mitchell, "'Greet the Friends by Name,'" 252.
laying the money he made from the sale of his field at the apostles' feet. This is a striking image of status reversal, for Barnabas was likely a wealthy person while the apostles were poor fishers who had given up their possessions to follow Jesus (Lk 18:28). Mitchell's fifth piece of evidence is the example of Ananias and Sapphira, who, contrary to Barnabas, secretly attempt to keep a portion of the proceeds from their sale of land and die as a result (Acts 5:1-11). It is here, Mitchell suggests, that Luke may be levelling a critique at those who, such as the philosophers mentioned above, justified their personal wealth by stating that they needed it in order to help their friends. This rationalization is not acceptable to Luke. Sixth, Peter performs what is described as an act of benefaction (Acts 4:9) in Acts 3:1-10 when he heals a cripple, but unlike a typical benefactor, he expects nothing in return. This behaviour conforms well with Luke's description of believers in Lk 22:25-26 which contrasts authoritative benefactors with community leaders, who, rather than control others, must serve the rest of the community members. Finally, Luke provides various examples of people traversing social boundaries in Acts. As Mitchell points out, "[t]he picture is one of people from differing statuses joining together, and, often, those of a higher status aiding those of a lower one."390 Thus, if Mitchell is correct, Luke promoted the friendship ethic to such a degree that it could extend across social divisions, and, moreover, required the wealthier friends to forfeit their own personal property for the sake of the community of friends. Such an ethic was rarely lived out in antiquity, but some of the early Christians may have been exemplars of it.

3. John

---

390. Mitchell, "'Greet the Friends by Name,'" 256-57.
The author of the Fourth Gospel uses ἀγαπάω more than φιλέω, but certainly does not resist φιλέω nor φιλος, some instances of which appear to have emerged from source material or tradition, while others likely served the author’s objectives.\(^{391}\) Φιλος often represents someone who has a significant relationship with Jesus, such as John the Baptist (3:29), Lazarus (11:11) and the disciples (15:14-15). The word also appears in the passion narrative, however, when "the Jews" accuse Pilate of not being Caesar’s φιλος if he sets Jesus free (19:12).\(^{392}\)

The most striking reference to friendship in the Gospel of John is the statement in 15:13 that there is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s φιλοι. This aspect of friendship has surfaced in various ancient texts,\(^{393}\) but it seems especially significant for the Johannine community,\(^{394}\) as this is the behaviour expected of the Good Shepherd (10:11, 15, 17-18) and then it is presented again in 1 John 3:16, as something community members must be willing to do for one another. Mitchell observes how this emphasis upon love for community members, represented by a willingness to die for one another, is quite different from the command to love one’s enemies. This emphasis may have emerged from the sectarian nature of this community and the threat of persecution which may have required members to die for one another.\(^{395}\) The gospel continues to use friendship language in John 15:14-15 in which Jesus tells his disciples that they are his φιλοι if they do what he commands them to do, and then says: "No

---

391. Brock, "The Significance," 405-06.

392. In addition to Mitchell ("Greet the Friends," 257-59), see Ford (Redeemer, 109) for an overview of John’s use of φιλος and φιλέω.

393. For example, Aristotle, Eth. Nic. 9.8.9; Epictetus, Diss. 2.7.3; Plutarch, Ad. Col. 8.111b.

394. For an evaluation of this theme in John, see Ford, Redeemer, 168-86.

longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." Jesus' disciples are now called his φίλοι because they share in the wisdom which Jesus has received from God. For John, "that which distinguishes the slave from the friend is knowledge." This is reminiscent of Wis 7:27 in which wisdom makes people "friends of God." Jesus' disciples are his friends because they share in his knowledge. They are not, however, his complete equals for again, they are his friends if they do as he commands (ἐντελεχεία), and they did not choose him, but he chose them.

4. Conclusion

The New Testament authors surveyed here use the friendship topos to suit their own needs. For Paul, friendship appears to have been a way of strengthening ties with various congregations, and sometimes correcting the congregations' perception of his friendship with them. Luke, who is more comfortable with explicit φίλοι language, promotes friendship across status boundaries, especially in his description of the early Christian community in Acts. The Gospel of John also appeals to friendship language, especially the notion that friends must be willing to die for one another, which may be reflective of the sectarian nature of the Johannine community. The fourth gospel also promotes the idea of a community of friends who share in the knowledge which Jesus as has revealed to them. The disciples are the φίλοι of Jesus, although Jesus maintains his status as their teacher and "commander."


Friendship traditions are thus by no means absent from New Testament texts. Moreover, as Brock has shown, some φίλος related words appear in pre-Pauline and pre-Gospel traditions. Φίλος and φιλέω therefore may have been more prevalent before many New Testament texts were composed.

**Friendship in Early Christian Literature**

Early Christians were interested in friendship, and as many of these individuals were educated in classical traditions, they possessed a familiarity with Graeco-Roman descriptions of this type of relationship. However, particularly during the fourth century and later, some Christians tended to avoid the classical words for friendship, φιλία and amicitia, in favour of ἀγάπη and caritas.\(^{398}\) Despite this decline of classical words for friendship, aspects of Greek and Roman notions of friendship still surface among Christian writers, but they are sometimes made secondary to Christian ideas.

1. First to Third Centuries

Some of the earliest non-canonical documents of early Christian literature reveal, as do some New Testament texts, that they are comfortable with φίλος language. The *Gospel of Peter* describes Mary Magdalene arriving at the tomb of Jesus with her φίλος (12.51). In this same gospel, Joseph of Arimathea is described as a φίλος of

---

398. Robert Joly, *Le Vocabulaire chrétien de l'amour est-il original? Φιλεῖν et Ἀγαπᾶν dans le grec antique* (Brussels: Presses Universitaires, 1968) has studied the history of the word φιλέω and found that it declines in usage in non-Christian literature before the rise of the church. Konstan ("Problems," 102 n.39) notes, however, that despite this decline, some early Christian writers "perceived a tension between the abstract nouns agapé and philia in ways foreign to pagan texts, and that these same writers tended to avoid the term philos (or amicus) in contexts relating to Christian love."
Jesus and of Pilate (2:3) and in the *Martyrdom of Peter* 10, Peter refers to Christ as his φίλος. 399

Abraham's friendship with God appears with some regularity within early Christian writings. *I Clement* refers to Abraham twice as being called "the Friend" (ὁ φίλος) (10.1) or the "Friend of God" (17.2), 400 and so do Tertullian and Ireneaus, 401 as if this title were common knowledge. 402 The notion of human friendship with God was generally acceptable within Christian circles. Clement of Alexandria makes reference to it throughout his writings, 403 while at the same time, he accepts Aristotle's three classes of friendship, the highest which is based upon virtue. 404 This idea of a human - divine friendship was to continue to exist among fourth century Christian writers and on into the Middle Ages.

2 *Clement* 6.1-6 is a particularly interesting passage which contrasts friendship with this world with friendship with the world to come:

And the Lord says: - "No servant can serve two masters." If we desire to serve both God and Mammon it is unprofitable to us, "For what is the advantage if a man gain the whole world but lose his soul (ψυχή)?" Now the world that is, and the world to come are two enemies (ἐχθροὶ). This world speaks of adultery, and corruption, and love of money, and deceit, but that world bids these things farewell. We cannot then be the friends (φίλοι) of both; but we must bid farewell to this world, to consort with that which is to come. We reckon that it is better to hate the things which are here, for they are little, and short-lived, and corruptible, but to love the things which are there, the good things which are incorruptible.

---


402. See also, Pizzolato, *L'idea di amicizia*, 239-40.

403. Clement, *Al. Prot.* 12.122.3; *Al. Strom.* 7.68.1.3.

It is noteworthy that the discussion of friendship with this world versus the world which is to come is tied to the saying in Q 16:13. If one chooses to be friends with this world, then one has presumably chosen Mammon over God. Likewise the saying found in Mk 8:36 (Mt 16:26; Lk 9:25) is incorporated into the passage, as if a person will lose their \( \psi\nu\chi\eta \) if they are friends with the world. The *Shepherd of Hermas* also downplays friendship with the world, although not in such explicit terms. The text first explains how ill temper can lead the servants of God who are double-minded (\( \delta\iota\psi\acute{\iota}\chi\circ\zeta \)) astray from righteousness. But ill temper can also creep into the heart of a tranquil person, such that the person is made bitter "out of nothing, because of daily business or of food or some trifle, or about some friend (\( \phi\acute{\iota}\lambda\circ\zeta \)), or about giving or receiving, or about some such foolish matters. For all these things are foolish and vain and meaningless, and unprofitable to the servants of God."\(^405\) Thus, although it does not mention the world, all of the daily things of the world, including friendships, are thought to be trivial and unimportant. It is no surprise, therefore, that this text also rejects friendships with non-Christians.\(^406\)

In contrast, Minucius Felix reflects upon the positive aspects of friendship when he thinks about his departed friend, Octavius. Minucius remembers how he and his cherished friend shared similar likes and dislikes as if "a single mind (\*unam mentem\*) had been parted into two."\(^407\) Clement of Alexandria is striking in his emphasis upon friendship as an important part of Christian discipleship, and as mentioned above, he accepted Aristotle’s taxonomy of friendships. He wrote, "the Lord did not say, ‘give,’ or ‘provide,’ or ‘benefit,’ or ‘help,’ but ‘make a friend (\( \phi\acute{\iota}\lambda\circ\zeta \));’ and a friend is made

\(^405\) Hermas, *Man.* 5.2.1-2.


not from one gift, but from complete relief and long companionship. "408 For these two early Christian writers, friendship (at least, friendship with other Christians) clothed in classical philosophical garb was not only acceptable, it was precious.

2. Fourth Century

By the fourth century, aspects of the so-called "pagan" concept of friendship had become problematic for some Christian writers, while others were able to integrate friendship into their Christian understanding of human relationships. There is no evidence that Christian doctrine directly clashed with Graeco-Roman notions of friendship, rather, some tensions arose over specific values associated with friendship and the ideas and sentiments that some Christians wished to emphasize.409

The word "some" is important here, as Christians from the same time and region did not always share similar views. Some of the church fathers wholeheartedly embraced friendship. A good example is the contrast in ideas of two Cappadocians, Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzus, whose friendship became a model for subsequent Byzantine writers.410 Gregory uses φιλανός regularly and refers to "pagan" sources as authorities on friendship with no compunction.411 In a letter to

---


411. Carolinne White (*Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992] 70-72) traces the influence of classical authors, including Homer, Hesiod, and Theognis, upon Gregory's views of friendship, while Konstan ("Problems," 104) demonstrates the Aristotelian and Stoic influences upon Gregory.
Sophronios⁴¹², he celebrates the fact, as did the Stoics, that friends are united by virtue, while in his letter to Palladios he says "If someone asked me, 'What is the best thing in this life?' I would respond, 'Friends.'"¹⁴³ He describes his friendship with Basil as two bodies bound by "one soul" (μία ψυχή),⁴¹⁴ and refers to the other proverbial phrase, "the possession of friends are in common" (κοινὰ τὰ τῶν φίλων) as the "rule of friendship."⁴¹⁵ Gregory also discusses friendship in Christian terms. In a letter which was probably addressed to Gregory of Nyssa, he states that all who live according to God and who follow the same gospel are friends (φίλων) and relations.⁴¹⁶ Nor did Gregory see any incongruity between the Christian emphasis upon loving everyone and an intimate personal relationship between two particular individuals. Carolinne White sums up this dimension of Gregory's perspective very well:

Even [Gregory's] belief that it was possible and legitimate to love some men more strongly than others is expressed in Christian terms and he appears not to have seen any conflict between man's duty to love all men and his desire for close friendships. In Ep. 147 he justifies his special love for Nicoboulos by saying that he is following God's example, for did not God, the creator of all, choose one race as his own but was not deemed unjust for so doing? Such special love could co-exist with a more general, extensive philanthropy which the very nature of Christ, the members of whose body all Christians are, teaches us to practice.⁴¹⁷

Gregory was thus able to fuse both classical and Christian concepts together in his view of friendship.

---


⁴¹³ Ep. 103.1.

⁴¹⁴ Gregory of Nazianus, Or. 43.20 (Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 42-43; [SC 384; ed. and trans. Jean Bernardi; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1992]).

⁴¹⁵ Ep. 31.1.

⁴¹⁶ Ep. 11.2.

⁴¹⁷ White, Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century, 72.
In contrast to Gregory, Basil appears to have been more powerfully influenced by Christian perspectives, although he did think friendship was important and developed a number of close friendships throughout his life. Classical ideas also have a role to play in Basil’s perception of friendship: he thought that friendship was a virtue and comments that the saying, ‘a friend is another self,’ is wise.418 Basil, like many others, is also conscious that flattery can ruin friendships and he makes a clear distinction between friendship and flattery at the close of a letter: "For herein especially does a friend differ from a flatterer; the flatterer speaks to give pleasure, but the friend refrains from nothing, even that which gives pain."419 Basil occasionally applies classical features of friendship, such as κοινωνία, to the wider context of the Christian community, and interestingly, he uses the word ὀμόψυχος, somewhat reminiscent of μία ψυχή, to describe communion within the church. He stresses the importance of writing letters, which were widely thought by classical authors to be the best substitute for a friend’s absence.420 Moreover, in his writings on monastic life, he argued that life in community was beneficial as the members would be with others of like mind and would care for one another materially and spiritually, including a firm rebuke here and there. Such a description conjures up the image of a Greek philosophical school.421

Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus had many quarrels, the reasons for which probably included the increasing ecclesiastical responsibilities and pressures with which Basil had to contend, and the resentment of Gregory that the two could not devote themselves

419. Ep. 20.
420. See White, Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century, 76-80; and Thraede, Grundzüge griechische-römischer Brieftopik, 125-46.
421. White, Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century, 81.
to an ascetic life of philosophy, as they had planned while students.422 However, another source of their conflict appears to have been Basil’s attitude that personal friendships should not interfere "with the realization of the Christian community or with the service of God."423 Basil is suspicious of close friendships in the coenobitic communities because he thought that they could "lead to a loss of equality among the members of that community and a consequent growth of mistrust and jealousy, even of hatred."424 Although Basil appears to have maintained a sincere affection for Gregory, Gregory appreciated that Basil proposed things to him not for Gregory’s sake alone, but for the sake of the church. This lead to feelings of betrayal in Gregory, as if Basil did not give priority to their friendship, and Gregory, in turn, did things which provoked Basil’s resentment. The reasons for all of Basil and Gregory’s battles may never be entirely clear, but it seems likely that at least one was this differing attitude toward friendship, and its importance in relation to allegiance to the community of Christians as a whole. Moreover, it is of note that Basil often uses the language of brotherhood instead of that of friendship, and substitutes ἀγάπη for φιλία. This is likely because Basil would prefer to be identified as a brother in the faith, rather than as a friend who has earned his status because of his own merits.425 The classical notion of friendship emphasized the virtuous nature of each friend, but for Basil, such an emphasis may have clashed with his notion of Christian humility and thus he wished to avoid an association with friendship.426

422. See White (Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century, 61-70) for a narration of the rocky, but sincere friendship between Basil and Gregory.

423. Van Dam, "Emperor, Bishops," 71.

424. White, Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century, 82.


426. As Basil (Ep. 56) writes: "and if we are filled with the conceit of empty pride and arrogance, then we are fallen into the sin of the devil from which there is no escape."
Like Gregory of Nazianzus, other famous Christians from the fourth century did not resist classical notions of friendship. However, they did not allow theories of friendship to jeopardize their commitment to Christ and to the Church. Ambrose of Milan's *De officiis ministrorum* is modeled upon Cicero's *De officiis* and his *Laelius*, although Ambrose also uses biblical texts to support his views of how Christian clergy should behave. The bishop devotes considerable space to friendship in this document, and he refers to it both with the words *amicitia* and *caritas*, as if the two were interchangeable. Ambrose calls the friend a "second self" and states that it is natural for one to search for another with whom one can join souls.  

Ambrose also encourages openness and even the disclosure of personal intimacies among friends, which would promote "a harmony of sentiment and collective loyalty within a community organized around a shared vision of life," again reminiscent of the philosophical schools. However, Ambrose is very clear that one's friendships should "never interfere with one's love of and service to God. The claims of God must always take precedence." Thus despite Ambrose's recognition and admiration for the classical descriptions of friendship, he places a limit upon such relationships if they threaten one's allegiance and love of God, or, one would surmise, if they disrupted community life.

John Chrysostom displays an awareness and acceptance of friendship as evidenced his treatise, *De Sacerdotio*, which begins: "I had many genuine and true friends

427. Ambrose, *De officiis ministrorum* 3.22.133 (Omnia quae extant opera 7 [Collectio SS. Ecclesiae Patrum 60; ed. D. A. B. Caillau; Paris: Apud Parent Desbarres, 1839]).


(φίλων), men who understood the laws of friendship, and faithfully observed them.\textsuperscript{430}

Elizabeth Clark observes that Chrysostom may have had classical descriptions of friendship in mind here.\textsuperscript{431} In his second homily on chapter 2 of Thessalonians, Chrysostom praises true friendship, which is obtained between those who possess "one soul" (ἀμώματος ψυχῶν), and who would willingly die for one another.\textsuperscript{432} Moreover, in his letters to Olympias, Chrysostom displays an attitude of friendship in his alternating encouragement and rebuke of Olympias, and his sadness that they are separated.\textsuperscript{433} However (and particularly after he joined the priesthood), friendship is still subordinate to the spiritual love of God, for "it alone is indissoluble."\textsuperscript{434}

The examination of Jerome's life and writings under the rubric of friendship leads to some almost bittersweet observations. Here was a person who placed a high value upon friendship, but then came to distrust it because he believed that his friends had failed him. He may have only had a "superficial knowledge" of Greek literature,\textsuperscript{435} but he was probably well acquainted with and admiring of Cicero and other Latin writers. as he paraphrases the Laelius with the words, "A friendship which can cease is never genuine," and Horace, when he refers to a friend as being a "part of my soul."\textsuperscript{436} Jerome did have numerous close friendships throughout his life and appears to have truly needed people, as many of his letters reflect sincere affection for their


\textsuperscript{431} Clark, \textit{Jerome, Chrysostom, and Friends}, 42.

\textsuperscript{432} White, \textit{Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century}, 91.


\textsuperscript{434} Konstan, \textit{Friendship in the Classical World}, 162.

\textsuperscript{435} Clark, \textit{Jerome, Chrysostom, and Friends}, 43.

\textsuperscript{436} Jerome, Ep. 3; cited by White, \textit{Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century}, 139.
The problem was that Jerome, a notoriously difficult person, mistrusted those who did not agree with him, a fact which in turn, alienated his friends. Brian Patrick McGuire has written that "behind the acuity of Jerome's language and his vaunting of sacred history we find a scared human being repeatedly driving away the people he wanted and needed." Moreover, he increasingly sought an ascetic life of solitude, which lead to his further disparagement of friendship. Thus, there is no evidence that Jerome specifically repudiated classical definitions and descriptions of friendship; rather, he regarded human relationships, at least in theory, as unreliable and secondary to a life of solitary asceticism.

Augustine, particularly in his later writings, emphasized caritas more than amicitia, but this does not mean that classical descriptions of amicitia could not inform his view of caritas, nor that human friendship was not important to him. Eoin Cassidy has shown that aspects of classical friendship influenced Augustine's view of Christian caritas. Although Augustine's vision of Christian love was extended to all, and required no merit or testing, the intimacy, reciprocity and equality characteristic of Greek and Roman portrayals of friendship were key elements in his understanding of caritas. For Augustine, such intimacy was also extended to Christ, with and through

437. See White, Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century, 130.
441. See also, White, Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century, 185-217.
whom all Christians were joined. As he wrote to his friend Marcianus, "I did not really have you as a friend (amicus) until I clove to you in Christ."442

The person who had the greatest difficulty reconciling friendship and Christianity was the late fourth century Christian, Paulinus of Nola. In a letter to Pammachius, Paulinus contrasts their friendship (amicitia), which Konstan interprets to mean, "our version of what is usually called friendship,"443 with their spiritual friendship (caritas) "which is produced by God as its source and is joined in a brotherhood of souls."444 Similarly in his 51st epistle, Paulinus writes: "We have become known to each other not by human friendship but by divine grace and it is by the inner depths of Christ's love that we are joined."445 The classical notion that true friendship was based upon virtue may also have been problematic for Paulinus, just as it was for Basil. Mutual admiration for one another's fine character was thought to be typical of Greek and Roman noble friendships, for such virtue bound friends together and maintained their bond. For Paulinus, however, the Christian should be modest and humble, and to presume to be virtuous would be arrogant. He portrays himself as a sinner in his letters, and consistently declares himself unworthy of the love that others have for him.446 Such an emphasis is consistent, however, with the understanding of Christian caritas, which is offered to people regardless of their achievements.

4. Conclusion


443. Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 158.

444. Translation of Paulinus' 13th epistle is by Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 158.


Prior to the fourth century, early Christianity does not resist classical notions of friendship. Although ἀγαπή began to replace φιλία in the New Testament and other early Christian literature, such developments were also occurring in "pagan" writings. Moreover, many Christian texts continue to describe people as φίλοι, whether it is of God, or of the world, and, as in the case of the works of Minucius Felix and Clement of Alexandria, express a very positive attitude toward friendship.

Classical views of friendship remained familiar and popular among fourth century Christian writers, although some, such as Paulinus of Nola, thought that "secular" friendship was inferior to Christian caritas. On the other hand, Gregory of Nazianzus appears to resent Basil’s prioritizing of the welfare of the church over his relationship with Gregory. And still others were able to harmonize dimensions of Greek and Roman friendship with their Christian views of love and human relations. Friendship, although questioned by some, had by no means disappeared.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have observed that ancient friendship was recognized as a meaningful form of human relationship, whether it manifested itself between comrades in Archaic Greece, or Christian clerics in fourth century Cappadocia. Some of the vocabulary of friendship changed throughout the ages, but sayings such as "friends have all things in common" and "friends have one soul," remained remarkably current, despite the fact that the first saying, in particular, was probably rarely lived out. Moreover, it appears that when ancient writers appealed to friendship, whether directly or in a more subtle fashion, they were invoking a moderately consistent set of values which included honesty, reliability, trust and the sharing of either material goods and/or spiritual and intellectual intimacies.
However, there was a significant variation among authors as to with whom one could be friends. For Aristotle, virtuous friendship was primarily among the male citizens of Athens, while Theophrastus included relations between the ruler and the ruled within this category. Other sources, primarily Jewish, speak of human friendship with God, while some philosophical groups and Christian writers equate membership in the community, whether it be Epicurean or Christian, with friendship.

When friendship became confused with patron-client relations, some authors insisted that the distinction between the two be maintained. This supports the fact that there was a sensitivity to what true friendship represented, particularly when it was threatened by patronage. Genuine friendship exemplified a value system that was counter to a system based upon status, as Engberg-Pedersen has suggested.

Not all proponents of friendship, however, wished to obliterate the status system; many simply wanted there to be a clear line drawn between friendship and the behaviour associated with patronage. In contrast, there were other writers who may have been opposed to the status system, most notably the author of the Gospel of Luke, and attempted to use friendship language as a means of extending membership in the community across social and status barriers. Still other writers, including some Neopythagorean sources and possibly the fourth evangelist, may have appealed to friendship as a means of maintaining their sectarian communities.

In sum, despite the fact that a reasonably consistent set of values was associated with friendship throughout antiquity, there was great diversity as to a) who could qualify as a friend, and b) for what purpose friendship language was employed.
CHAPTER 3

RHETORIC AND FRIENDSHIP IN JAMES

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate in what ways James draws upon the theme of friendship and its association of ideas. There are instances in the letter when friendship language appears with greater density and these passages require examination in detail according to the conventions of ancient rhetoric. Before entering into a discussion of the particulars, however, it is important to review some of the prevailing attitudes towards James as a piece of literature. Some attention must be given to the issue of James as an ancient letter; and subsequently to the question of whether it is a rhetorically sophisticated document.

James as a Letter

The debate about James as a letter recalls the work of Adolf Deissmann, whose studies of the ancient letter were conducted nearly a century ago. Deissmann classified letters into true letters, which are private and address concrete situations, and epistles, which are public, highly literary, and artistic. James, he argued, clearly falls into the latter category, as it lacks the detail required for a specific situation; rather, James is a "pamphlet addressed to the whole of Christendom."1 Similarly, Martin Dibelius’ influential commentary on James viewed the document as a string of discontinuous ethi-

cal admonitions, with no evidence of an "epistolary situation," the only "letter" characteristic being the prescript in Jas 1:1. These observations lead him to conclude that James is not an actual letter, but another genre, namely paraenesis.

However, studies of ancient epistolography have shown that the ancient letter was a tremendously flexible and varied form of communication, and Deissmann's classification of letters into "real letters" and epistles has been criticized as a far too narrow, and indeed, misleading, means of describing the great diversity of extant ancient letters. For example, there are epistles which could also be classified as "real letters" and some "real letters" bear characteristics of epistles. Indeed, as David Aune has declared, apart from Deissmann's categorization, which Aune deems problematic, "few typologies of Greco-Roman or early Christian letters have been proposed and none widely adopted." Other genres of literature could be framed within some of the conventions of a letter and could function as a letter, despite the fact that they do not bear all or even many "real letter" characteristics. For example, essays could be framed by epistolary introductions and conclusions, and thus serve as "letter essays," and philosophers would use the letter form as a means of instructing their students. Such

2. Recently, S. R. Llewellyn ("The Prescript of James," *NovT* 39 [1997] 385-93) has argued that Jas 1:1 was a later addition, and that perhaps this originally "loose compilation of sayings" comparable to the Gospel of Thomas and Q, was preserved "because it was given the ostensible form of the letter [with the addition of the prescript] at some later stage in its transmission."


6. As Aune (The New Testament, 170) writes, "[e]pistolary prescripts and postscripts could be used to frame almost any kind of composition. The epistolary conventions of many letter-essays, philosophical letters, and novelistic and fictional letters functioned frequently in this way."

letters are not private nor do they necessarily focus upon a particular epistolary situation, but they are generally categorized as letters, albeit "literary" letters.

Many today consider James to be a "literary" letter which was not addressed to a private individual but probably to a number of communities, as indicated by the initial reference to the "twelve tribes in the diaspora" (Jas 1:1). In this way, James is comparable to ancient Jewish encyclicals, such as the Aramaic letters dispatched by members of the Gamaliel family,8 and the encyclicals preserved within 2 Maccabees,9 which were addressed to more than one group, and could serve a variety of religious or administrative purposes.10 It also, however, bears similarities to what Fred O. Francis calls "secondary letters," or letters which "lack situational immediacy."11 Francis observes that "secondary letters," often found within historical narratives such as the letter in 1 Maccabees 10:25 and the one imbedded in Josephus' Antiquities (8.50-54), have double opening statements, as James has,12 and they end abruptly, with no epistolary close,13 which is also a characteristic of James. These features also appear in many independent Hellenistic private and public letters,14 and many letter collections

8. For the texts and translations of these letters, see Dennis Pardee, Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters (SBLSBS 15; Chico: Scholars Press, 1982) 186-96.


10. See Baasland, "Literarische Form," 3646-84; Ropes, The Epistle of St. James, 127-28; Wachob, The Voice of Jesus, 5-6.


12. Francis ("The Form and Function," 111) points out that in James 1:1-27 "there is a presentation and representation of testing, steadfastness, perfect work/gift, reproaching/anger, wisdom/words, and rich-poorer/doer. In both cases these themes laid down in the opening verses are subsequently developed in the body of the epistle."

13. Embedded within Thucydides' historical narrative, for example, there are letters (7.10-15; 1.128.7) with neither opening nor closing formulae. See Aune, The New Testament, 169.

14. For example Phlm 4-7 contains a double opening statement, and many Hellenistic letters, private and public, primary and secondary, end abruptly, such as 1 John. See Francis, "The Form and Function," 112, 125.
leave out opening greetings and closing salutations altogether. Some Hellenistic Jewish letters, such as the apocryphal Letter of Jeremiah, which is not embedded in a historical narrative, has neither an epistolary prescript nor a closing formula. Moreover, beginning with the phrase πρὸ πάντων in 5:12, James closes with a warning against the use of oaths and expressions of concern for the recipients' health and well-being. Referring to F. X. J. Exler's study of Hellenistic epistology, Francis points out how Greek letters may end with the phrase πρὸ πάντων followed by a health wish and/or an oath formula. Finally, many letters, including several New Testament letters, refer to prayer in their closing. Thus James is not so devoid of epistolary features as Dibelius and others have thought, but may best be classified as a "literary" letter.

James and Rhetoric

Despite Dibelius' view that James had limited epistolary features, he did grant that it was a sophisticated document, at least at the level of writing style and vocabulary. According to Dibelius, and largely agreed upon today, James wrote in good Greek, he made use of rare words, and manifests various rhetorical elements, such as paronomasia (1:1,2), parechesis (1:24), alliteration (1:2), and homoiooteleuton

15. Aune (The New Testament, 171) refers to the letters of Apollonius, for example, which all have abbreviated openings, and only 4 of which have closing salutations.


18. For example, 1 Thess 5:17, 1 John 5:14-17, Philm 22. See Francis, "The Form and Function." 125.

(1:6) among others. Yet Dibelius' fundamental description of James as paraenesis placed limitations upon the document that are no longer acceptable to many today. For Dibelius, paraenesis was a literary genre, in which a series of exhortations are strung together with little continuity between them and no overarching frame or theme. Moreover, Dibelius thought that if something was essentially paraenetic, it was simply a loose assemblage of diverse traditions with no overall theological purpose or structure.

It is likely for this latter reason that Dibelius did not apply the tenets of Greco-Roman rhetorical theory to the letter. For Dibelius, paraenetic literature was by nature unoriginal; it consisted primarily of a collection of traditions and was more interested in the transmission of materials than in their revision. As he wrote, the "first feature" of paraenesis "is a pervasive eclecticism which is a natural consequence of the history and nature of paraenesis, since the concern is the transmission of an ethical tradition that does not require a radical revision even though changes in emphasis and form might occur." Thus Dibelius' presuppositions that James consisted primarily of paraenesis and about the nature of paraenesis itself precluded him from the possibility of exploring how ancient rhetorical conventions may have been operative in James.

Today, many scholars disagree with Dibelius about his notion of paraenesis. The great scholar understood paraenesis as a literary genre spanning Jewish and Greek cultures and grounded in ethical exhortation, which in turn, had an important role in early

20. Dibelius, James, 37-38; see Wachob (The Voice of Jesus, 11-12) for a more substantial list of James' rhetorical elements.

21. Dibelius, James, 5-11.

22. Dibelius (James, 22) wrote that paraenesis, "by its very nature cannot at all bring together a coherent structure of theological thought." The origins of Dibelius' ideas about paraenetic literature are helpfully discussed by Wachob, The Voice of Jesus, 36-52.

23. Dibelius, James, 5.
Christianity as it struggled to provide directives for fledgling Christian communities. There is little contention with this latter point, but historians have not been able to discover a definition of paraenesis as a technical term for a literary genre in the ancient world. In his taxonomic study of wisdom literature, John G. Gammie argues that paraenetic literature is a secondary genre of wisdom literature, with paraenesis as a subdivision of paraenetic literature. Paraenesis, therefore, "cannot be properly classified as a major literary type or even as a secondary genre."24

Others, such as Wesley Wachob, do not think that paraenesis is distinguishable from protreptic,25 for indeed, both terms refer to hortatory speech. However, various studies have attempted to find differences between the two. Benjamin Fiore, although he admits that the modern distinction between protreptic and paraenesis is "sharper" than in antiquity, accepts Rudolf Vetschera’s observation that paraenesis can include many aspects of life such as "culture, friends, enemies, good fortune" but that protreptic "hopes to lead the addressee to obtain a certain knowledge and the aretē included in it."26 However, Gammie counters that in some instances paraenesis may also "be of quite narrow focus."27 Stanley Stowers has argued that the difference may be based upon the nature of the audience: paraenesis was directed to the converted in an effort to reinforce particular attitudes while protreptic is occasionally used in attempts to convert people. However, Stowers admits that this is not an entirely consistent feature of each


25. Wachob (The Voice of Jesus, 51) says that "they are interchangeable terms for exhortation or hortatory speech." Wachob bases his findings on the pioneering work of Theodore C. Burgess ("Epideictic Literature," *University of Chicago Studies in Classical Philology* 3 [1902] 89-248) which was apparently overlooked by Dibelius and those he depended upon for his understanding of paraenesis.


term, and Wachob has noted that Clement of Alexandria, with his *Exhortation* (Προτρεπτικός) to *Endurance or to the Newly Baptized*, did not presuppose a particular audience disposition when he titled his work a Προτρεπτικός. Gammie points to a perhaps more convincing difference between the two terms: that protrepsis builds a sustained argument which is much more systematic and organized than that of paraenesis. Although Gammie refers to the Letter of James as paraenesis, other scholars, as we will see below, have pointed to the fact that James contains sustained arguments. Thus certain scholars, such as Patrick J. Hartin, would prefer to designate James as protrepsis. This seems a helpful development, for it indicates that we should no longer view James a hodge podge of sayings but as a careful argument, despite the fact that there are debates about the exact arrangement of the argument. The debate about protrepsis versus paraenesis will undoubtedly continue, and indeed they share a great many things in common, but for our purposes, James will be treated as protrepsis, which Gammie has identified as a sub-genre of paraenetic literature. It serves to provide moral instruction to its audience, but in a carefully constructed and focused manner.

It is important to note here that the application of ancient rhetoric to some, especially Pauline, letters has been and continues to be a source of debate. This is because epistolary theory and rhetorical theory developed separately from one another in antiquity, and thus some scholars wonder if rhetoric truly affected letter writing in the ways in which other authors would like. The ancient rhetorical handbooks rarely discuss rhetoric’s applicability to letters, and likewise, letter writing manuals do not discuss

---


30. For Hartin’s discussion of this (largely based upon Gammie’s *Semeia* article) see *A Spirituality of Perfection. Faith in Action in the Letter of James* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1999) 45-49.
It was not until the fourth and fifth centuries, moreover, that Christianity explicitly integrated rhetorical and epistolary practices.\textsuperscript{32}

As a variety of scholars have affirmed, however, because rhetorical and epistolary theory was not formally integrated at the time of the composition of various texts of the New Testament does not mean that rhetoric could not have exerted an influence upon letter writing. Rhetoric pervaded the cultures of the Graeco-Roman world. As Burton Mack writes:

All people, whether formally trained or not, were fully schooled in the wily ways of sophists, the eloquence required at civic festivals, the measured tones of the local teacher, and the heated debates where differences of opinion battled for the right to say what should be done. To be engulfed in the culture of Hellenism meant to have ears trained for the rhetoric of speech. Rhetoric provided the rules for making critical judgments in the course of all forms of social intercourse. Early Christians were not unskilled, either as critics of their cultures of context or as proponents of their own emerging persuasions.\textsuperscript{33}

The New Testament authors did not necessarily require formal training in rhetoric in order to be influenced by it, although some were likely from a well educated background. By simply living in the culture that they did, they would have come into contact with rhetoric, "for the rhetorical theory of the schools found its immediate application in almost every form of oral and written communication."\textsuperscript{34} Moreover, Aune claims that by the 3rd century BCE, rhetoric had come to influence letter writing,\textsuperscript{35} and other authors have demonstrated that certain Greek writers wrote letters according


\textsuperscript{32} Watson, \textit{Rhetorical Criticism}, 122.


to rhetorical conventions prior to the Common Era. Demetrius, an otherwise unknown Greek writer who refers to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* from time to time, discusses letters in his treatise, *On Style*, which can possibly be dated to the early first century B.C.E. Demetrius says that "[t]he letter, like the dialogue, should abound in glimpses of character," and he continues on to describe the appropriate style and topics for letters. What is unusual, as George Kennedy comments, is that other rhetoricians do not discuss letters, as the epistolary format was used so widely in the Greco-Roman world. Perhaps, as Jeffrey Reed points out, the three species of rhetoric were too limited for letter writers, despite the fact that their functions appear in letters.

Despite this lack of ancient discussions of rhetoric as it relates to letter writing, there is now a wealth of rhetorical studies on the New Testament letters even though there remain some who are skeptical of rhetoric's applicability. But when it comes to Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles, there is little debate about the applicability of

36. For example, F. W. Hughes (*Early Christian Rhetoric and 2 Thessalonians* [JSNTSup 30: Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989] 47-50) has shown that the letters of Demosthenes were written according to rhetorical rules.


41. For example, Stanley E. Porter, ("The Theoretical Justification for Application of Rhetorical Categories to Pauline Epistolary Literature," *Rhetoric and the New Testament. Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* [eds., Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht; JSNTSup 90; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993] 100-22) argues that studies of Paul's letters should limit themselves to the rhetorical style of Paul's letters, as the rhetorical handbooks only discuss style when it comes to letters. In his view, there is not enough warrant in the handbooks for applying basic rhetorical categories to letters. In contrast, see Betz (*Galatians*), who performs a a full-fledged application of ancient rhetorical practices to Paul's letter to the Galatians.
ancient rhetorical practices. They are seen as highly literary speeches that were intended to be read aloud, and thus scholars assume that the authors incorporated rhetorical conventions into their texts. Moreover, there is general agreement that the authors of these ancient texts did not simply absorb and subsequently reflect rhetorical practices from the world around them, but that they consciously and skillfully applied rhetorical conventions to their texts in a "studied" manner, which suggests that at least some of the authors may have been schooled in ancient rhetoric.

Before the "fall" of rhetoric in the 19th century, several authors had used rhetoric in their analyses of James. But studies incorporating rhetoric into the examination of James did not reappear until relatively recently, with the publication of Wilhelm Wuellner's "Der Jakobusbrief im Licht der Rhetorik und Textpragmatik" which uses the "new rhetoric" as well as modern semiotics and communications theory. Building on the work of Wuellner, Ernst Baasland produced one of the next rhetorical studies on James, in which he proposed that James consisted of deliberative rhetoric and was essentially a wisdom speech (weisheitliche Rede). John H. Elliott also develops his analysis of James based upon Wuellner's work, but he applies social scientific insights to the letter of James. Elliott explores James in light of contrasts between purity and pollution, which figured importantly in second Temple Judaism and early Christianity, and shows how purity and pollution "serve as an important means for conceptualizing,

43. Watson, "Rhetorical Criticism," 179.
44. This is mentioned by Ernst Baasland ("Literarische Form," 3648) who refers to the work of J. D. Schulze, C. G. Küchler, C. G. Wilke, and J. A. Bengel, all of whom applied insights from rhetoric to their analyses of James before the beginning of the 20th century.
46. Baasland, "Literarische Form," 3654.
distinguishing, and evaluating appropriate and inappropriate attitudes, actions, and alliances with regard to the community, its members, and their relation to God and society.\textsuperscript{47}

The most recent rhetorical study of the entire letter of James is that of Lauri Thurén, who argues that James is primarily epideictic rhetoric in that it attempts to reinforce ideas and values that the recipients already possess.\textsuperscript{48} Thurén suggests that the seeming obscurity of the rhetorical structure is actually the subtlety of an author who knows that his audience is rhetorically knowledgeable, and thus resists making his rhetorical shifts too obvious.\textsuperscript{49}

Other authors have offered more focused work on sections of James. J. D. N. Van Der Westhuizen performed a close analysis of Jas 2:14-26, which he classifies as deliberative rhetoric in that it exhorts the audience to action.\textsuperscript{50} Duane F. Watson has published two rhetorical studies, on Jas 2 and Jas 3:1-12 respectively. He understands Jas 2 and Jas 3:1-12 as deliberative rhetoric, for these sections exhort the audience to a particular type of action and dissuade them from other kinds of behavior. Watson shows how there are three complete arguments created in these pericopae, each of which includes a \textit{propositio}, \textit{ratio}, \textit{confirmatio}, \textit{exornatio}, and \textit{complexio}. He also explains how James uses diatribe and paraenetic materials in these sections in order to amplify the arguments.\textsuperscript{51} Finally, Wesley Wachob’s dissertation concentrates upon the use of a saying of Jesus in Jas 2:5 within the rhetorical structure of Jas 2:1-13. He also

\textsuperscript{47} Elliott, "The Epistle of James," 78-79.

\textsuperscript{48} Lauri Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 276-77. Thurén also grants that there are aspects of judicial and deliberative rhetoric within the letter as well.

\textsuperscript{49} Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 283.


\textsuperscript{51} Watson, "James 2"; "The Rhetoric of James 3:1-12."
considers James to be deliberative rhetoric, and, applying Vernon K. Robbins’ method of socio-rhetorical criticism, he explores how Jas 2:5 contributes to the social, cultural and ideological understanding of James as a whole.  

The comparison of James to ancient conventions of rhetoric was never attempted by Dibelius, as discussed earlier. However, the work of the scholars mentioned above suggests that there is an emerging agreement that this text is informed by Graeco-Roman rhetorical practices insofar as these practices pervade the culture and society of the day, although considerable disagreement remains regarding how exactly these conventions figure in James. This lack of consensus does not mean that a rhetorical investigation is not warranted, for in rhetorical speeches and especially so in letters, the precise starting and end points of rhetorical units are not always obvious nor do they plainly conform to the instructions provided in handbooks and instruction manuals.  

Moreover, early Christian rhetoric, insofar as it served a new social experiment, was imaginative and inventive in its reference to new language and figures, and did not draw upon all of the stock phrases and heroic examples of its non-Christian contemporaries. Therefore, this project does not aim to offer a comprehensive rhetorical outline of James, but insofar as sections of James use friendship language, it will analyse the rhetorical form and function of the unit under question. The insights from recent rhetorical analyses will be engaged, but attention must be chiefly paid to the

52. For a brief summary of Wachob’s thesis, see Watson, "Rhetorical Criticism," 189.

53. Mack (Rhetoric and the New Testament, 49) points out that the rhetorical handbooks were simply guides; they "were never understood in antiquity as rigid templates, nor has it been assumed ... that every rhetorical composition must follow these patterns."

ancient rhetoricians, and to what extent their instructions manifest themselves in James.

Friendship Language and Rhetoric in James

A. Introduction

Taken as a whole, it is difficult to determine the overall species of James, as there are some judicial sections, many clear deliberative sections, and in some cases it appears that the author is seeking to re-emphasize existing convictions, which is the purpose of epideictic rhetoric. It is therefore possible that James contains a variety of rhetorical species, but as George Kennedy explains, "the definition of the species as a whole can become very difficult, but a discourse usually has one dominant species which reflects the author's major purpose in speaking or writing." Owing to the preponderance of deliberative sections in James, I would agree with those who understand James as primarily deliberative rhetoric with an intermingling of other species. This is in keeping with the description of James as protrepsis, which often embodies a call to conversion to a particular ethical way of life.

Secondly, as mentioned earlier, this study will not attempt to offer an overall rhetorical outline of James. However, specific rhetorical units will be identified insofar

55. Occasionally, I will refer to the work of modern rhetoricians who, in turn, depend upon the ancient rhetoricians for the development of their principles.

56. For example, Jas 5:1-6. See Thureén, "Risky Rhetoric." 276.

57. See Wachob, The Voice of Jesus, 194; Watson, "James 2; "The Rhetoric of James 3:1-12."

58. This is the view of Thureén, "Risky Rhetoric," 276-77.

as this is possible, and we will deal with the friendship language within the context of each unit and its overall function in the letter.

In James, the most explicit use of friendship terminology is in reference to the human relationship with God. For example, Abraham is described as "friend" (φίλος) of God in Jas 2:23 and subsequently in Jas 4:4, the person who makes himself a friend (φίλος) of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Jas 2:23 will be analysed in the context of Jas 2:14-16, as this, in the opinion of many, is a discrete unit within the argumentatio of James. Likewise, the phrase about friendship with the world being enmity with God appears within another section of the argumentatio, Jas 3:13-4:10, the structure and rhetoric of which will be examined in detail.

But there are other, less obvious, references to friendship with God that require closer inspection. For instance, words and concepts related to ancient understandings of friendship appear within the initial part of the letter, Jas 1:2-18. The emphasis upon patience, testing, God being "simple" and "without reproach" in contrast to the "double-minded" person, each figure in the ancient vocabulary of friendship, and it is interesting that James contains all of them in one section of the letter.

Friendship with God therefore deserves considerable attention, but in dealing with the various sections of James it is also important to discuss the character of the speaker, as well as the type of behaviour asked of the audience. How do these dimensions of the letter relate to its references to friendship and to characteristics of friendship in the ancient world? Thus, while friendship with God is the primary focus of the analysis, these other elements of the letter require discussion.

B. James 1:2-18

1. Common Features of the Exordium
As will be argued, this section of James forms the exordium of the letter. But first, attention must be paid to the nature and function of an exordium within ancient rhetoric, then one can delineate how Jas 1:2-18 forms an exordium and how friendship language and ideas figure within the unit.

Most ancient writers concur that the exordium is a requirement for an argumentative speech, although Aristotle says that the exordium is "only admissible when there is a conflict of opinion." The purpose of the exordium is to establish an ethos of authority for the speaker and a climate of pathos that will engage the audience and predispose it to listen, and it is always adjusted to suit the circumstances of the discourse, speaker, audience (including potential opponents), and the particular subject under discussion. Cicero says that the exordium should be serious and must contain everything which contributes to dignity, because the best thing to do is that which especially commends the speaker to his audience. It should contain very little brilliance, vivacity, or finish of style, because these give rise to a suspicion of preparation and excessive ingenuity (De Inventione 1.25 [LCL]). Although the entire narrative should induce the audience to be well disposed, attentive and receptive to the speaker, this stance "must in the main be won by the Introduction to the cause." In any speech, the exordium is the crucial place for establishing the authority of the speaker, for if the speaker is believed to be a good person at the beginning, the

audience will be more inclined to listen. Ancient rhetoricians agree that the character of the speaker has a central role in the effectiveness of the speech, in fact, Aristotle says that this *ethos*, or moral character, "constitutes the most effective means of proof" (*Rh. 1.2.4*). Thus the exordium must carefully establish the credibility of the speaker, especially if the speaker knows that the audience is not sympathetic.

One may begin a speech with either a direct or a subtle opening, the latter reserved for situations in which the speaker's cause is discreditable. the hearer has already been persuaded by the opposition, or the hearer is tired from listening to previous speakers. If one uses the direct approach, an effective method of beginning is to address the situation of the hearers and praise them for their "courage, wisdom, humanity and nobility of past judgements they have rendered ..." (*Rhet. ad Her. 1.8*).

One also attracts the audience's attention if it is made clear that the matter under discussion is important, and that it concerns all humanity or the hearers themselves. The speaker may refer to the good relationship between himself and the audience, or he will address the situation of the audience, which in turn, can be understood as giving rise to the speech.

The exordium may also be used to introduce some main points which will be developed later in the argument. Aristotle states that one of the tasks of the exordium is to provide a "summary explanation of the business to persons who are not acquainted with it, in order to inform them what the speech is about and to enable them to follow

---


66. Cicero, *De Inv.* 1.23.

the line of argument ... " According to Quintilian, such an introduction is not a requirement and should not enumerate every issue to be discussed, but it may be prudent to include a few references to the main questions as they "will exercise a valuable influence in winning the judge to regard us with favour" (4.1.26). Likewise, Cicero says that a faulty exordium is one which neglects to find connections with the rest of the speech. Thus one expects to find ideas and themes within the exordium that will be developed later on. Such an introduction aids in preparing the audience for what is to come.

2. James 1:2-18 as an Exordium

The transition markers between the exordium, narratio and other parts commonly referred to in the rhetorical handbooks are not always obvious in rhetorical speeches, even less so in letters, and as Watson points out, "it is more likely that James simply does not conform to Greco-Roman standards in its overall argumentation." Moreover, James uses many obvious division markers, such as the appeal to "my brothers" or "my beloved brothers" to indicate small units, but thereby making it difficult to determine the exact outline of larger rhetorical sections. Therefore, one cannot rely solely upon clear syntactic shifts but on the how the sections function on a rhetorical level.


69. Cicero (*De Inv.* 1.26): "The unconnected [exordium] is one which is not derived from the circumstances of the case nor closely knit with the rest of the speech, such as a limb to the body."

70. Especially when, as discussed earlier, the rhetorical handbooks do not address the use of rhetoric in letters.

71. Watson, "Rhetorical Criticism," 190.
Nearly all studies of James agree that Jas 1:1 is an epistolary prescript, the format of which is actually typical of ancient non-literary letters. Thurén argues that the prescript must be considered as part of the exordium, because it establishes the ethos of the speaker as authoritative, its use of the epithet δοῦλος "emphasizes his solidarity with the addressees," and the identification of the audience with the true Israel would be pleasing, for despite their diaspora situation, they really have high status. Moreover, the use of χαίρειν would create an amiable atmosphere and connects the verse to the next one, which refers to joy (χαράν). However, it is just as likely that the author may have written a prescript which would nicely cohere with the rest of the letter, for James 1:2-18 is able to develop an ethos and pathos quite well apart from the prescript.

When we turn to the rest of the exordium, most rhetorical analyses of James have argued that Jas 1:2-18 forms either part or all of the exordium, and even Dibelius grants that this is a seemingly unified section of the letter. Apart from his inclusion of Jas 1:1, Thurén's arguments regarding the outlines of the exordium are the most convincing. For Thurén, Jas 1:1-4 forms the exordium proper, with its emphasis upon perseverance and perfection, Jas 1:5-11 then amplifies these themes with relation to wisdom and money, while Jas 1:12-18 forms an inclusio by returning to the themes of perseverance and perfection. Wuellner, however, argues that the exordium is found in Jas 1:2-4, followed by a narratio (Jas 1:5-11), a propositio in Jas 1:12, and an

---

72. See John L. White, Light from Ancient Letters (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986) 194-95. As noted earlier, Llewelyn ("The Prescript of James") argues that the prescript was only added later to give James the appearance of a letter, which enabled its survival. Unfortunately, however, Llewelyn does not engage the important essay by Francis ("Form and Function") who, as discussed previously, explores the ways in which different ancient letter forms can deviate from standard practices, such as a lack of a final farewell.


74. Dibelius, James, 69.

75. Baaßland ("Literarische Form," 3658-59) also considers Jas 1:2-18 to be the exordium, although he thinks that Jas 1:16-18 functions as a transitus to the propositio in Jas 1:19-27.
**argumentatio** in Jas 1:13-5:6. Thurén rightly points out that such an arrangement is awkward, for there are no signs of a transition between Jas 1:12 and Jas 1:13, and Jas 1:19, which begins with "Know this, my beloved brothers," is much more likely the beginning of a new section. Other studies of James have divided the opening of the letter differently, such as Fred O. Francis, who argues that 1:13-18, 1:19-21 and 1:22-25 have restated the three opening themes of testing, wisdom/speech, and money, but he has not addressed how such a structure would function rhetorically. If we examine the unit of Jas 1:2-18, however, we will see that it performs the typical functions of an exordium.

There are several ways in which a speaker can establish an *ethos* of authority and integrity. One is the use of direct address, which, as mentioned earlier, is often used within the exodium in rhetorical speeches. Many ancient writers confirm that forthright, frank speech (*παρηγορία* or *licentia*), which offers criticism but criticism for the betterment of the hearers, reveals the fine character of the speaker. Dio Chrysostom insists that to find a man who speaks frankly and out of concern for the good of others, even to the point of risking alienation and rejection from the mob, is not easy, "so great is the dearth of noble, independent souls and such the abundance of toadies, mountebanks, and sophists." Rhetoricians thought highly of frankness. Isocrates, for example, wrote that one ought to commend those who admonish others for their betterment, "for such a man can soonest bring you to abhor what you should abhor and to set

---

76. Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 270.

77. Francis, "Form and Function," 118.


your hearts on better things." 

This frankness must not descend to the level of a humiliating invective, however, for such disparagement would ultimately not aid or improve the recipients, but only depress or demoralize them. Thus frankness must always keep the good of the listeners in view, and must be done sensitively and with moderation.

The beginning of James does not admonish the audience, but it does directly warn them about their behaviour. The author speaks confidently and with authority when he cautions them to ask God for wisdom (if they lack it) with faith, unlike the double-minded man who is unstable and as a result will receive nothing from God (Jas 1:5-7). Although we have not established who the recipients of the letter were, nor their economic status, James asserts squarely that the rich man will fade away (Jas 1:10-11). If the recipients of the letter consisted of both rich and poor, James does not resist the possibility of offending the wealthy, at least if they intend upon remaining wealthy.

Signs of a speaker's ethos are also evident by the use of imperatives. Ancient rhetoricians do not discuss the use of imperatives in creating an ethos, but some modern theorists point out that the force of the imperative lies in the authority of the speaker. Thus, if a speaker knew that she lacked authority, she would likely resist using the imperative mood, as the audience would immediately begin ignoring her. James, however, does not hesitate to use the imperative throughout his letter, as it


81. See Plutarch, Flatterer, 74D-E.

82. I am assuming that the author is male.

appears 31 times,84 8 of which are in Jas 1:2-18. Even from the very beginning of the letter, then, the author seems to be aware of his authoritative hold on the audience, for otherwise, he would likely avoid so many direct instructions.

Thirdly, the use of maxims can enhance the authority of the speaker, for by using a known saying or phrase which is understood to be generally true, the speaker reveals a good character.85 However, indiscriminately flinging maxims about in a speech will not impress an audience; the maxims must be used sparingly and appropriately. Quintilian makes it clear that the application of well known sayings is "useless, unless the pleader has the wit to apply them in such a manner as to support the points which he is trying to make"(5.11.42). Thus proverbs or sayings with which the audience may be quite familiar are not effective unless they are placed carefully within an appropriate context.

Jas 1:12 is commonly understood to be a macarism or beatitude, a type of maxim which often appears in the LXX with the formula μακάριος ἄνηρ,86 and is a characteristic feature of wisdom literature.87 George Kennedy discusses the beatitudes in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount, explaining that Jesus makes the minor premises ("the poor in spirit will enter the kingdom of heaven" and so forth) acceptable to his listeners "by avoiding any attempt to justify them, thus relying on the ethos of his authority, and also by the way he puts the verbs into the future tense."88 Similarly, Shawn Carruth has shown how the beatitudes in Q 6:20-21 derive their claim to truth from the author-

---


85. Aristotle (Rh.2.21.16) says that "he who employs [maxims] in a general manner declares his moral preferences; if then the maxims are good, they show the speaker also to be a man of good character."

86. Dibelius, James, 88.

87. Patrick J. Hartin, A Spirituality of Perfection, 43.

ity of the speaker. In fact, the speaker must have significant authority as the Q beatitudes are generally thought to run counter to conventional wisdom. The content of Jas 1:12 is not necessarily counter to accepted wisdom, given the emphasis upon testing within Jewish wisdom literature, but it does offer the future promise of an eschatological reward, the "crown of life." Therefore, it seems that the speaker in James again asserts his authority by making a firm statement about the future, with no need to justify himself. Secondly, the reference to a trial (πείρασμός) recalls Jas 1:2 and prepares the way for the discussion of temptation in Jas 1:13-18, a section in which the verb πείρασμα occurs 3 times and the adjective ἀπείραστος appears once in verse 13. While maintaining the ethos of the speaker, therefore, the beatitude also fits well within the opening section of James, connecting themes introduced at the very beginning of the letter with those that immediately follow verse 12.

Jas 1:13-18 then continues the theme of temptation/testing with a series of statements about God and temptation. Jas 1:13 is particularly notable as it conforms somewhat to the characteristics of a rhetorical syllogism or enthymeme whereby a statement is made, which is an imperative in this case ("Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'"), followed by a reason for the statement with the connective γὰρ ("for God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one"). Although there are biblical passages such as Gen 22 which suggest that God does indeed test, here James is likely expressing the view found in wisdom literature that rather than taking responsibility for their choices, humans are quick to blame God when they experience difficulties. Verses 14 and 15 then place the blame for temptation upon one's own


91. See Prov 19:3; Sir 15:11-20; Martin, James, 34.
desire, \( \dot{e}pithumeia \), which eventually leads to sin and death, while verses 16-18 affirm that only goodness and perfection come from God, in direct contrast to \( \dot{e}pithumeia \).\(^{92}\)

Such a series of strong statements about the source of temptation and the nature of God would not emerge from a speaker who lacks respect from his audience. Quintilian states that "reflexions of universal application" are "best suited to those speakers whose authority is such that their character itself will lend weight to their words" (8.5.7-8). Jas 1:13-18 makes firm assertions about human desire and the nature of the divine, which suggests that this author possesses an ethos of self assuredness and respect, for he requires such authority to affirm such opinions.

Yet the beginning of James does not focus upon ethos at the expense of pathos, for the text attempts to arouse emotion from the audience. Although the author speaks with authority, he expresses concern for the recipients. Jas 1:2, for example, makes emotional appeals to the audience with a reference to the trials (\( \pi e\iota\alpha\sigma\mu\omega\iota \)) that they, the author's "brothers" (\( \alpha\deltae\lambda\phi\omega\iota \)) meet, and the assurance that the testing (\( \delta\iota\kappa\iota\mu\omega\nu \)) of faith will lead to positive virtue, namely steadfastness or endurance (\( \dot{u}t\omicron\omicron\nu\nu \)). Of note here is the fact that James describes the audience as "knowing" that testing will produce endurance, a positive statement which would make the addressees more inclined to listen.\(^{93}\) Such endurance, in turn, leads to an even greater end, that of perfection, for Jas 1:4 states that \( \dot{u}t\omicron\omicron\nu\nu \) should have a "full effect" or "perfect work" (\( \dot{e}r\rho\gamma\nu \tau\epsilon\lambda\iota\nu\nu \)) such that the audience may be "perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

Thus the end of testing is not steadfastness but ultimately perfection or wholeness; something which James presents as an attainable goal.

\(^{92}\) The contrast between desire and God is most pronounced in verse 18, whereby God "gives birth" to humans "by the word of truth" as opposed to desire which conceived sin, which in turn "gave birth" to death. See Johnson, The Letter of James, 205; and Martin, James, 39.

\(^{93}\) Seen Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 271.
Moreover, at the close of the exordium, James refers to his "beloved brothers" (Jas 1:16) and assures them that all good things come from God, that "we" were brought forth by the word of truth that "we" should be a kind of "first fruits" of God's creatures (Jas 1:18). This verse is often interpreted as a reference to the salvific actions of God, whereby the believer becomes one of the "first fruits" or one of the reborn. Rhetorically, it could not help but have a positive effect upon the audience, for it assures them that they are indeed the first fruits of God's creatures.

Thus far, Jas 1:2-18 has fulfilled the duties of the exordium in that it has presented the speaker as authoritative, direct, and concerned for the well being of the audience, but it has done so with a certain sensitivity for their situation and assurance of God's reliability. But an exordium will also often refer to the subject of the entire speech and thus it is not unusual that the main theme of James be introduced in this section. Many analysts agree that an overall thrust of James is to seek perfection or wholeness, for we observe this theme to be taken up throughout the rest of the letter, with τέλειος occurring five times, as well as other instances of the verb τελείω and related words such as δόξα and ὁδόκληρος. By perfection, James does not mean the unattainable thing for which moderns sometimes aspire, but the notion of complete or


97. The use of τέλειος and related words has been analysed by Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 52-53.
total allegiance to God. To be perfect is to withstand the trials of faith which seek to divide one from God as well as to live out one's life in dedication to God, whether it be through bridling one's tongue (Jas 3:2) or through consistency between hearing and doing (Jas 1:25).

Perfection is gained, at least in part, not through one's own merits, but through the gift of wisdom from God, which is the focus of Jas 1:5-8. Thurén, Elliott and Wuellner argue that this section is an expansion or amplificatio of the proper exordium in Jas 1:2-4, which firmly lays out the need for perseverance in the quest for perfection. Jas 1:9-11, which refers to the rich and poor, a theme which is taken up later on throughout the letter, is also an amplification of this theme of perfection, for part of being perfect is to resist the desire for riches. Jas 1:12-18 then invokes the theme of the exordium, endurance leading to perfection, by stating that μακάριος ἰνή δός ἐπομένει πεισμάτων, ὅτι δοκίμασις γενόμενος λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς χρίσεως ὁ ἐπηγγέλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτῶν ("Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised him"). and by furnishing another meaning of πεισμάτων: "steadfastness in tribulation is rewarded by God [Jas 1:2-4], but the trial can also be a temptation which leads to death [Jas 1:13-15]." The section then closes with Jas 1:16-18 which provides a contrast to Jas 1:13-15 by emphasizing that "every perfect gift" comes from God who "brought us forth" unlike sin which "brings forth" death. God, who provides "every perfect gift" is the source of perfection, it seems, echoing Jas 1:5-8. Thus, it is clear that Jas 1:2-18

98. Hartin ("Call to Be Perfect through Suffering," 483-84) discusses this concept of perfection in Jewish literature.


100. Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 272.
performs another of its duties as an exordium, and that is to introduce the main subject of the letter, which in this case, is perfection.

3. Friendship within the Exordium

It is striking to what extent Jas 1:2-18 employs friendship language, but first, it is clear that the author of this letter "speaks" as a friend ought to, for he speaks frankly, with παρρησία, as has been discussed. In the previous chapter, we observed that Plutarch, in particular, emphasizes the fact that true friends will speak frankly to one another, out of concern for each one’s well being and betterment. Παρρησία was the focus, as we saw, of Philodemus’ treatise on how members of the Epicurean school, friends and fellow disciples, should treat one another. In James, the speaker expresses himself authoritatively and forcefully in the exordium, but he does not demolish the hearers, but offers them firm exhortation and hope.

Moreover, the speaker addresses the audience as ἀδελφοί μου (Jas 1:2) and as ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί (Jas 1:16), an address which he continues to use throughout the rest of the letter. Recently, Peter Arzt-Grabner has shown that the use of "brothers" could, among other things, be used to designate friends, both in the LXX and in many Greek documentary papyri. For example, a letter from 70-69 BCE or 41-10 BCE from an unknown writer to "Heraklios the brother" (Ἡρακλείω τῷ ἀδελφῷ) states that "while writing to all our friends (φίλοις) I deemed it necessary to address you too"

101. Flatterer 71B.

102. See Jas 1:19; 2:1,5,14; 3:1,10; 4:11; 5:7,9,12,19.

103. Peter Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers' and 'Sisters' in Documentary Papyri and in Early Christianity," (Paper delivered at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Boston, November 22, 1999). Special thanks to Dr. Arzt-Grabner for allowing me to cite from his paper.
As Arzt-Grabner concludes, it is therefore "most reasonable to assume that Heraklios was one of the writer's friends, and not his natural brother." This observation opens up the definite possibility that by addressing his audience as ἀδελφοί μου, the author of James was drawing upon the use of ἀδελφός for φίλος. Considering the stature of the friendship relationship in the ancient world, such an identification would have served the need of the exordium to inspire a more receptive and even genial disposition in the audience.

Regarding concepts and ideas related to friendship, in the previous chapter we observed that often friends were required to prove their friendship through testing. In the classical and hellenistic periods, the true test of friendship was whether one friend would help another during difficult times, even to the point of death, as Plutarch reports. Cicero, we recall, insists upon putting friends through trials rather than to naively accept preliminary expressions and acts of goodwill. Most explicit in his references to testing is Ben Sira, who uses the same word, πειρασμός, as James to describe what a new φίλος should endure before earning the trust of another (6:7). Like the other writers, Ben Sira concurs that the best test of friendship is how the friend behaves in the face of affliction or adversity of some kind (6:8; 12:8-9).


105. Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers' and 'Sisters,'" 4.

106. Arzt-Grabner’s article, I think, raises questions about the use of fictive kinship language and its association with friendship in the New Testament generally, but such explorations are beyond the scope of this project.


108. Against Colotes 8.1111b.

109. Lael. 63.
It is possible that James’ references to testing in the exordium of his letter (1:2-3, 12) would have elicited some connections to friendship in the minds of his listeners, although testing was a common theme within Judaism. The LXX translates Gen 22:1 as Καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τὰ ῥήματα ταύτα ὁ θεὸς ἐπείραζεν τὸν Ἀβραὰμ, but James, despite the fact that he refers to this story as a great manifestation of faith and works in 2:21-24, would presumably reject this reading as he says in 1:13-14 that God tests no one (πειράζει δὲ αὐτὸς οὐδὲνα), rather, one is tested by one’s own desire (ἐπιθυμία). If, as we will see, God is characterized as a friend in the letter of James, it is clear that God is not a friend who tests. It is not clear that the initial references to testing (Jas 1:2-3, 12) place responsibility upon desire, but clearly testing, whatever its form and source, can be viewed a positive thing which promotes endurance and ultimately, perfection. Again, it is not evident that James shares wisdom literature’s view that testing was educative: "the whole life of the righteous is a test, since God educates His own throughout their lives,"110 wherein Abraham is consistently understood as one who was tested and proved himself faithful (Sir 44:20), but for James testing does demonstrate one’s steadfastness or heroic endurance (ὑπομονή),111 which in turn, leads to perfection.

One could assign this testing language simply to a characteristic of ancient Judaism were it not for a few other references in the exordium which evoke the concept of friendship. In Jas 1:5 the audience is exhorted to ask God for wisdom, who gives to all ἀπλῶς and without reproaching (μὴ ὁνειδίζοντος). The word ἀπλῶς can mean "simply," "without ulterior motive," "wholeheartedly" or "generously," and, as dis-


111. The idea that trials or affliction would produce endurance was common within Jewish literature, with Job (see Jas 5:11) and Abraham as key models of such endurance. See Dibelius, James, 73.
discussed earlier, is sometimes used to describe a true friend. Plutarch compares this type of person to the flatterer, the antithesis of the friend, when he writes:

For the character of a friend, like the "language of truth," is, as Euripides puts it, "simple (ἀπλούς)," plain, and unaffected ... but the flatterer's activity shows no sign of honesty, truth, straightforwardness (ἀπλοτος), or generosity ... The friend possesses this virtue of simplicity as opposed to the flatterer who may say one thing but mean another. Moreover, Plutarch goes on to describe the flatterer's favours, in which there is reproach (ἐπονεδιστον) and mortification (Flatterer 64B). The φιλος, in contrast, reports his actions modestly, "and says nothing about himself" (Flatterer 64B). The friend is gracious, and does not complain about being put out in order to grant a favour. Similarly, Sir 20:15 describes the fool "who has no friends" (Sir 20-16) who "gives little and upbraids (ὁνειδιστι) much" while Sir 41:25 warns against the use of abusive words (λόγων ὁνειδισμοῦ) before friends and of insults after giving a gift. For James, God is anything but a flatterer or a fool. God is characterized as a friend who possesses the virtue of straightforwardness and lack of reproach, and thus those who ask for wisdom will receive it without any complaints or hesitation from God.

Again, this is not enough evidence to state confidently that James is alluding to friendship in his exordium, but there is another element that emerges in chapter one which surely strengthens the argument. This is James' description of the person who wavers to and fro as a "double-minded" or better, "double-souled" or "double-spirited" (δίψυχος) person. The word δίψυχος is intriguing as this appears to be its

---

112. Flatterer 62C; 63F.

113. The central theme of The Testament of Issachar is the virtue of ἀπλοτης, which reveals to what an extent this notion of simplicity had become a virtue in Hellenistic Jewish thought. In The Testament of Issachar, however, the focus is upon leading a simple life, as Issachar is depicted as a farmer. For some discussion of this theme in The Testament of Issachar, see Hollander and De Jonge, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 233-34.

first instance in Greek literature. Stanley Porter has traced the history of δίψυχος and found no antecedents to its appearance in James, although it is picked up by other early Christian writers, as we saw in the previous chapter. Porter concludes with the suggestion that this is a Christian word, and possibly one that the author of James invented.

The notion of being divided did not originate with James, however, for we find various words in different texts which are prefixed by δι to designate "two" or division of some sort. The Testament of Asher 3:2, for example, describes the "double-faced" (διπρόσωπος) person who follows their own desire (ἐπιθυμία). Joel Marcus, who compares the Jewish concept of yēser, or evil inclination, to James' reference to following one's own ἐπιθυμία, considers διπρόσωπος and the word δίψυχος in James to "correspond to a condition of 'double-heartedness' which means being ruled by both the good and the evil inclination, in rabbinic traditions." Susan R. Garrett discusses this psychological feature of "doubleness" in her analysis of Luke's use of "sound eye" (ὁ ὀφθαλμός συν ἀπλοῦς ῥα) imagery in Luke 11:34-36.

Such authors referred "singleness" and its opposite, "doubleness" or "duplicity," not only to the eye but also to the face (hence one can be "two-faced"), to the soul ("double-souled," in Greek dipsychos), and especially to the heart ("double-hearted" or having a "divided heart"). The "single" person was viewed as entirely

---

115. Porter, ("Is dipsuchos," 475-76) points out the verbal and conceptual parallels between 1 and 2 Clement and James which suggest that the former were influenced by the latter.

116. As Porter ("Is dipsuchos," 498) writes: "In this instance, however, the evidence as a whole does at this stage of investigation point to δίψυχος being a Christian word, and probably one originating with the book of James as well."


devoted to God, with no fraction of the self wavering or holding back in its commitment.\textsuperscript{119}

James is undoubtedly tapping into this "doubleness" imagery with his references to the \( \delta \iota \psi \upsilon \chi \omicron \omicron \zeta \) but it is intriguing to consider why he chose, or perhaps invented, this word when he could have used "double-hearted" or "double-faced" as others do.

One possibility is that again, James was thinking of friendship. We recall from the previous chapter that friends were often described as being of "one soul" or "one mind" (\( \mu \iota \alpha \ \psi \upsilon \chi \eta \)). This goes as far back as the tragic poets and Aristotle,\textsuperscript{120} and is carried on in the works of Plutarch and Cicero,\textsuperscript{121} New Testament authors such as Paul (Phil 1:27) and Luke (Acts 4:32), and early Christians such as Gregory Nazianzus\textsuperscript{122} and others. Some writers simply talk about friends loving one another as they love their own soul, including those who authored the LXX (1 Sam 18:1), and others used variations, such as \( \delta \omicron \omikron \upsilon \chi \omicron \omicron \zeta \), to describe friends.\textsuperscript{123} Ben Sira (6:1), moreover, contrasts the friend with the enemy who is characterized as a "double-tongued sinner" (\( \delta \alpha \mu \alpha \nu \tau \omicron \omicron \lambda \delta \zeta \ \delta \ \delta \gamma \iota \lambda \omega \sigma \sigma \zeta \)).

I suggest that James uses the word \( \delta \iota \psi \upsilon \chi \omicron \omicron \zeta \) here to describe the opposite of God who gives \( \alpha \pi \lambda \omega \zeta \), just as a true friend should. The previous chapter described how \( \alpha \pi \lambda \omega \zeta \) characterized the true friend, in contrast to the flatterer. Plutarch compares the generous act of a true friend to the acts of the gods in whose nature it is "to take pleasure in in the mere act of being gracious and doing good" in contrast to the flatterer.


\textsuperscript{120} Euripides, Orestes 1046; Aristotle, Eth. Eud. 7.6.8-13.

\textsuperscript{121} Plutarch, On Having Many Friends 96E. Cicero, Laelius 80; 92 describes friends as \textit{unus animus}.

\textsuperscript{122} Or. 43.20.

\textsuperscript{123} John Chrysostom, Second Homily on 1 Thessalonians 2. See White, Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century, 91.
who does not speak \( \alpha \pi \lambda \omega \zeta \).\textsuperscript{124} Jas 1:5 thus echoes this description in its characterization of God, the source of wisdom, as generous and without reproach.\textsuperscript{125} Other texts, such as *The Testament of Benjamin* 6:7, place the terms for "double" (\( \delta \iota \pi \lambda \omega \zeta \)) and "single" (\( \alpha \pi \lambda \omega \zeta \)), side by side,\textsuperscript{126} just as the *Testament of Asher* 4:1 juxtaposes \( \delta \iota \rho \omicron \sigma \omega \tau \omicron \zeta \) with \( \mu \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \rho \omicron \sigma \sigma \omicron

The use of the words \( \mu \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \rho \omicron \sigma \omega \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron

James, one could argue, is playing upon the phrase \( \mu \omicron \alpha \psi \nu \chi \eta \) with its opposite in order to accentuate the contrast between God, the gracious friend, and the vacillating person who is \( \delta \iota \psi \chi \sigma \zeta \) and not fully committed to God. Although he does not discuss friendship language, Porter comes to a similar conclusion:

\[\text{If one lacks knowledge of how to pray in such circumstances [tests], one is to turn to God, who gives to all \( \alpha \pi \lambda \omega \zeta \), either generously or more likely "straightforwardly", and not reproachfully. Thus the command for the believer to pray in faith and not doubt is set against the character of God, who is willing to give. Therefore it is true that this section is constructed around a practical dualism regarding the believer ... but this practical dualism is set within the context of theology, which counts on a God who is unlike the doubting man.}\textsuperscript{129}

The doubting \( \delta \iota \psi \chi \sigma \zeta \) person will not receive wisdom nor achieve perfection for they are not steadfast in their faith. Furthermore, Oscar Seitz, who has compared the use of

---

\textsuperscript{124} See Plutarch, *Flatterer* 62C.


\textsuperscript{126} *The Testaments of the Twelves Patriarchs*, 173.

\textsuperscript{127} *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, 340.

\textsuperscript{128} *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, 138.

\textsuperscript{129} Porter, "Is dipsuchos," 482.
δίψυχος to its use in other early Christian texts, such as 1 and 2 Clement, the Shepherd of Hermas, and the Epistle of Barnabas, has found that the δίψυχος person is consistently portrayed as an unstable character who cannot endure trials; who cannot withstand temptation.  

1 Clement, especially, contrasts δίψυχος with ἀπλώς.  

These elements of the use of παρρησία, the repeated address of "brothers," the discussion of testing, a vision of a straightforward and "simple" God, and the characterization of the doubter as "double-minded" are all aspects of the ancient topos of friendship and their combined presence here suggests that James is alluding to this topos. Certainly, a discussion of the later expressions of friendship in James is required but it is appropriate that some allusions to it appear in the exordium as it often introduces themes and ideas which will be developed in the argument of the speech. As friendship was such a noble bond in the ancient world, these allusions to it would have aided the exordium in performing its function of developing a sense of pathos, stressing the authority of the speaker, and introducing themes which are then taken up throughout the remainder of the letter.

C. James 2:14–26

All rhetorical analysts agree that James 2 forms part of the argumentatio and main body of the letter. This passage is also thought by many to be a self-contained


132. For example, Baasland, "Literarische Form," 3656; Wueüner, "Der Jakobusbrief," 36; Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 278.
The "rhetorical situation" defined by Lloyd Bitzer as a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action, as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence,

in each unit is similar, as evidenced by the examples set forth in Jas 2:2-3 and Jas 2:15-16, which both indicate that the "needs of the poor are not being met. Faith is not being demonstrated by good works toward the poor (cf. 1.22-7)." The question of whether these situations are real or hypothetical will receive attention in a later chapter, but regardless, they show that the two sections address the same "rhetorical situation." Both units seek to persuade the audience not to show partiality to the rich but to care for the poor.

The purpose of the argumentatio is to set forth evidence, using different methods, which will support one's case. The stylistic and argumentative features of Jas 2:14-26 have been studied closely by Van Der Westhuizen and Watson and I will not rehearse them in great detail here. Rather, I will provide a brief overview of the rhetorical structure, following Watson, then concentrate upon the specific reference to Abraham as a friend of God in Jas 2:23.

Jas 2:14-26, as stated above, is understood to be a further development of the argument about partiality set out in Jas 2:1-13, but elaborated to the broader topic of

---


faith and works. Watson has worked out the following structure according to patterns of elaboration described in rhetorical texts such as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*: *Propositio* (2:14) (states the theme that faith must be accompanied by works using two rhetorical questions); *Ratio* (2:15-16) (the reason using an example); *Confirmatio* or *Argumentatio* (2:17-19) (restates the propositio in 2:17, then uses anticipation and personification in 2:18a, dilemma in 2:18b, and anticipation an irony in 2:19); *Exornatio* (2:20-25) (exornatio means embellishment and in this case includes an *amplificatio* in 2:20. proof from *exemplum* in 2:21-22, *iudicatio* [supernatural oracle] in 2:23, another *amplificatio* which repeats the *propositio* in 2:24, and another proof from *exemplum* in 2:25); *Complexio* (brief summary conclusion) (2:26). As many scholars, including Dibelius, have shown, the section exhibits many aspects of the ancient diatribe form, including the use of an imaginary opponent in 2:18-23 who makes objections (2:18) and forms false conclusions (2:19).

The reference to Abraham thus appears within the *exornatio*, the latter which is used to embellish, or "adorn and enrich the argument, after the proof has been established" (*Rhet. ad Her.* 2.18.28). Both Abraham and Rahab are referred to as specific historical examples of people who were justified by works and not by faith alone (2:24). The use of examples, either historical or invented, was a common practice within rhetorical speeches for they usually provided concrete proof in support of the argument. In the New Testament, examples used in rhetorical arguments were often

taken from Jewish history,142 and the examples of Abraham and Rahab were well known within Jewish and Christian circles.143 Sometimes they were cited together as they were famous for their hospitality and faith, among other things.144

Thus it is not unusual for Abraham and Rahab to be referred to together, however, the identification of Abraham’s works (ἔργα) (Jas 2:21, 22) has puzzled scholars. James explains the meaning of Rahab’s works (ἔργα): she practiced hospitality by sheltering, hiding and helping two strangers escape from Jericho (Josh 2:1-21), and this story fits well with the theme of showing mercy to the poor as referred to in Jas 2:15-16 and the larger argument about partiality as introduced in Jas 2:1-13. However, the works which justified Abraham are not so clear. Is it because he was willing to offer Isaac upon the altar, as James 2:21 seems to say?145 Why then, is ἔργα in the plural and not the singular? Roy Bowen Ward suggests that the author presupposes his audience’s knowledge of Abraham’s works of hospitality (Gen 18) as this was well known within Jewish and Christian literature. Moreover, the title "friend of God" as we saw earlier, was a reasonably common epithet for Abraham, and could be associated with a variety of Abraham’s good deeds, including hospitality. For example, in his treatise, On Sobriety, Philo cites Gen 18:17 as "shall I hide anything from


144. For example, 1 Clement 10-12 admires Abraham, Lot and Rahab for their hospitality, and in the case of Abraham and Rahab, for their faith. For a discussion of these examples in 1 Clement, see H. Chadwick, "Justification by Faith and Hospitality," Studia Patristica 4 (1961) 281-85. Dibelius, (James, 167) points out that there were lists of pious persons which were well known within ancient Judaism and apparently to some New Testament writers as well.

145. It is interesting that James refers to the near sacrifice of Isaac, which was known as a "test" for Abraham by God, and yet, as discussed earlier, James refuses to acknowledge that God tests (Jas 1:13).
Abraham my friend (φίλου μου)" even though the LXX uses παράδος μου.\footnote{146} Ward argues that Jas 2:15-16 prepares the audience for the story of Abraham's hospitality because it refers to caring for those in need, then sending them on their way (2:16) which is exactly what Abraham did in Gen 18:16.\footnote{147} He thus concludes that Abraham's "works" should be understood with reference to his hospitality rather than to his willingness to sacrifice his son.

Ward's argument is persuasive were it not for the fact that Jas 2:23, which links a citation from Gen 15:6 to a description of Abraham as a "friend of God," finds precedent in Jewish literature.\footnote{148} Irving Jacobs has pointed out that within Midrash, the association of the binding of Isaac story in Genesis 22:1-19, or the Akedah, and the citation of Gen 15:6 had occurred prior to the emergence of James.\footnote{149} Thus, the notion of being a "friend of God" is probably related to the Akedah. In keeping with Jewish tradition, James associates Abraham's friendship with God with the endurance of a great test.\footnote{150} However, Ward is correct to point out that Abraham's hospitality was well known and it would not be surprising if the letter's author presumed that the audience knew about it. It could be, then, that the letter writer refers to the binding of Isaac because "it was at this point in his life that Abraham was declared righteous for

\footnote{146} Philo (de. Sob. 56 [LCL III; trans. F. H. Colson; Cambridge: Harvard; London: Heinemann, 1960]). Ward ("The Works of Abraham," HTR 61 [1968] 286) notes that the "title 'friend of God' was related to various characteristics of Abraham, e.g. his humility (1 Clem. 17:2), his faithfulness (Jub. 19:9), his obedience to God's commandments (CD iii.2) - as well as his hospitality."

\footnote{147} Ward, "The Works," 288.

\footnote{148} See the previous chapter and also, Davids, The Epistle of James, 130.


\footnote{150} Again, one needs to remember that this is not the only reason why Abraham was called a friend of God.
this and his many previous acts of hospitality and charity (cf. Heb. 11.17-19). This would explain the reference to Abraham’s works in the plural and it also maintains the connection between the actions of Abraham and Rahab, as well as the coherence between Abraham’s works and the focus of chapter 2, which is to act mercifully toward those in need.

Returning to the question of rhetoric. Watson states that Jas 2:23 is a *iudicatio* or judgment (in this case, from the past) which, within the *exornatio*, serves to embellish the argument once the proof has been set forth. Jas 2:23 is a supernatural oracle of a god, which can function as a type of judgment, and in turn, "confirms" the ideas set forth in the unit, that faith should be accompanied by works, especially the "works" of caring for the needy. The example of Abraham is the "clincher" with which none of James listeners could argue. It is a compelling elaboration upon the theme that faith must be accompanied by works.

It is important to point out, as well, that this section finds continuity with chapter 1, in that endurance through "testing" is admired, the reference to "perfection" (Jas 2:22) is repeated, as well as the importance of doing (Jas 1:22-25) and caring for the needy (Jas 1:27). Although James is undoubtedly describing Abraham in terms which were well known within Judaism, he has maintained the association between perfection, testing and being a friend of God. Johnson comments that the title "friend of God" is the most distinctive element in the description of Abraham, for it is "the most revealing aspect of James’ understanding of Abraham within the dualistic framework of his own composition." Abrahm, as friend of God, is the opposite of the διψυχος person. He is unwavering in his faith even to the point of withstanding the ultimate test: the binding of his own son. "Abraham’s willingness to give back to God what God had given


demonstrated and perfected his faith and revealed what 'friendship with God' might mean."  
Abraham is a perfect example of one who avoids friendship with the world in favour of friendship with God, an opposition which emerges clearly in chapter 4.

D. James 3:13-4:10

The final section which evinces the theme of friendship explicitly is Jas 3:13-4:10. This section will receive the most analysis as it contains the striking verse: "Unfaithful creatures! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." Not only is this verse unambiguous in its use of friendship language, it may recall a saying of Jesus. But we will initially analyse how the unit is structured rhetorically, or what can be described as the "inner texture" as Vernon Robbins has developed this phrase.  

First, however, a few remarks must be made about the issue of the unity of Jas 3:13-4:10. This section is part of the argumentatio, as all rhetorical analysts would agree, although they disagree over the question of whether it is unified. Dibelius considered 3:1-12 to be a unified treatise on the tongue, and Watson has shown how 3:1-12 displays a classical pattern of argumentation, and thus both support the notion that 3:13 is the beginning of a new section of the letter. Dibelius, however, does not consider 3:13-4:10 to be a smooth unity, but rather a sequence of two admonitions.


155. Dibelius, James, 181-206.

in 3:13-17 and 4:1-6 broken up by an isolated saying in 3:18 and containing a series of imperatives in 4:7-12.\textsuperscript{157} He also thinks that 4:11-13 can be included with the rest of 3:13-4:10 because it consists of imperatives which conform in form to the previous imperatives although he admits that 4:11 introduces "something new, as is indicated also by the change in tone: instead of "sinners" (\textita{ἀμαρτωλοί}) or "double-minded" (\textita{δύσμοι}) the address in v 11 is "brothers and sisters" (\textita{ἀδελφοί})."\textsuperscript{158} Thurén considers 3:1-4:12 to be a unity based upon the themes of speech and wisdom, and notices that there is a break between 3:12 and 3:13, but he thinks that there is no clear change of audience after 3:13 until 4:13, although he does not provide any explanation for this position.\textsuperscript{159} Davids admits that 4:11-12 may be a free-floating admonition. but he then suggests that they fit well with the previous section in that they address community conflict.\textsuperscript{160} However, one could argue that a good proportion of James addresses the issue of community conflict and moreover, Davids grants that 4:10 "clearly rounds off a section."\textsuperscript{161} James Hardy Ropes claims that 4:11-12 is an appendix to 4:1-10 in that the "thought of the writer reverts ... to those facts of life which had given him the text for his far reaching discussion and exhortation (4:1-10)."\textsuperscript{162} Ropes' scenario is certainly possible but as with the other positions mentioned above, hardly final proof.

In contrast to the above authors, some scholars view 3:13-4:10 as a logical unit. Although Davids includes 4:11-12 with 4:1-10, he does see the relationship between 3:13-18 and 4:1-10. He challenges Dibelius' view that 3:18 is a free-floating saying by

\textsuperscript{157} Dibelius, \textit{James}, 208.

\textsuperscript{158} Dibelius, \textit{James}, 228.

\textsuperscript{159} Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 280.

\textsuperscript{160} Davids, \textit{The Epistle of James}, 169.

\textsuperscript{161} Davids, \textit{The Epistle of James}, 168.

\textsuperscript{162} Ropes, \textit{A Critical and Exegetical Commentary}, 273.
pointing out how the "εἰρήνην at the end of 3:18 forms a contrast with the πόλεμοι of 4:1. The latter section makes the more general accusation of 3:13-18 pointed and specific." 163 Ralph P. Martin states that "the text from 3:13 to 4:10 is indeed a coherent and self-consistent unit, with some telltale markers to indicate the closely woven texture." 164 He then goes on to describe several ways in which 3:13-18 is connected to 4:1-10, including the fact that 4:1-10 picks up on the consequences (for example, wars and strife) of following the wisdom from below, which is contrasted to the wisdom from above in 3:13-18. Moreover, he points out how Jas 3:17 describes the wisdom from above to be "impartial" (ἀδιάκριτος) which contrasts with the person who follows the wisdom from below (3:15-16) and who is not impartial but "double-minded" (διψυχος). 165

Johnson also refers to this latter point in his analysis of Jas 3:13-4:10 as a unified whole. 166 However, Johnson understands the unit to consist of an indictment in 3:13-4:6 followed by a call to conversion in 4:7-10. The thematic focus of the indictment is envy which reaches a climax in 4:5-6, with the citation of Prov 3:34. "The whole exposition comes down to the validity of the scriptural witness to the way God works in the world. Is all that Scripture says in vain? Is envy really the proper sort of longing for the spirit God placed in humans?" 167 Following the indictment is thus a series of

---

163. Davids, The Epistle of James, 149.

164. Ralph P. Martin, James, 142. Note that Hartin, (James and the Q Sayings of Jesus, 31) treats 3:13-18 and 4:1-10 as discrete units which parallel each other and "form the very heart of the epistle."

165. Martin, James, 142.


exhortations to submit to God and be humble, or said otherwise, a call to conversion from a life of envy and enmity to a life of friendship with God (4:4).168

Johnson's study of this section of James is compelling but he has not performed a full-fledged rhetorical analysis of the unit. Although we have not proven that Jas 3:13-4:10 is clearly a coherent whole, the evidence presented by scholars provides sufficient warrant to attempt a rhetorical study of the unit. In the following section we will therefore examine Jas 3:13-4:10 particularly to determine whether the instructions provided by various rhetorical guides in antiquity are followed within this short and elusive New Testament letter. The interest here is thus the "inner texture" of this part of James: "its form, structure, and argumentative pattern."169

Several things necessary to consider when performing rhetorical criticism are how the author uses invention, arrangement and style in his work. The Rhetorica Ad Herennium clearly defines these three terms:

Invention is the devising of matter, true or plausible, that would make the case convincing. Arrangement is the ordering and distribution of the matter, making clear the place to which each thing is to be assigned. Style is the adaptation of suitable words and sentences to the matter devised (Rhet. Her. 1.2.3).170

These elements are also discussed in the ancient rhetorical handbooks and progymnasmata, or textbooks on composition,171 which would have been familiar to those fortunate enough to receive some education within the Graeco-Roman world. The hand-


170. Rhet. Her. 1.2.3 also discusses memory or memorization (μνήμη, memoria) and delivery (ισόκρατος, pronunciatio) which is the tone of voice and physical movements, but these obviously pertain to oral delivery.

books and textbooks discussed the above elements in more detail and provided guidelines for how one should construct a compelling argument, including practice exercises one should perform. They explain that invention (ἐὑρεσις, inventio) consists of finding the right materials to make a point, and thus involves a sifting through of figures of speech, citations, images and other topoi in order to find the perfect device for a rhetorical aim. For example, what citation from the Jewish scriptures would be appropriate in an early Christian text and how is it reinterpreted within the early Christian literary context? Arrangement (ταξις, dispositio) would be crafted in tandem with invention as various topoi could be used in the elaboration of a theme, or the topos itself could be the subject of elaboration. Finally, style (λεξις, elocutio), was immensely important not only because it dealt with the matters of grammar, syntax, transitions and metaphors, but it served to develop the ethos of the speaker (for example, does the speaker have authority and thus make many imperative statements) and the pathos of, or "desired effect upon" the audience.

The Rhetorica Ad Herennium states that the most complete and perfect argument ... is that which is comprised of five parts: the Proposition, the Reason, the Proof of the Reason, the Embellishment, and the Résumé. Through the Proposition we set forth summarily what we intend to prove. The Reason, by means of a brief explanation subjoined, sets forth the causal basis for the Proposition, establishing the truth of what we are urging. The Proof of the Reason corroborates, by means of additional arguments, the briefly presented Reason. Embellishment we use in order to adorn and enrich the argument, after the Proof has been established. The Résumé is a brief conclusion, drawing together the parts of the argument (Rhet. Her. 2.18.28).

Such an outline may not have been true for all rhetors, but rhetorical speeches did have a standard, or skeletal, format consisting of the introduction (προοίμιον, exordium) which was discussed earlier, a statement of the case (διήγησις, narratio), supporting arguments (πιστις, confirmatio or argumentatio), and a conclusion (ἐπιλογος).


peroratio or conclusio). This pattern was characteristic of judicial speeches but subsequently became common for deliberative speeches. Burton Mack points out that during the second century B.C.E., a general outline for a complete argument, or "thesis," emerged which was more accessible to most people in that it enabled them to bypass deciphering the complex instructions within the rhetorical handbooks. This outline consisted of the four major elements described above as well as a few other pieces and is structured as follows: 1) an introduction; 2) a proposition; 3) a reason (rationale); 4) an opposite (contrary); 5) an analogy (comparison); 6) an example; 7) a citation (authority); and 8) a conclusion. As Mack and Wachob explain, this pattern was flexible. For example, Hermogenes' elaboration of a chreia exercise consisted of 8 stages (praise, paraphrase, rationale, statement from the opposite point of view, statement from analogy, statement from example, statement from authority, exhortation). Similar to this is the elaboration of a theme, or tractatio, which is outlined in the Rhetorica Ad Herrenium and consisted of seven stages: 1) statement of the theme (res); 2) the reason (ratio); 3) the expression of the theme in another form (pronuntiatum) with or without the reasons; 4) a statement of the contrary (contrarium); 5) a comparison (similie); 6) an example (exemplum); and 7) a conclusion (conclusio).

Again, this pattern may vary, but at least some of these elements are essential to a complete argument.

177. See Rhet. Her. 4.43.56; and Wachob, The Voice of Jesus, 62.
178. Wachob (The Voice of Jesus, 63) writes: "Rhetoricians and texts, both ancient and modern, agree and demonstrate that, while the sequence of those figures may vary and one or several of them may be absent in a given case, one or more of them are the necessary ingredients for a complete argument."
1. The Argumentation of Jas 3:13-4:10

A close analysis of Jas 3:13-4:10 reveals that this particular section follows the elaboration exercise with some adaptations. Jas 3:13-4:10 contains the following pattern:

1. Statement of Theme - 3:13-14
2. Reason - 3:15-18
3. Argument Proper
   a. Opposite - 4:1-3
   b. Maxim - 4:4
   c. Citation (Authority) - 4:5-6
4. Conclusion - 4:7-10

In working through each of these stages in the pattern, therefore, aspects of the invention, arrangement and style of this section of James should emerge.

Statement of Theme: Jas 3:13-14

13. Τίς σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν; δεικτάτω ἐκ τῆς καλῆς ἀναστροφῆς τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ἐν πραύτητι σοφίας. 14. εἰ δὲ ἤλθον πικρῶν ἐχετε καὶ ἐριθείαν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν, μὴ κατακαυχᾶσθε καὶ ψεύδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας.

The opening verse introduces part of the theme of this section, namely, the importance of leading a life of wisdom. James asks who is "wise and understanding" among his listeners, and then to the one who might respond, "I am," exhorts him to live a good life and "show his works in the meekness of wisdom." The verse begins with a reference to σοφὸς and ends with the word σοφία, the theme of wisdom giving
direction to the whole section, and, as we will see, "to what follows in 4:1-10 as well."\footnote{179}

James associates two things with this life of wisdom: works (\(\varepsilon\rho\gamma\alpha\)) and meekness (\(\pi\rho\alpha\omega\tau\eta\zeta\)).\footnote{180} Neither association is new or surprising, either in James or in early Christian literature. In James the relationship between works and wisdom is similar to the one between works and faith, discussed in Jas 2. Wisdom, like faith, is not simply an intellectual possession, but must be manifested in a good life of works.\footnote{181} Other early Christian texts also made this association between works and wisdom such as \(I\ Clem.\ 38:2,\ 1\ Pet\ 2:12;\ 3:2,\ \text{and}\ Heb\ 13:7.\)\footnote{182} James' emphasis upon how one lives and acts is continued throughout the entire section with the discussion of wars and divisions between people (3:16; 4:1-13), underscoring the fact that he is dealing with concrete behaviour here, as he does throughout most of the letter.

The second connection, meekness, is no less important, for James spends a good deal of this section warning against the opposite of meekness, namely pride, and selfish ambition (3:14, 16; 4:2, 6). In chapter one James refers to \(\pi\rho\alpha\omega\tau\eta\zeta\) (1:21) as that which is required in order to receive the word from God and likewise here he reminds his audience that they need wisdom but wisdom received with meekness. Again, meekness was a virtue within early Christianity (Gal 6:1; Eph 4:2; 2 Tim 2:25; Tit 3:2; 1 Pet 3:15), and in Graeco-Roman culture was associated with "friendliness" and "gentleness" as opposed to roughness or anger.\footnote{183}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{179. Hartin, \textit{James and the Q Sayings of Jesus}, 99.}
\footnote{180. Martin, \textit{James}, 129.}
\footnote{181. Hartin, \textit{James and the Q Sayings of Jesus}, 100.}
\footnote{182. Hartin, \textit{James and the Q Sayings of Jesus}, 100.}
\footnote{183. Aristotle (\textit{Rhet.} 1.9.5) considers "gentleness" to be one of the components of virtue, and he places it as the median between anger (\(\alpha\rho\gamma\lambda\alpha\tau\eta\zeta\)) and "spineless incompetence" (\(\alpha\omega\rho\gamma\eta\alpha\iota\omega\)) (\textit{Eth.M} 1.23). See F. Hauck and S. Schulz, "\(\pi\rho\alpha\omega\zeta,\ \pi\rho\alpha\omega\tau\eta\zeta,\)" \textit{TDNT} 6 (1968) 645-51.}
\end{footnotes}
The second part of the opening theme is an exhortation to those who have "bitter jealousy" (ἅρπαγα) and "selfish ambition" (ἐριθεία) in their hearts not to boast (κατακαυκαυχάμους) and be false to the truth. This latter phrase (ψεύδομεν κατὰ τὴν ἀληθείαν) is awkward but most commentators understand it as "lying against the truth." The overall meaning of the verse, however, seems reasonably explicit: if you are jealous and full of your own pride and ambition (the opposite of receiving wisdom meekly), you should not boast of your wisdom for then you are lying. You cannot be wise and be selfishly ambitious or boastful simultaneously for the truly wise person is meek and shows his wisdom through a good life of works, as the previous verse explained.

The central message of this section of James, therefore, is that the truly wise are those who are humble and show their wisdom through works, as opposed to those who are jealous, selfish and full of words of pride. This contrast, positive and negative, truly wise vs. jealous and selfish, is conveyed throughout the rest of the section. As the rhetorical instructor wrote, this opening statement sets forth "summarily what we intend to prove" (Rhet. Her. 2.18.28) and thus the audience can anticipate a series of arguments which will support the call to live a life of wisdom and to avoid a life of jealousy and selfishness.

It is important to recall, at this point, that envy was considered to be inimical to friendship. Plutarch, for instance, claimed that true friends do not possess envy (φθόνος) nor emulation (ἄρπαγα) but withstand one another's accomplishments with moderation and without vexation (Flatterer 54C). The word ἄρπαγα was a neutral term in Greek literature, for its meaning depended upon its specific context. Often, it is


185. As Johnson ("James 3:13-4:10," 336) remarks: "That φθόνος opposes friendship is obvious..."
translated as "zeal" which could be positive in that one could have zeal or passion for a particular idea or person, or cause. However, it could also be negative, as it is in James, where it is described as "bitter" (πικρος) and placed side by side with ἐριθεία, which has been translated as "selfish ambition" and in the New Testament is related to "antisocial attitudes destructive of community (Rom 2:8; Gal 5:20; Phil 1:17; 2:3)."

In various Greek texts ἡλος is used interchangeably with φθόνος, an observation which leads Johnson to conclude that James also thinks of the two words as synonyms. Thus ἡλος likely refers to "envy" in James and contains none of the positive connotations it possesses in other literary contexts. For James, no envious person can be a wise person, rather, one must possess the virtue of meekness, a term associated with "friendliness," as we saw, in the ancient world.

Reason: James 3:15-18

The next section of the argument is the reason why one should humbly accept and follow God’s wisdom and not be selfish and envious. Within the ratio, rhetors would


188. Johnson (The Letter of James, 271) lists the following sources: Plutarch, On Brotherly Love 14: How to Profit by One’s Enemies 1; 9; On Tranquility of Soul 10; 11; Plato, Symposium 213D; Laws 679C; Epictetus, Discourses III, 22, 61.

189. Johnson ("James 3:13-4:10) is convincing in his argument that envy is a key theme in Jas 3:13-4:10, however, he needs (in my view) to underline the positive exhortations to meekness and humility as well.
provide examples which would not only demonstrate the correctness of the proposition, but supply proof of why the audience should follow their advice. As Wachob states, the {\textit{ratio}} includes an example which provides a "compelling social basis for what [James] says." There are different types of examples which rhetors could draw upon, notably the historical example (παράδειγμα), the comparison or analogy (παράβολή), and the fable (μῦθος). The historical example was a well-known case taken from history while a comparison was usually an example from everyday social life and a fable was from an imaginary world or story.

In this particular pericope, James builds an antithetical comparison of two lifestyles, one without wisdom and one wise. His comparison here is not as concrete as the reasons he provides in other sections of his letter, for example, the contrast in treatment of the wealthy and poor men who enter the assembly in Jas 2:2-4, but nonetheless, it functions in a similar manner. James describes the characteristics of each life, and subsequently illustrates their concrete effects for society. He begins by stating clearly that this "anti-wisdom" is not from above, then provides a list of negative adjectives to describe it: it is "earthly" (ἐπίγειος) "unspiritual" (ψυχική) and "devilish" (δαιμονιώδης). The most plausible explanation of this list is that James wants to emphasize the negative features of this anti-wisdom in increasingly worsening increments. First, it is ἐπίγειος; it is from the world, as opposed to being from God. The term ἐπίγειος can mean simply "existing on earth" with no negative connotation.

190. \textit{Ad. Herr.} 2.23.35.


194. Hartin, \textit{A Spirituality of Perfection}, 73.

195. This theme of "earthliness" or "worldliness" is again picked up in Jas 4:4, as we will see.
but in contexts in which there is a clear distinction between earth and heaven ἐπίγειος does come to mean "what is earthly in the sense of what is completely opposed to the heavenly." The next word, ψυχική, is a little more puzzling as it simply means, "of the soul," but within the New Testament it becomes one pole of the contrast between "the earthly, human, and non-spiritual and the heavenly, divine and spiritual," the opposite pole being πνευματικός. The third adjective, δαιμονιώδης, represents the worst characteristic of anti-wisdom, as it baldly states that it is from the devil. This word is unattested prior to its appearance in James and is a hapax in the New Testament but James also refers to τὰ δαιμόνια in 2:19 who believe but shudder, and other New Testament texts present demons as the opposite of God (1 Cor 10:20-21; 1 Tim 4:1). Thus James is not granting that there is another type of wisdom from below, so to speak, but that no one can claim to hold true wisdom when they engage in selfish, false and arrogant behaviour. As Sophie Laws puts it. James' "point is not that there is a different wisdom in opposition to the true one, but that a claim to true wisdom cannot be upheld in the context of an inconsistent style of life." In other words, a life of envy and dishonesty does not originate in another type of wisdom but comes from the devil.

In verse 16, James then describes the concrete effects of the manifestation of Ἴλαος, which we saw could be understood as envy, and ἐρυθεία (selfish ambition). This

---

196. Hermann Sasse, "ἐπίγειος," TDNT 1 (1964) 680-81. Another text which makes this comparison between heaven and earth is 2 Cor 5:1.


200. Sophie Laws, The Epistle of James, 162.

201. Hartin, A Spirituality of Perfection, 73.
sentence begins with the connective particle γάρ, which "[i]ntroduces proof that v. 15 is true." 202 ἰηλος and ἐριθεία will produce disorder (ἀκατάστασις), which recalls a description of the διψυχός person in 1:8 who is ἀκατάστατος in all his ways and the tongue in 3:8, also described as ἀκατάστατος, and every evil practice (καὶ πᾶν φαύλον πράγμα). ἰηλος, ἐριθεία, and ἀκατάστασις are associated in vice lists in other New Testament texts, notably 2 Cor 12:20, 203 and ἀκατάστασις might best be translated as "social unrest" or even, "anarchy." 204 Πράγμα refers to concrete acts or practices thus underscoring that James is talking about behaviour within the community and not simply thoughts or dispositions. He may even be referring to the problems in court as mentioned in 2:6, for πράγμα can refer to lawsuits. 205 Thus the reason why the audience should not be envious and ambitious, but meek and humble is very clear. for envy finds its source in the devil and produces strife, indeed it produces every evil action.

Jas 3:17 presents a balanced contrast to a jealous life by specifying the attributes of wisdom and illustrating the effects of such a lifestyle. 206 This wisdom from above (ἀυστηρος σοφία) is pure (ἀγνη); in other words she is free of all things bad, such as ἰηλος and ἐριθεία. 207 Next, James provides a list of the virtues of wisdom which are related by their alliteration (the first three adjectives each begin with ε) but also by the fact that "they amount in combination to a definition of 'meekness' enjoined by

206. Almost all commentators agree that Jas 3:15-16 and Jas 3:17-18 form a balanced contrast. See, for example, Hartin, James and the Q Sayings of Jesus, 98.
207. Compare with Wis 7:25. See Ropes, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 249.
3:13. "Wisdom from above is peaceable (εἰρηνική), which is in contrast to the disorder produced by envy and ambition; it is gentle (ἐπιευκής), a word which is paralleled by "meekness" (πραΰτητος) in 2 Cor 10:1, and trusting (ἐυπειθής), another hapax "which does not indicate a person without convictions who agrees with everyone and sways in the wind (cf. 1:5-18), but the person who gladly submits to true teaching and listens carefully to the other instead of attacking him." This wisdom is also "full of mercy and good fruits" (μεστὴ ἐλάδου καὶ καρπῶν ἀγαθῶν) the latter which anticipates the "fruit of righteousness" in 3:18, "impartial" or "simple" (ἀδιάκριτος), and "without hypocrisy" or "sincere" (ἀνυπόκριτος). These latter descriptives recall the characterization of God in chapter one and are the antithesis of the doubting, wavering δίψυχος person whom we encountered earlier and who returns in 4:8.

The rationale concludes with Jas 3:18, which may have been well known to the audience, and thus may be a maxim: "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by [for] those who make peace [peacemakers]." In particular, it bears resemblance to Matt 5:9: "Blessed are the peacemakers," a saying probably familiar to James' readers given the overall density of Jesus sayings in James. Jas 3:18 and Matt 5:9

209. See Davids, The Epistle of James, 154.
211. Johnson, The Letter of James, 274.
212. Scholars debate about the precise meaning of ἀδιάκριτος. It could mean "simple" as opposed to δίψυχος, or "not given to party spirit." See Davids, The Epistle of James, 154.
213. The dative can be read as "by those who make peace" or "for those who make peace." Douglas J. Moo (The Letter of James [PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000] 177) points out that the verse "has a simple proverbial style ... which suggest[s] that James may here be quoting a saying current in the early church."
214. See Hartin, James and the Q Sayings of Jesus, in particular, 112.
are in fact the only two New Testament texts to address peacemaking and they are similar in their thinking. In both sayings, the ability to make peace emerges from a relationship with God. In Matt 5:9 the peacemakers are referred to as "the sons of God" while in Jas 3:18, the peacemaker receives the gift of righteousness from God. The possibility that James is refashioning the beatitude, or a form of the beatitude, is increased given the fact that the description of the wisdom from above in Jas 3:17 uses adjectives which correspond strikingly to the words used in Matthew's beatitudes.

Such a maxim would have the rhetorical effect of assuring the audience that the speaker's teaching corresponds to Jesus' teaching, which in turn, increases the credibility of the speaker.

This verse is also striking in that it associates peacemaking with righteousness (δικαιοσύνη). Within the inscriptional evidence, the epithet of δικαιοσύνη was often awarded to the secretaries of Greek associations when they had done an exemplary job of managing the association's finances. This does not mean that δικαιοσύνη was void of a moral dimension, for in the context of the inscriptions it could suggest that the secretary was fair and honest in how he distributed the monies. However, sometimes individuals were praised for both δικαιοσύνη and φιλοστροφία, the latter which could refer to having a competitive spirit, and to possessing zeal and great ambition. Again, this word could have a positive moral connotation, in the sense that it could refer to "gener-

215. Hartin, James and the Q Sayings of Jesus, 155.

216. Hartin, James and the Q Sayings of Jesus, 155.

217. Compare Jas 3:17, with its references to wisdom from above as pure, peaceable, gentle and merciful to Matt 5:5,7,8,9. See Hartin, James and the Q Sayings of Jesus, 214.


219. Danker, Benefactor, 328.
ous zeal"\textsuperscript{220} but often it was sharply criticized for it could "shade into aggression, pride and boastfulness,"\textsuperscript{221} precisely the sorts of things that James criticizes. Thus the linkage between peacemaking and δικαιωσύνη would not necessarily have been self-evident to ancient society in general, which may have normally associated financial skills, or perhaps competition, with δικαιωσύνη. Again, James is attempting to demonstrate that living according to the wisdom from above, the wisdom from God, is diametrically opposed to the "normal" workings of the world.

In addition, Jas 3:18 is an apt way to end this section, for it resembles the form of Jas 3:16 in that it refers to actions;\textsuperscript{222} just as Jas 3:16 specified negative behaviour associated with jealousy, Jas 3:18 refers to positive behaviour (peacemaking) which is born of an acceptance of the wisdom of God. It also lifts out peacemaking, mentioned in Jas 3:17 as a characteristic of wisdom from above, as a "prime quality of all the characteristics of wisdom."\textsuperscript{223} Finally, it anticipates its opposite, strife and fighting, which follow in chapter 4.

The rationale within this rhetorical unit not only reemphasizes the theme of pursuing wisdom meekly and not succumbing to selfish ambitions and envy, but it offers a comparison, taken from the social sphere, as to why one should choose the wisdom path. A lack of wisdom will lead to disorder and bad practice whereas those who accept wisdom will seek justice/righteousness peacefully. James has reasoned inductively, for he has used examples from the social sphere (conflict vs. peace) and probably a version of a Jesus saying (3:18) to introduce reasons for his argument, but he has also used a

\textsuperscript{220} Danker, \textit{Benefactor}, 328.


\textsuperscript{222} Johnson, \textit{The Letter of James}, 275.

\textsuperscript{223} Hartin, \textit{A Spirituality of Perfection}, 75.
deductive proof (commonly called an enthymeme), in that he makes a statement (3:15) and subsequently provides a supporting statement for it beginning with γὰρ in 3:16.\textsuperscript{224} Both techniques were common within rhetorical speeches,\textsuperscript{225} and the type of enthymeme which James uses in 3:15-16, which is "derived from opposites,"\textsuperscript{226} (in this case, the opposite of true wisdom) was a common topic of demonstrative enthymemes. Moreover, James has introduced the issue of peace versus conflict which will figure importantly in his subsequent main argument.

Argument Proper

Opposite: James 4:1-3

1. Πόθεν πόλεμοι καὶ πόθεν μάχαι ἐν ὑμῖν; οὐκ ἐντεύθεν, ἐκ τῶν ἡδονῶν ἰμῶν τῶν στρατευομένων ἐν ταῖς μέλεσιν ἰμῶν; 2. ἐπιθυμεῖτε καὶ οὐκ ἔχετε, φονεύετε καὶ ξηλοῦτε καὶ οὐ δύνασθε ἐπιτυχεῖν, μάχεσθε καὶ πολεμᾶτε, οὐκ ἔχετε διὰ τὸ μὴ αἰτεῖσθαι ἰμᾶς, 3. αἰτεῖτε καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε διότι κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε, ἵνα ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ἰμῶν δαπανήσῃτε.

In Jas 4:1-3, the letter writer commences his argument proper with a series of impassioned questions and statements focusing upon conduct which is in dramatic opposition to the type of demeanor which James exhorts. Again, opposites remind us that rhetoric is debate, for they keep the other side in view.\textsuperscript{227} Opposites could be used in a variety of ways, and in this particular case, it appears that James employs the

\textsuperscript{224} See Kennedy, New Testament Interpretation, 16. For a comparable analysis of chapter 2 of James, see Wachob, The Voice of Jesus, 77.

\textsuperscript{225} Aristotle, Rhet. 1.2.8-9.

\textsuperscript{226} Aristotle, Rhet. 2.23.1.

\textsuperscript{227} Mack, Rhetoric and the New Testament, 42.
opposite in order to "censure the opposite proposition, showing that the opposite would not make any sense..."228 In this instance, the opposite proposition would be to ignore the author's plea to seek the wisdom from above, but rather, to live according to one's own ambitions, one's own inclinations. In this section, then, James builds an argument against such behaviour.

James begins this "oppositional" segment with two questions, both rhetorical, which address conflict within the community. Most commentators understand James' use of the terms "wars" (πόλεμοι) and "fightings" (μάχαι) as metaphors for disputes among the audience, as these words are used as "synonyms for strife and quarrelling."229 The second question refers to passions (ηδοναί) at war "in your members" which makes it clear that the source of all of these conflicts is human passion, whether it is for physical pleasure, or for wealth, fame, authority etc.... The term ηδονή, moreover, is linked to social disorder within Hellenistic and Hellenistic Jewish literature.230 The next verse is grammatically difficult. Does it say that you desire and do not have and so you kill as some commentators would punctuate it;231 or is it that the addressees desire and do not have, kill out of jealousy, and cannot obtain, fight and wage war?232 Several authors have puzzled over James' reference to killing (φόνος) and emended the text to refer to envy (φθόνος), which would certainly make sense, although there is little basis for it. Johnson shows that murder is often linked to the topic of envy and

229. Dibelius, James, 216; Martin, James, 144.
230. See, for example, 4 Macc 1:25-27.
231. For example, Johnson, The Letter of James, 277.
232. Martin, James, 146.
untrammelled desire within Hellenistic literature and in Jas 1:14-15, the author did make it clear that desire (ἐπιθυμία) could lead to death. With regard to the grammatical structure of the verse, Mayor’s reading (following Hofmann) seems the most logical. He explains:

The easiest way of seeing how the words naturally group themselves is to put them side by side without any stopping: ἐπιθυμεῖτε καὶ οὐκ ἔχετε φονεύετε καὶ ἵππουτε καὶ οὐ δύνασθε ἐπιτυχεῖν μάχεσθε καὶ πολέμειτε. Can any one doubt that the abrupt collocations of φονεύετε and μάχεσθε are employed to express results of what precedes, and that in the second series ἵππουτε καὶ οὐ δύνασθε ἐπιτυχεῖν correspond to ἐπιθυμεῖτε καὶ οὐκ ἔχετε in the first series? Unsatisfied desire leads to murder; disappointed ambition leads to quarelling and fighting.234

If one allows one’s desires and envy to reign, one only encounters fighting and death, rather than peace, which is the result of following God’s wisdom. Using a series of questions, that function rhetorically to hold the audience’s attention, and indictments, the author boldly makes plain the folly of clinging to one’s own desires. His audience has not learned that they must ask for wisdom from God (Jas 1:5), rather they covet and they do not have, because they do not ask (Jas 4:2b). Jas 4:3 indicates, moreover, that some are asking things of God, but they are asking wrongly or "evilly," to spend it on their passions. By this the writer likely means that some are approaching God with the wrong motives; their petitions are born out of selfishness.236

---


234. Mayor, The Epistle of St. James, 136. Johnson (The Letter of James, 277) also takes this reading.


236. Johnson, The Letter of James, 278.

Through the depiction of the type of conduct which the author wishes his audience would avoid, then, James exposes the futility of leading a life without wisdom, for it is ruled by voracious desires which, ever unsatisfied, lead to fighting and killing. The language is very strong, but for James, the importance of the subject appears to demand such a vivid depiction.238

Maxim: James 4:4

4. μοιχαλίδες, οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι ἡ φιλία τοῦ κόσμου ἐχθρα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν; ὃς ἐὰν οὖν βουληθῇ φίλος εἶναι τοῦ κόσμου, ἐχθρὸς τοῦ θεοῦ καθίσταται.

This verse, I will suggest, is a Jamesian version of a Jesus saying, but for our present purposes we will address its role as a maxim within the argument proper of Jas 3:13-4:10. This is not the only place where a maxim occurs in James, as we have seen, in this case, from the discussion of the exordium, where the maxim served to enhance the authority of the speaker. There are different forms of maxims, some more complex than others in that they provide a reason for the saying.239 They should be used only rarely, but when they are used, they "will add much distinction."240 Moreover, they should be related to the matter under discussion, "in order that what you say may not seem clumsy and irrelevant."241 Maxims are proofs drawn from words, persons or

238. James 4:1-13 is using what the author of Rhet. Her. 4.15.22 calls an "Apostrophe" which expresses grief or indignation. "If we use Apostrophe in its proper place, sparingly, and when the importance of the subject seems to demand it, we shall instil in the hearer as much indignation as we desire."

239. Rhet. ad Her. 4.17.24-25.

240. Rhet. ad Her. 4.17.25.

241. Rhet. ad Alex. 9.
actions. As Aristotle explains, they are statements of the general, and they are advantageous for more than one reason. First, if they are familiar to the audience, they will be much more acceptable and likely to be put into action, and second, if they are good, they will make the speech ethical, which will in turn render the character of the speaker to be "a man of good character" (Rhet. 2.21.). Certainly, a maxim could be rejected by the audience, "but so great is its force, so great the presumption of agreement attaching to it, that one must have weighty reasons for rejecting it." If the maxim does run contrary to the desires and expectations of the audience, however, one must "specify the reasons briefly, so as to avoid hostility and not arouse incredulity."245

Jas 4:4 begins with a caustic condemnation of the audience as "adulteresses," an expression that disturbed some scribes who amended it to μοιχοὶ καὶ μοιχαλίδες, but which refers to the covenant relationship between God and Israel which in the author’s view, the audience has sundered. In so doing, they have effectively committed adultery, and indeed, idolatry, for they have put other things before God. The phrase anticipates the rest of the verse as it focuses upon choosing between loyalty to God or loyalty to something else. It is followed by the phrase, "do you not know" which indicates that the audience is aware of what they should do but refuse to do so; it

242. Rhet. ad Alex. 7.

243. The author of the Rhetorica ad Herrenium (4.17) explains, as well, that a maxim is a "saying drawn from life, which shows concisely either what happens or ought to happen in life ... ."

244. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric, 166.

245. Rhet. ad Alex. 11.

246. As we have seen, James usually refers to his audience as "brothers" or "beloved brothers" and thus the gender inverted address would likely have been surprising to some scribes.

247. See LXX Ps. 72:27; Jer 3:6-10; 13:27; Isa 57:3; Hos 3:1; 9:1; Ezek 16:38; 23:45. See Johnson, The Letter of James, 278.
is "the clearest example in James of the diatribal rebuke for not acting upon an assumed store of shared knowledge."\textsuperscript{248} This question/rebuke is then followed by a repetition of what the question asked, but in statement form, beginning with \( \delta \xi \) \( \tau \alpha \nu \). This is the maxim proper, for it states clearly that if one is a friend of the world then one is an enemy of God.

Despite the fact, therefore, that the audience is conscious that they cannot be friends with both the world and God at the same time, the letter writer bluntly reminds them of this fact. Some authors consider this verse to be the clearest expression of the identity the letter writer wishes his audience would reflect.\textsuperscript{249} This may be true, but regardless, the verse clearly fits, as a maxim should, with what we have encountered in James so far; James places special emphasis upon testing, and the one who withstands great tests and trials is called a friend of God, as Abraham was (Jas 2:23). God, moreover, is described as friends sometimes were (Jas 1:5). Unlike the person who is \( \delta \iota \psi \chi \omicron \varsigma \) and who vacillates, the author wants his readers to focus exclusively upon their relationship with God, which should take priority over all other relationships.

Given what we have learned in the previous chapter about what it meant to be a \( \phi \delta \lambda \omicron \varsigma \) in antiquity, the language of friendship here would have been quite powerful, for friends were expected to bear unparalleled loyalty for one another; they should be of "one soul" instead of "double-souled;" they should share all things and even die for one another if necessary. "As a friend of God, one shares the same vision, the same values

\textsuperscript{248} Johnson, \textit{The Letter of James}, 278.

\textsuperscript{249} As Hartin (\textit{A Spirituality of Perfection}, 106) writes: "Among the spiritual values that James's community is encouraged to embrace is the call to maintain friendship with God. This expresses the very identity of the community. James 4:4 is one of the central verses of the entire letter; it captures the main thrust of the letter's central argument."
God has - one trusts God fully and sees reality as God would." This would be a demanding relationship and one that entertains no compromises.

The opposite end of the spectrum is friendship with the world, which, if entered, effectively makes one an "enemy" of God. The world (κόσμος) is not portrayed positively throughout this letter: in Jas 1:27, religion is defined as keeping oneself "unstained from the world;" in Jas 2:5, the author asks if God has not "chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith to be heirs of the kingdom which he has chosen to those who love him?" thereby contrasting the world with the kingdom, and Jas 3:6 describes the tongue as a "world of injustice ... staining the whole body;" and finally in Jas 4:4, as we see, the world is diametrically opposed to God. To be friends with the world would mean that one embraces worldly values, values which do not come from God. As the writer says, the embrace of such ideas would lead to enmity with God, for one can only be a friend of God if one is entirely devoted and places nothing in the way of that relationship. There is no evidence that the author desires his audience to forsake the world and retreat to the desert or some other geographically remote location, but they must not live according to the values and standards of the world, for these do not come from God and are, in effect, opposed to God.

This maxim thus introduces friendship into this particular unit of James, but it is also connected to the previous sections. In the opening statement and rationale the writer has made it clear that his readers should seek wisdom and live by it with humility. He then delineates the nature of this wisdom and its effects in contrast to those who live without it, and who are thus selfish and envious. True wisdom comes from God, who gives simply and without reproach (Jas 1:5), and from whom every perfect gift comes (1:17). These gifts come from above (ἄνωθεν) as does this wisdom (ἄνωθεν 3:17) whereas the opposite to this wisdom is "earthly" (ἐπίγειας 3:15). With

Jas 4:4 the author has maintained the contrast between above and below, between God's desires and the world's desires; between God's wisdom, which brings peace, and the lack of wisdom in the world, wherein envy and ambition reign, producing fighting and death. As Johnson writes, to be "'friends of the world,' then, means to live by the logic of envy, rivalry, competition, and murder." 251

Although it introduces a new idea (friendship with the world/enmity with God) to the section, Jas 4:4 evinces the main theme of the letter, albeit in another way. 252 Jas 3:13-14 expresses the notion that one must make a choice between living according to God's wisdom or according to one's own envious desires. In the ratio, a clear contrast between the wisdom from God "from above" and that which is from below "earthly" is drawn such that no compromise can be made between them; one cannot live according to both. Jas 4:4 re-emphasizes this choice, but using the language of friendship with the world and enmity with God, 253 and with an even stronger emphasis upon the fact that one must make a choice between God and the world. This is a vivid example of how absolutely no compromises can be made; to be a friend of the world, in effect, will cause one to hate God! How could anyone argue that friendship with the world would be desirable?! And to attempt to live in allegiance to both would make one a διψυχος person (Jas 1:8; 4:8) who wavers in the wind. This verse, therefore, functions as a dramatic, powerful, and vivid proof of the type of choice that James' listeners must make. Moreover, it holds out the attractive possibility of becoming friends with God if one is willing to resist the world. If one lives in the meekness of God's wisdom, one could presumably be called a friend of God, as Abraham and others were. This verse


252. See Rhet. Her. 4.43.56.

253. Johnson (The Letter of James, 279) points out that ἔχθρα and φίλαξ are opposites of one another; see LXX Sir 6:19; 37:2; Luke 23:12.
would thus have been an especially cogent means of convincing the audience that they should only follow God's wisdom in humility, and resist their own selfish ambitions.

The maxim, as discussed above, was one type of proof used in constructing a rhetorical speech. Briefly, I want to suggest that this particular maxim of Jas 4:4 is a form of recitation of a Jesus saying, albeit recast in the letter writer's words, using language amenable to the writer's intents and interests. As such, the audience, or at least some of the audience, would have recognized the main emphasis of this saying, as being something which Jesus himself taught.

It is well known that the letter of James shares many things in common with the sayings of Jesus, especially those sayings found in the shared material between Matthew and Luke, namely Q. Patrick J. Hartin has explored these comparisons thoroughly in his monograph, *James and the Q Sayings of Jesus*, in which he argues that James stands in an intermediary position between Q and the Gospel of Matthew. Indeed, most authors have noticed these similarities between James and the sayings of Jesus, even though James never credits Jesus with the material. Moreover, the common view is that James did not have access to the canonical gospels, but to the sources which the gospel writers used, such as Q, or at least, a version of Q. As some studies of James have shown, the author freely and regularly recasts preexisting texts in order to suit his own purposes. Thus, James may be using a variety of Jesus sayings, as well as LXX texts, and other traditions, but shows no sign of feeling compelled to preserve them with accuracy. Rather, they are shaped and edited according to the style and content of his message.


Jas 4:4 is comparable, at least in meaning, to the saying about serving two masters, found in Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13, both of which also include the saying about the impossibility of serving God and mammon at the same time, and Gos. Thom. 47:2. It is possible, as Hartin argues, that James' source for these materials was a pre-Matthean version of the Sermon on the Mount, for James preserves materials more common to Matthew than to Luke.256

There are few verbal similarities between Jas 4:4 and the Jesus saying, apart from the reference to God as one pole of commitment. However, the sense of the two sets of materials is very similar. Both forms of the maxim emphasize that there can be no compromise between love of the "world," as is the case in James, or love of "mammon" as is the case with the Jesus saying, and love of God. "Mammon" was commonly thought to be a semitic reference to money or riches, and although James is not talking explicitly about wealth in this section of the letter (as he does in other sections) he is focusing upon the evils of selfish ambition and covetousness which lead to fighting. Moreover, the "world" for James, represents a place of pride, ambition, and values opposed to God; it is a place where the pursuit of mammon runs rampant. In fact, the "poor in the world" are those who are rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom (Jas 2:5). The Jesus saying does not use friendship language, but James may have thought it appropriate to recast the saying in friendship terms as such a refashioning would be suitable given the earlier characterization of God as a friend, and the example of Abraham as a friend of God.

The notion that this is a revision of a Jesus saying is further substantiated by 2 Clem. 6:1-5, which we briefly discussed in the previous chapter. This early Christian

256. Hartin (James and the Q Sayings of Jesus, 243) writes that "[b]ecause of its common use of the Jesus tradition, it would be logical to presume that James took it over from the tradition being handed on within the Matthean community. This description does not come to James via Q, but rather from his connection with the Matthean community."
document is another illustration of the connection between the Jesus saying (in this case, Jesus is credited with the saying) and the notion of friendship with the world:

1. Ἀγεῖ δὲ ὁ κύριος· Οὗτος οἰκότης δύναται δυσὶ κυρίος δουλεύειν, ἡν ἤμετας θέλωμεν καὶ θεῷ δουλεύειν καὶ μαμωνη, ἀσύμφορον ἡμῶν ἐστὶν. 2. τί γάρ τὸ ὀφελος, ἐὰν τὸν κόσμον ὄλον κερδηθῇ, τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν ἐκμωθῇ; 3. ἐστιν δὲ οὗτος ὁ αἰῶν καὶ φθοράν καὶ φιλαργυρίαν καὶ ἀπάτην, ἐκεῖνος δὲ τούτως ἀποτάσσεται. 5. οὐ δυνάμεθα οὐν τῶν δύο φίλοι εἶναι· δει δὲ ἡμᾶς τοῦτο ἀποταξαμένους ἐκεῖνος χρύσαθαι.

2 Clement thus makes a clear link between the Jesus saying, and the fact that one cannot be friends (φίλοι) with the world, but instead of contrasting the world with God, it contrasts this world with the world to come. James, as we have seen, is not void of eschatological concerns, but unlike 2 Clement, the letter does not focus upon the world to come but on the audience’s relationship to God. James is profoundly theocentric, and thus rather than focusing upon the next world, James centres this maxim upon the exclusive commitment to God required for all believers. This commitment, as we have seen, will abide no concessions to the world, or, in the Jesus saying, to wealth and riches. In maintaining the contrast between God and this world, James has therefore preserved the sense of the Jesus saying better than 2 Clement, which has taken a much more eschatological turn.

Although it has offered another interpretation of the Jesus saying, 2 Clement reveals that other early Christian writers recognized the similarities between Jesus’ saying about God and mammon and James’ saying about competing friendships. I have not found any other early Christian text which makes as close an association between these two ideas as 2 Clement does, and indeed, whether there is a direct relationship between James and 2 Clement is not clear. But even so, 2 Clement’s linkage sup-

---

257. 2 Clement never quotes James directly, although the unusual word δύσφυσία (2 Clem. 19.2) appears in this letter. However, as we saw earlier, this word is found in 1 Clement, which contrasts “simplicity” (ἀπλότης) with “duplicity” (δύσφυσία) (1 Clem. 23.1). These two ideas are also opposed in the Epistle of Barnabas’ contrast between the “two ways” (Barn. 18-20) and the Shepherd of Hermas provides considerable reflection upon δύσφυσία. Debates continue as to the relationship between this collection of early Christian literature and the letter of James, but 1 Clement and the Shepherd of Hermas bear more lexical and thematic similarities with James than 2 Clement does. For a list of indirect parallels between early non-canonical Christian literature and James, see Mayor, The Epistle of James, lxvi-lxxiv, and for a dis-
ports the possibility that when the author of James wrote this verse, he was thinking of Jesus’ teaching.

The next question is why does James refer to Jesus’ teaching without crediting Jesus with his own instruction? Wachob has dealt with this issue in grappling with Jas 2:5 as a version of "blessed are the poor" and concluded that James did this in order to say something about God’s attitude toward the poor as well as about the author’s own view. By avoiding the attribution to Jesus (in attributing a chreia to a speaker, one was obviously making a comment about the character and moral stance of the speaker), James shifts the focus away from Jesus and on to God. The case of Jas 2:5, however, is also a rhetorical example which recalls the faith of Jesus in Jas 2:1. Thus, according to Wachob, Jas 2:5 is "the language of Jesus .... reformulated into a statement about God, and it is marked by, subsumed under, and intimately connected to Jesus' faith ... [T]he implication in Jas 2:5 is that Jesus' faith is thoroughly consonant with God's words and deeds towards the poor." Second, the use of the saying makes a significant claim for the author of the letter, who in Wachob's view, is claiming to be James the Just. Thus the lack of attribution to Jesus serves to buttress the authority and moral caliber of James the Just.

I suggest that Jas 4:4 functions in a similar manner, although unlike Jas 2:5, there is no reference to the faith of Jesus Christ in the vicinity. Rather, by referring to a saying of Jesus but recasting it with regard to friendship with God, the author is asserting that Jesus' demands and God's demands are one and the same. James is a deeply

cussion of the relationship between James and 1 Clement, see D. A. Hagner. The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome (NovTSup 34; Leiden: Brill, 1973) 248-56. Hagner thinks it likely that 1 Clement is dependent upon James, considering the extent of thematic and lexical parallels.

258. Wachob, The Voice of Jesus, 150.

theocentric text; God and the human relationship to God are at the very heart of the letter. Friendship language, as we have discussed, functions as a powerful rhetorical tool to persuade the audience to James' point of view. Thus, by rephrasing one of Jesus' teachings, with which the audience was likely familiar, Jas 4:4 functions as a forceful proof for the exhortation to abandon the ways of the world, fraught with envy, pride and the pursuit of wealth, and to receive and live out God's wisdom. The quest for perfection, or wholeness, which as we have argued is a fundamental thrust of the letter, would inevitably culminate in a friendship with God for it would require a renunciation of the "worldly" values. As the audience would recall, one cannot love both God and mammon.

Secondly, this verse would make significant claims for the speaker, for it indicates that the speaker's views and Jesus' views are the same. Thus, the speaker would appear as one who "like Jesus, spoke and taught the wisdom of God." Thus by recasting a saying of Jesus, the speaker has increased his moral credibility with his audience.

Citation (Authority): James 4:5-6

5. ἦ δοκεῖτε ὅτι κενῶς ἡ γραφὴ λέγει· πρὸς φθόνον ἐπιτοθεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα ὃ κατώκισεν ἐν ἡμῖν, 6. μείζονα δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν· διὸ λέγει· ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν.

Jas 4:5-6 contains verses, one of which resorts to scripture as an ancient testimony in support of the overall argument. A citation from an ancient source establishes the truth of the nature of the overall statement. The persuasive power of the


quotation can be very great "because of the universal validity of the wisdom and its unquestionable independence of the parties." In this case, the ancient testimony appears in 4:6, a citation from Prov 3:34.

First, however, what are we to make of Jas 4:5, a verse fraught with lexical difficulties? For example, to what is the author referring when he mentions scripture (γραφή)? The phrase beginning with πρὸς φθόνον does not appear anywhere in scripture, and despite the fact that early Christians had access to texts which were not included in the canon, when James does quote scripture he always cites the Septuagint. Is it the case, therefore, that James is citing a particular idea from scripture, for the notion of jealous God who requires complete fidelity from Israel is not uncommon in scripture? However, God is never described as "longing enviously" (πρὸς φθόνον ἐπιποθεῖ), rather, φθόνος is only applied to the human being or human emotion, which can be envious, and ἐπιποθεῖ is applied to the human longing for God and not vice versa. This leads Johnson, following Laws and Adamson to some extent, to conclude that "it is not God who should be taken as the subject, but the pneuma within humans." For Johnson, the "scripture" reference is to verse 6, which

262. Heinrich Lausberg, Handbook of Literary Rhetoric. A Foundation for Literary Study (trans., Matthew T. Bliss, Annemiek Jansen, David E. Orton; ed., David E. Orton, R. Dean Anderson; Leiden, Boston. Köln: Brill, 1998) 203. Quintilian (5.11.37) discusses this type of testimony, "which is rendered all the more impressive by the fact that it was not given to suit special cases, but was the utterance or action of minds swayed neither by prejudice or influence, simply because it seemed the most honourable or honest thing to say or do."

263. Laws, The Epistle of James, 177.

264. Laws, The Epistle of James, 177.

265. See Laws (The Epistle of James, 177) who refers to LXX Wis 2:24; 6:23 1 Macc 8:16; 3 Macc 6:7.

266. Johnson (The Letter of James, 281) cites LXX Ps 41:2; 118:20, 131, 174.

contains a citation from Prov 3:34. Laws does not accept such a position, as it means that Prov 3:34 would receive a double introduction; rather, she suggests that the mention of scripture is not a reference to a single text, but to a general scriptural idea, found most often in the Psalms, that "the desire of the human spirit is, according to scripture, for God and the things of God." She thus understands Jas 4:5 as two rhetorical questions: "Does scripture mean nothing? Is this (according to scripture) the way the human spirit's longing is directed, by envy?" The answer obviously requires a negative response for according to scripture (the Psalms) the human spirit longs for God and all the things of God. Such an interpretation of the verse is not absolutely convincing, as Laws admits, but it explains the use of προφονον ἐπιστοι and the intriguing reference to "scripture."

Jas 4:6 contains an obvious reference to scripture which "is not arbitrary, but in fact grounds James' argument." The citation from LXX Prov 3:34 is almost exact except for an exchange of θεος for Κύριος. This citation offers proof of why one should live a good life "in the meekness of wisdom" and not live according to selfish ambition for "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." God does not approve of an envious or selfish life but of a humble one; the ancient texts say so. God's actions are completely different from the human spirit which can be envious. God gives a "greater" (μείζων) gift, a notion which is comparable to Jas 1:5 in which God gives ἀλογος. Moreover, Johnson has shown how the context of Prov 3:34, which deals with God's wisdom, walking in peace, not envying, caring for the poor, and the exaltation of the wise, fits remarkably well with the association of ideas in Jas 3:13-

269. Laws, The Epistle of James, 179.
270. Laws, The Epistle of James, 178. Johnson (The Letter of James, 282) concurs with this reading.
4:10. The citation from Prov 3:34 and its context, with which the audience was likely familiar, thus forms a consummation and proof of the argument as a whole.

Concluding Exhortations: James 4:7-10

7. ἀντίστατε δὲ τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ φεύγεται ἀφ ὑμῶν, 8. ἐγγίστε τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐγγιαί ὑμῖν. καθαρίσατε χεῖρας, ἀμαρτωλοί, καὶ ἐγνῖσατε καρδίας, δίψυχοι. 9. ταλαιπωρήσατε καὶ πενθήσατε καὶ κλαύσατε. ὁ γέλως ὑμῶν εἰς πένθος μετατραπήτω καὶ ἡ χαρὰ εἰς κατήφειαν. 10. ταπεινώθητε ἐνώπιον κυρίου καὶ ψώστε υμᾶς.

The closing of a pattern of elaboration often included some exhortation.273 efforts to influence the emotions of the hearers, and an attempt to summarize or refresh the audience’s memory of the overall theme.274 The conclusion could appeal to the audience’s feelings for a decision or judgment.275

Johnson terms Jas 4:7-10 a call to conversion from a life of envy and friendship with the world, to a life of total reliance and trust in God. This is really a call to repentance, as repentance language figures prominently in this section.276 Although James’ language is strong, it is assumed that his audience does want to be loyal to and trusting of God. "They intend to be God’s servants, but by yielding to natural inclinations they are in practise verging toward a state of ἐχθραὶ τοῦ θεοῦ."277


273. Hermogenes, for example, writes that at the conclusion of an elaboration, "you are to add an exhortation to the effect that it is necessary to heed the one who has spoken or acted." See Hock and O’Neill, The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric, 177.

274. Lausberg, Handbook of Literary Rhetoric, 204.

275. Mack and Robbins, Patterns of Persuasion, 55.


The first verse includes the word ὅτι ("therefore") which indicates that now that the author has set forth his argument and proofs, the audience must make a decision as to what they will do. James appeals to them to "submit" (ὑποτάγητε) to God (4:7) and to "resist" (ἀντίστητε) the devil, who, as the letter writer assures optimistically, will "flee" from you if you do.278 He exhorts the readers to cleanse their hands, to purify their hearts and calls them διψυχοί which they are as long as they remain enemies of God and rely upon their own selfish ambitions. He demands them to be wretched, and to weep and mourn, somewhat reminiscent of Matt 5:4, but unlike the prophets who use this language to describe what will happen to idolatrous people, the author does not threaten his audience with outside disaster; rather the author wants the audience to bring such tribulation upon themselves in "an act of conversion."279 In order to be friends of God, they must undergo a dramatic reversal from following their own desires to heeding and manifesting the wisdom of God, and such a reversal requires repentance. Although the language of testing and trials is not used explicitly here, the notion that the audience must go through perhaps a painful conversion conforms to James' emphasis upon testing and trials as necessary constituents of the journey to perfection. If one desires friendship with God, one must endure trials, a theme consistent in Jas 1, 2, and 4.

Finally, the last verse functions as a nice inclusio to the entire section as again, it emphasizes the humility required in order to form a relationship with God. "Be humbled" says Jas 4:10, recalling the initial reference to meekness (προφήτης) in Jas 3:13 and the citation of Prov 3:34 in Jas 4:6 ("God gives grace to the humble" [τῶν ἑμνηστῶν]). The audience is reminded of the type of behaviour that God demands, an

278. Only James and Herm. Man. 12:4, 7; 12:5, 2, contain this idea of evil fleeing from the person. The latter text may be dependent upon James (Johnson, The Letter of James, 284).

appeal is made to make a decision, and a promise that God will respond ("the Lord will exalt you") is made.\textsuperscript{280}

This section would have been persuasive, for despite the fact that the audience must undergo repentance in order to become friends with God, the possibility of such a friendship is truly that, a possibility. There is optimism here that the hearers can change and an assurance that God is reliable. Moreover, given that many of the members of James' audience were Jewish Christians, the exhortations to cleanse the hands and purify the heart (Jas 4:8) would have been effective rhetorically for such directions associate living from "below", heeding the devil and ignoring God's wisdom with impurity.\textsuperscript{281} If one is a friend of the world and enemy of God, one is also impure. Perhaps this language is used in order to make a last effort to persuade the audience of the undesirability of friendship with the world.

2. Conclusion

Within the letter of James, Jas 3:13-4:10 forms a discrete literary unit, which conforms to the ancient rhetorical technique of the elaboration of a theme. The focus of the unit is adherence to the wisdom of God, in humility, as opposed to engaging in strife and satisfying ambitions. This theme is particularly emphasized by the use of a maxim in Jas 4:4, which emphatically restates the theme but in the language of friendship with the world versus friendship with God. If, as I have argued, this is a refashioning of a Jesus saying, it would have been particularly compelling for it restates something which the audience presumably already accepts, and it asserts that the will of

\textsuperscript{280} This final phrase bears striking resemblance to Luke 18:14; Matt 18:4; 23:12. See Hartin, \textit{James and the Q Sayings of Jesus}, 142.

\textsuperscript{281} For more on pollution and purity in James, see Elliott, "The Epistle of James in Rhetorical and Social-Scientific Perspective."
Jesus and God are the same. The notion of friendship with God is therefore particularly important in forming a persuasive argument as to why the audience should resist their desires, resist the devil and draw near to God.

**Conclusion**

The letter of James is a rhetorically sophisticated document, which uses the language of friendship to persuade the audience to a particular moral and theological perspective. Rather than to place God on the periphery, James' listeners are exhorted to friendship with God, despite the challenges and difficulties of such a relationship. This concept of friendship with God is a motivational force behind various ethical stances that the letter takes, be it withstanding tests, acting mercifully, or living out God's wisdom in humility. Moreover, beginning in the exordium and throughout the main argumentative section of the letter, the author speaks as a friend, and uses various types of friendship language and concepts which his audience would probably have recognized, given the great tradition of friendship within the Greek speaking ancient world. Friendship is not the central focus of the letter, but it is used to promote the kind of ethics, for example, integrity between faith and action, and disposition which the author deems critical to a "religious" life. As I have suggested, the author recasts a saying of Jesus, but in terms of friendship with God, as a way of providing cogent theological proof of the validity of the ethical positions taken in the letter. The audience is assured that Jesus' demands, with which they were presumably familiar, and God's demands are identical. Moreover, the credibility and authority of the author of the text is sustained, for his exhortation coincides with what Jesus taught.

In the next chapter, then, we will turn to some of these ethical positions, as they themselves are related to friendship. But in connection with these ethical questions, we...
will explore what Robbins calls the "social and cultural texture" of the text, or the social and cultural worlds from which the text emerges.282 In what type of context would friendship language, for example, have been particularly meaningful, and what sorts of problems might the language of friendship be effective in resolving?

282. See Robbins, Exploring the Texture of Texts, 71-94.
CHAPTER 4

FRIENDSHIP AS A SOCIAL ETHIC

Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was evident that the language of friendship, especially
the notion of friendship with God, had a significant role to play in the persuasive
strategy of the letter of James. James consists mainly of deliberative rhetoric, however,
and as such it seeks to encourage and convince its recipients to "convert" or change
their behaviour in some way. Obviously then, the argument must relate to the experi-
ences of those who are hearing it. There must be what Lloyd Bitzer calls a "rhetorical
situation," which requires an exigence,¹ or problem that needs correction, an audience,
or group of people who are capable of "being influenced by discourse and of being
mediators of change,"² and thirdly, rhetorical constraints, which include the "beliefs,
attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, motives and the like"³ used by
the speaker to convince the audience of his or her argument. In other words, rhetorical
discourse is not created merely to flaunt a particular cleverness or literary style, but to
address concrete issues and concerns; it is pragmatic and responds to a specific situ-
ation. An analysis of James’ rhetoric, then, can aid in positing a possible scenario, or
"rhetorical situation," to which this elusive letter directs itself.

¹ Bitzer ("Rhetorical Situation," 6) defines the exigence as "an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a
defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be."

² Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 8.

³ Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 8.
It is important to be clear that the "rhetorical situation" is not identical to the historical situation of the recipients, although the two situations are not unrelated. In attempting to determine the "rhetorical situation" of James, we will not be reconstructing a precise set of historical circumstances, but assessing the type of "specific condition or situation which invites utterance." What sort of scenario, or ideology, would invite the author of James to create and send such a letter and particularly, what type of situation could the language of friendship address effectively? This situation is likely connected to the general historical circumstances of the audience, but it does not focus upon the details of their exact whereabouts, time, and distinct characteristics. At the end of the chapter, however, I will briefly address the provenance and destination of the letter.

As the "rhetorical situation" is not analogous to the historical one, it is possible to assess it even with regard to an encyclical, such as the letter of James. The lens is not upon the precise complexion of the audience, but the general ethos and set of exigences that need to be altered. Thus the letter need not be addressed to only one community but to numerous groups that share similar problems and for which James could be an effective voice in overcoming such difficulties.

Our task is not to explore every exigence or rhetorical problem in the letter of James, but to examine what possible social contexts or problems the language of friendship could address effectively. Part of this problem will inevitably be the ennui of the audience that the speaker must defeat in order to obtain a legitimate hearing. It is my contention that given the complex relationship between friendship and patronage within the Graeco-Roman world, James is drawing upon friendship language in order to counteract the audience's surrender or potential surrender to the patron-client system. This is by no means the only struggle in which the audience is engaged, but there is

sufficient evidence within the text to support the notion that this was one aspect of their situation to which the author deems it necessary to respond. Patronage was a pervasive and successful means of social control under the Roman empire, for it was a central mechanism for the redistribution of wealth. As such, one could generally say that patronage had a firm grasp upon many communities, a grasp from which many would have found it difficult to wrench themselves free. Moreover, this patronage system would mask itself as friendship, thereby making it more difficult to challenge. But for some writers, including the author of James, patronage, exposed for what it truly was, was in direct contrast to the attitudes and behaviours expected of true friends as they were understood in the ancient Graeco-Roman world,⁵ and indeed, to the disposition and conduct that the author of James is attempting to promote.

**Patronage**

A. *Patronage in the Ancient Mediterranean*

We will begin, then, with some discussion of the topic of patron-client relations in the antiquity; a topic that has attracted significant scholarly attention in the last few decades.⁶ There is ample consensus among historians that this phenomenon was pervasive throughout the societies of the first century Mediterranean basin, such that a generous discussion of it can be found in several recent introductions to the world of

---

⁵. This is Troels Engberg-Pedersen’s interpretation of Plutarch’s urgent distinction between friendship and flattery, as discussed in chapter 2.

⁶. For example, see Wallace-Hadrill, ed., *Patronage in Ancient Society*. 
According to historian Richard Saller, ancient patronage consisted of three chief characteristics:

First, it involves the reciprocal exchange of goods and services. Secondly, to distinguish it from a commercial transaction in the marketplace, the relationship must be a personal one of some duration. Thirdly, it must be asymmetrical, in the sense that the two parties are of unequal status and offer different kinds of goods and services in the exchange - a quality which sets patronage off from friendship between equals.

The difficulty with patronage, not surprisingly, was that because it involved participants of unequal social and economic status, it could "easily slide into overt exploitation." This is not to say that patronage necessarily involved abuse and manipulation, for the patron was expected to fulfill his or her obligations to clients, but the potential for the patron to sabotage the association and take advantage of his or her higher position was great.

Patronage is not limited to ancient societies and surely exists today, but in the first century Mediterranean basin, it is perhaps fair to say that this system was more explicitly operative because of the political configurations of antiquity. For example, the power structure was intensely hierarchical, and as there was a huge gap between the 'power elites' and the rest of the population, patronage functioned as the means by which elites could increase honor and status, acquire and hold office, achieve power and influence, and increase wealth. Patronage facilitated the maintenance of power differentials and control by those with power (patrons), exchanging their exercise of it on behalf of others (clients) in return for


10. Garnsey, Famine and Food Supply, 58.

their clients' support, honor, information, and loyalty. In other words, it kept the social hierarchy intact.12

The patronage system thus served to uphold an economic/political structure whereby power was concentrated in the hands of a relatively small class of ruling elites. The ultimate patron was obviously the Roman emperor, but at the town and village levels there were also the local patrons who provided protection, land, food and other necessities in exchange for honour, information or other services from their network of clients.

Moreover, the ancient peasant economy was an "embedded economy," meaning that the economic system was inseparable from the rest of society. Unlike modern market economies in which economics is often perceived as a sector that can be analyzed independently, the ancient economy was deeply "embedded" within the political, religious and kinship spheres of society.13 In contrast to the domains of religion and warfare, there was no semantic field associated with economics, nor were there discussions of economic theory.14 Therefore, one could not easily separate one's economic obligations and interests from those of the political, social and religious spheres of existence.

This economy was also one of limited good in which all things, whether they be foodstuffs, land, protection, or less tangible commodities such as honour or friendship, existed in fixed amounts. This means that if a person gained more of a specific good, the perception would be that someone else was losing. Thus competition was deeply ingrained as people spent their energies attempting to preserve their share of the limited

12. Hanson and Oakman, Palestine in the Time of Jesus, 73.


amount there was to go around. This culture of "limited good" thus served the interests of patronage, for it meant that those who were able to help others, through the provision of protection, food, money, or some other sort of necessity, gained the recognition and honour from those whom they gave assistance.

The evidence for patronage throughout the Roman empire has been well documented by literary and inscriptive sources and the dynamics of the relationship explored by anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists and increasingly, classicists and scholars of Christian origins. Saller understands patron client relations to have been a key part of the Roman system of administration and thus patronage was not limited to Rome itself, but spread to many regions of the empire. He has paid particular attention to North African patronal inscriptions, but evidence is found in many places, including Gaul, Syria, and Palestine, including the Galilee. In fact, patronage is "often thought to have been nearly universal" in pre-modern Mediterranean societies in which rich and poor lived in the same vicinity.

The practice of patronage, especially in Rome, was not without it critics. Lucian of Samosata, for example, describes the reactions of Nigrinus, who jeers at both the rich and their clients after a stay in Rome. In reaction to the practice of paying court to the wealthy patrons, Nigrinus describes the clients who


get up at midnight, run all about the city, let servants bolt the doors in their faces and suffer themselves to be called dogs, toadies and similar names. By way of reward for this galling round of visits they get the much-talked-of dinner, a vulgar thing, the source of many evils. How much they eat there, how much they drink that they do not want, and how much they say that should not have been said!21

Polybius of Megalopolis, moreover, criticizes the behaviour of King Prusias of Bithynia, who visits the Roman senate and generals as a client would a patron, "making it impossible for anyone after him to surpass him in unmanliness, womanishness, and servility."22 Finally, Plutarch, as we have already seen, despises the behaviour of clients who flatter and feign adoration for affluent patrons. *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend* sharply contrasts the conduct of true friends, who speak frankly, and flatterers or clients, who sing the praises of the rich in hopes of personal gain. Such fawning and fawning, to a large extent incited by the system of patronage, thus earned considerable denunciation from moralists and satirists.

Recent scholarship has also argued that various New Testament authors offer a challenge to patron-client relations. For example, Halvor Moxnes reads the Gospel of Luke as a critique of the reigning economy, which consistently exploited the poor. For Moxnes,

Luke's advice to give without expecting a return speaks to the dangers of creating patron-client relations within the community. Contrary to Hellenistic expectations, those who gave alms or rendered loans were expected to forgo not only returns in kind, but also in the form of gratitude, status and recognition. They were urged to behave as benefactors, but without any of the social remunerations normally awarded benefactors.23

---


We saw in the second chapter how Alan Mitchell perceives the social power of the language of friendship in Acts, wherein such language "equalizes relationships" in the Lukan community. Such "equalizing" would have driven a wedge into the system of patronage; indeed, early Christian communities were willing to impugn various "ingrained" socio-economic practices of their day.

B. Patronage and Benefaction

These criticisms have caused some scholars to question whether patronage was identical to benefaction, a practice which reaches far back into the classical period. Various authors have equated patronage with benefaction, with little or no distinction between the role of the benefactor and the role of patron. However, some scholars have questioned this assimilation of concepts. We thus need to briefly outline what it meant to be a benefactor in the Graeco-Roman world.

Stephan Joubert points to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* as a helpful outline of the two forms of benefaction familiar to ancient Greeks. The first is the noble individual who provides important benefactions for the community as a whole, and the second is the person who exchanges goods and services on an individual level with others who are status equals or near status equals. Both types of benefactors are magnificent (μεγαλοπρεπής) and magnanimous (μεγαλόψυχος) men who do not stupidly spend

---


25. For example, Hanson and Oakman (Palestine in the Time of Jesus, 201) equate the benefactor with the patron. For an overview of scholars who have essentially classified patronage and benefaction as one and the same, see Stephan Joubert, "One Form of Social Exchange or Two? Ancient Graeco-Roman Benefaction, Patronage and Second Testament Studies" (paper delivered at the Context Group Conference, Portland, Oregon, March, 1999). Special thanks to Dr. Joubert for allowing me to cite from his paper.

26. Stephan Joubert, "One Form of Social Exchange or Two?" 2.
more than they are able, nor do they spend in order to parade their wealth, but because they are great people, of the highest moral attributes. The benefactor is not even overly concerned with honour, although he accepts it, as he should, in Aristotle’s view (Eth. Nic. 4.3.1f).

Seneca’s De Benificiis27 provides a description of the ideal conditions for benefaction. The true benefactor is not motivated by desires for repayment, but because "[t]o help, to be of service, is the part of a noble and chivalrous soul; he who gives benefits the gods, he who seeks a return, money-lenders" (3.15.4). The bestowal of benefits produces a bond between people (4.41.2) making equal demands upon both. Despite the risk of ingratitude and no repayment, the ideal benefactor should give and not be concerned as to whether the gift will be repaid, even though the ideal beneficiary will both receive and return the benefits willingly (1.4.3).

A key attribute of the benefactor, therefore, is his or her lack of self interest. Benefactors, be they mortals or gods, were sometimes referred to as "father," as in some ways they embodied the selfless behaviour of parents. For example, parents persist in raising children despite the disappointments involved in doing so just as benefactors continue to provide benefactions, regardless of the risk of no repayment.28 T. R. Stevenson argues that this ideal picture of the selfless provider formed the background against which gods, rulers and mortal benefactors were measured. This picture "rests upon the recognition of procreative/tutelary power and entails the selfless use of that


28. Seneca, Ben. 1.1.10. See also the discussion by T. R. Stevenson ("The Ideal Benefactor and the Father Analogy in Greek and Roman Thought," CQ 42 [1992] 430) who states: "Our evidence shows that the father analogy was used regularly of founders and savours in the Greco-Roman world. In Greek literary sources,‘father’ appears commonly in conjunction with epithets such as σωτήρ, εὑργέτης and κτιστής.”
power." Often, it was contrasted with the image of the tyrant, who, unlike the ideal benefactor, was interested only in selfish gain.

Gods, therefore, could be described as benefactors, and this is no less true of the biblical sources as those in the non-Judaean-Christian sphere. A common word to refer to a benefactor is εὐεργέτης, and Frederick Danker observes that of "the 22 occurrences of the euerg- word family relating to beneficence in the Greek Bible, 14 have God as their referent, directly or indirectly." Of interest here is that the Old Testament references are within wisdom literature, 5 of them occurring in the *Wisdom of Solomon* which also, as we have seen, refers to the notion of friendship with God. In the New Testament, the author of Luke-Acts is particularly interested in presenting God as the benefactor *par excellence* and Jesus as a benefactor especially of the oppressed.

This image of the selfless benefactor who gives life, saves, and helps those in need is in contrast, argue some, with the image of the patron, the latter taking on special significance in the Roman period. We have observed that several authors lashed out with sarcasm at the Roman patrons and the type of behaviour they incited among their clients. Moreover, Joubert cites Cicero (*Verr.* 2.2.154) who describes C. Verres' expectations that his Greek dependents honor him as both patron and saviour, as the lat-

---


34. Joubert, "One Form of Social Exchange or Two?" 12.
ter epithet was often associated with being a benefactor. Such an example indicates that patronage and benefaction were not perceived to be identical.

Joubert indicates that patronage was ultimately a Roman phenomenon, although when the system of Roman patronage spread throughout the Greek east, the Greeks continued to use the traditional language of benefaction to honour their Roman patrons. Although the system had changed, the same set of epithets and vocabulary used to describe benefactors was applied to Roman patrons, despite the fact that these individuals were not equals nor near equals to their beneficiaries. Joubert concludes that "the Greeks in general did not understand the Roman rule over them as patrocinium (as the Romans did). But the fact that many Greeks continued to honour the Romans as benefactors renders explicable why some would perceive that patronage and benefaction are one and the same. It is more likely that patronage coexisted with benefaction, charity and other forms of aid and exchange within the Roman world. This is not to say that patronage and benefaction did not overlap sometimes, and it is evident that the exchanges were sometimes perceived differently by the parties involved, but again it does not mean that the two types of relationships are identical. Admittedly, there is a paradox in some authors, such as Pliny, who emphasize that the giving of gifts should not be motivated by a desire for recognition, but who, in turn, freely advertise their generosity in their correspondence. This could mean that by the Roman period, the concept of benefaction was still idealized in theory, but rarely prac-


36. Joubert, "One Form of Social Exchange or Two?" 12.


ticed according to the ideal. Patronage, however, and as authors universally attest, was by definition an exchange between unequals, and it maintained a system whereby the clients were kept submissive to, and often exploited by, their providers. Benefaction, insofar as it continued to be practiced, was either between an individual benefactor and a community, or between equals or near equals. It did not place the beneficiary(ies) in a submissive role, for many honorary inscriptions clearly state how they have fulfilled obligations to the benefactor, thus indebting their benefactor to them. Although the attributes, such as ἀρετή, ascribed to benefactors in these inscriptions indicate that the individual is of great social standing (not only that he or she is an excellent human being), such honours were a method of maintaining the benefactors’ support, for if benefactors wanted to maintain their public honour, their generosity had to continue.

Thus, it appears that patronage and benefaction, although sometimes closely related, cannot be blended into one type of social exchange within the Graeco-Roman world.


40. After defining patronage as a personal relationship between persons of unequal status involving an exchange of goods and/or services, Millett ("Patronage and its Avoidance in Classical Athens," Patronage in Ancient Society, 16) adds another element: "namely, that the relationship was conducted along lines largely determined by the party of superior status. It is this that opens up the way for the exploitation that is so common in patron-client relations."

41. The reciprocal exchange of benefits was key to Greek understandings of friendship during the Classical and into the Hellenistic periods. See David Konstan, “Reciprocity and Friendship," Reciprocity in Ancient Greece (eds. Christopher Gill, Norman Postlethwaite and Richard Seaford; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 279-301.

42. See, for example, Phillip Harding (ed., trans.). From the End of the Peloponnesian War to the Battle of Ipsus: Translated Documents (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) nos. 28B [=SEG 26.1282].

43. As Danker (Benefactor, 438) points out: "Besides encouraging others, it is anticipated that recognition of benefits conferred will also encourage the benefactor who is being honored to continue in his or her generous ways."
C. Patronage, Benefaction and Friendship in James

The issues of patronage, benefactorism and friendship are important, I think, when attempting to assess the social situation of the recipients of the letter of James.

First, several authors have identified patronage as an "exigence," to use Bitzer’s term, that the author of James is attempting to address. The problem of patronage is most explicit in Jas 2:1-13. This pericope begins with an exhortation to show no partiality (Jas 2:1), followed by a scenario in which a rich man with fine clothing and gold rings and a poor man in shabby clothes enter the assembly; the rich man is treated well, while the impoverished one is ordered around (2:2-3). The author concludes the scene with the rhetorical question: "have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?" (Jas 2:4), then scolds the audience for dishonoring the poor man despite the fact that it is the rich who oppress them, drag them into court, and blaspheme the honorable name invoked over them (Jas 2:6-7).

As Kloppenborg Verbin has observed, such a scene is reminiscent of Lucian’s criticism of rich people who show off their clothing and rings, expecting bows and curtsies in return (Nigr. 21). We have seen that flattery was often associated with patronage during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, and one form of expressing it was


to offer the best seat or the platform to the wealthy patron; what Plutarch refers to as "silent flattery" *(Flatterer 58B)*. Considering how pervasive patronage was in the early centuries of the common era, there is no reason to believe that the author of this text would not be familiar with the system, nor that he would not be critical of it, as many other Hellenistic writers were. Given the general bitterness that James displays towards the rich in this text (eg. Jas 1:10; 5:1-6), a denunciation of patronage and the behaviour that it can produce, namely flattery and ill treatment of the poor, is not surprising.

When we turn to the presence of friendship language in this letter, the argument that the author is attempting to inveigh against the practice of patronage becomes more compelling. As we have seen, it was common in the Graeco-Roman world for patrons and clients to refer to one another as φιλός or amicus, even though friendship and patronage were not the same thing. Patron-client relationships would disguise themselves as alliances of friendship, and thus sometimes the boundaries between the two sorts of relationships were not crystal clear. Moreover, it was possible, as we saw, for a friendship to deteriorate into a relationship based upon utility.

But the fact that friendship and patronage did indeed become confused, and that clients and patrons would use the language of friendship, disturbed some writers to the extent that they composed critical and satirical texts on the hypocrisy of this type of charade. Perhaps the most bitter attack upon the cloaking of patronage with friendship emerged, as discussed in chapter two, in Juvenal’s fifth satire, in which the "friendship" between Virro and Trebius was in reality a relationship suffused with constant humiliations inflicted upon Trebius by the wealthier Virro. Similarly, we observed that Horace counsels against seeking the "friendship" of a wealthy person, for such a relationship would result in the opposite of true friendship. The "weaker" "friend" would become dependent upon the wealthy one (now in a patron’s position), and subsequently lose the ability to speak frankly. Plutarch is particularly sensitive to the fact that the
language of friendship is used in patron-client relationships, in which the "friend" cajoles the patron through flattery, which was absolutely inimical to friendship.

According to Plutarch, as we saw, such use demeans friendship and the set of values upon which it is based. Thus he and others appealed "to the nature of friendship as a means of exposing the coercive aspects of contemporary patron-client relationships."46 Clearly, as documented by these writers, friendship and patronage could not be collapsed.

James appeals to friendship for the same reason. By incorporating friendship language into this short letter, the author provides a set of attitudes and actions opposed to those spawned by patronage. The audience should quickly recognize that the behaviour the author advises is antithetical to the practices plaguing their communities. Moreover, by applying the friendship language specifically to the audience’s relationship with God, the contrast between patronage and friendship is made particularly stark. Again, I am not arguing that appeals to friendship are pervasive, nor that they are the key to the interpretation of the text, but sensitivity to them, in light of discussions of patronage and benefaction, sheds light on the possible problems that this community is facing.

1. James 1:2-18

As we have discussed, the exordium of James contains some interesting allusions to the ideal of friendship. There is the emphasis upon testing and steadfastness, concepts which many writers considered constituent elements of the development of a true friendship. What sort of testing might the author have in mind here? Classifying James within the subgenre of a "covenantal letter to the Diaspora," Donald Verseput has observed that an emphasis upon withstanding hardship is appropriate after an opening

that addresses the recipients as the "twelve tribes in the diaspora" (Jas 1:1), if we take this opening as a geographical reference to their whereabouts, for references to Israel's exile (in the diaspora) were painful and evoked the idea that Israel must endure until God's salvific intervention. He then reads Jas 1:2-4 as a reference to the "afflictions of life in the Diaspora [that] have a purifying effect by concentrating the attentions of suffering Israel upon the anticipated deliverance of God."48

Such a reading is possible, given the eschatological reward linked to endurance through trial in Jas 1:12, and the emphasis upon patient suffering until the coming of the Lord in Jas 5:7-12, but one must remember that the "deliverance of God" is not explicitly mentioned in Jas 1:2-4. Moreover, James says that testing produces steadfastness, which produces a positive outcome, perfection, a central theme of this letter. Perfection, it appears, refers to wholeness, or the notion of faith in action, or belief and ethics, joined inextricably to one another, but there is no clear link to salvation in this passage. Granted, Jas 1:2-4 makes no reference to patronage per se, but it could be that the suffering and trials James has in mind relate in some way to the exploitative effects of this system. In his study of patronage as the social setting for the letter of James, Thomas Coleman points out how this "matter of trials, broached as it is at the outset of the letter, shows that James' primary concern is not propounding new doctrines but addressing troublesome issues."50 In order to gain perfection, one must resist the temptation to rely upon a patron despite the inevitable suffering such resistance will cause.

Perfection, understood as integrity or wholeness between faith and action, would be consistent with the friendship *topos*, as we have seen that consistency, that is, prac-

47. Verseput, "Genre and Story," 100, 102.
50. Coleman, Patronage and the Epistle of James, 65.
ticing what one preaches, and expressing what one truly thinks, are characteristics of
the ideal friend. Again, there is no explicit language of friendship in this section, but
the behaviour prescribed is certainly amenable to the ethos of friendship.

The next section of the exordium, Jas 1:5-8, supplies more concrete evidence. Here, the image of God as giving simply (ἀπλῶς) and without reproach (μηδε
δείξωντος) bears similarities to the picture of a friend supplied by such writers as
Plutarch and Ben Sira. This description of God seems "unprovoked" as Kloppenborg
Verbin has noticed, but it could be perceived as a preparation for a discussion of
benefaction. Kloppenborg Verbin thinks that it could be the beginning of an argument
against patronage, which is then more explicitly developed in Jas 2:1-13, as several
have suggested. God is the patron, albeit a divine patron, on whom the audience should
deepend, and not other people.

The latter suggestion is compelling, and I would agree that James is deliberately
portraying God as a friend and benefactor, but not as a patron. Here, attention to the
distinction between patronage and benefaction is important. The description of God in
these verses conforms more to the ideal of the selfless, generous benefactor than to the
wealthy patron, who delights in the honours served up by clients. Indeed, whether they
were true friends in reality or not, inscriptions describe benefactors as φιλανθοι to associa-
tions or to cities. For example, in an Athenian inscription dating from 306-05 BCE,
Athens honours Timosthenes of Carystus who "continues to be a friend (φιλανθος) to the
people of Athens" and who "did not withdraw from friendship (φιλάνθος) and [who] was


52. Kloppenborg Verbin ("Patronage Avoidance," 784) states that "God's is an effective patronage."

53. Danker (Benefactor, 492) says that there is "little evidence of the Hellenistic benefactor semantic
field" in James but that in chapter 1, "divine benefaction is thematic."
continually benefitting in public the people of Athens" (line 17-18).\textsuperscript{54} Again, these benefactors probably did not meet the ideal set out by writers such as Seneca, but in theory, the notions of friendship and benefaction, although separate concepts, could overlap. The *Wisdom of Solomon* is at ease in referring to God as a giver of benefits while including the notion of the possibility of friendship with God (Wis 7:27). For Seneca, friends do not need to offer benefits, as friends have all things in common (*De Ben. 7.12*), but "helpfulness is traditionally the mark of a friend and services may be interpreted as a sign of good will or amicableness."\textsuperscript{55} James may be presenting God as a friend and benefactor here to underline *how different* God is from those rich people who offer services and demand laurels from the community. If one asks for wisdom, God will be a reliable provider, giving simply, with no tricks up the divine sleeve, and without reproaching. God will not impart the humiliating abuse which some patrons could and did deliver.

However, James also clearly stipulates that one must ask in faith, without doubt; one must not be a $\delta \iota \psi \nu \chi \alpha \varsigma$ person, unstable and tossing to and fro. We have explored the connections between friendship and $\delta \iota \psi \nu \chi \alpha \varsigma$, and seen that the use of it strengthens the possibility that James has the *topos* of friendship in mind. The friend who is not of "one mind" with God will not receive anything from the Lord (Jas 1:8), just as friends who are not $\mu \iota \alpha \, \varsigma \, \psi \nu \chi \eta$ with one another are not true friends.

The exordium continues with another amplification of the pursuit of perfection in its advocacy against the pursuit of riches. Jas 1:9-11 probably contains an allusion to LXX Isa 40:6-8,\textsuperscript{56} for when it describes the reversal between the lowly brother who

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{54} For example, *IG II*\textsuperscript{2} 457. Translation by Harding, *From the End of the Peloponnesian War*, 154.
  \item \textsuperscript{55} Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*, 128.
  \item \textsuperscript{56} Dibelius, *James*, 85-86; Johnson, *The Letter of James*, 190-91; Verseput, "Genre and Story," 102-103.
\end{itemize}
will boast in exaltation and the rich in his humiliation there are parallel images with the Isaiah passage such as the passing of flower in the grass and the withering of the grass. Commentators agree that the words ταπευμός and πλούσιος refer to a lack or excess of material wealth but there is disagreement as to whether or not the rich person is considered to be a member of the community (commentators agree that these two individuals are not specific people but representative of the rich and poor). Ropes, for example, thinks that ἀδελφός should be supplied with ὁ πλούσιος as it is with ὁ ταπευμός, therefore making the rich man a member. ⁵⁷ However, it could be that James did not refer to the rich person as a brother in a deliberate attempt to describe the wealthy man's outsider status. Moreover, the parallelism between the outcomes between the rich and poor is odd. The poor brother is offered hope for the future, for he will be exalted, while the rich person will be humiliated with no sense of hope. ⁵⁸ James is not holding out any possibility for salvation for the affluent here; indeed, the rich will "pass away" (παρελεύσεται) and "wither away" (μαρανθήσεται) ⁵⁹ thereby turning the verses into a clear threat to the rich. Interestingly, Verseput has found a comparison in the way that 4Q185 uses the imagery from Isa 40:6-8 to provide "an oracle of doom spoken against the adversaries of God's people." ⁶⁰ Here, woe is pronounced upon the "sons of man," then the poem continues with language similar to Jas 1:9-11:

For see, (man) sprouts like grass
and his loveliness blooms like a flower.
His grace makes the wind blow over him
and his root shrivels,
and his leaves: the wind scatters them,
until hardly anything remains in his place,

---

⁵⁷. Ropes, Epistle of James, 146.

⁵⁸. See Laws, The Epistle of James, 63.

⁵⁹. Ropes (Epistle of James, 148-49) thinks that it is not the person who will pass away and wither away, but his riches, but he does not given a solid argument for this position.

and nothing but wind is found. [...] They will look for him and not find him, and no hope remains; their days are like a shadow on the earth. 61

Moreover, there is considerable agreement that the rich who are condemned in Jas 5:1-6 are understood to be "powerful outsiders and enemies of the 'elect poor'." 62 Again, they may not be real people, insofar as this letter was likely circulated to a variety of communities, but they represent the type of lifestyle and behaviour that is not acceptable to God. Their condemnation could therefore function as a stern warning to members of the community who are tempted to pursue relations with wealthy patrons and even to call them "friends," for it prohibits such people from God's salvation. It does not even offer them the possibility of repentance! Such harsh invective against the rich may indicate the degree to which the author thinks their influence is threatening the integrity of the community.

Jas 1:12-15 reiterates the need to endure trials, and offers a promise of salvation for such endurance. Within these few verses James adamantly insists that God does not tempt anyone, presumably to counter those who attempted to blame their temptations on God (Jas 1:13). 63 Testing, as discussed earlier, was ultimately necessary to achieve perfection and perhaps eventually, friendship with God, but this testing does not come from God, but from other sources, such as desire (Jas 1:14).

Jas 1:16-18 again emphasizes the need to rely upon God as a generous benefactor. This is a fitting close to the exordium of the letter for it repeats the theme of per-

---


63. Dibelius (James, 90-91) explains how many Jews resisted the idea that God could test, for they were concerned to maintain the connection between sin and human responsibility. Various texts were corrected, such as Gen 22:1, which in Jub 17.16 is changed to state that God did not test Abraham, but the devil, Mastema.
fection ("every perfect gift comes from God"), which is central to the letter. However, it has reminded the audience that God is the source of all good things. If the communities were beginning to turn to wealthy patrons, and to honour and depend upon them, perhaps they needed this reminder that God would be their true provider. Moreover, it is possible that James is appealing to the friendship ethos in this particular description of God, for God's constancy is stressed in Jas 1:17. Although there is a complex text critical problem here as to the precise wording,\textsuperscript{64} all the variant readings mean the same thing: "[t]he text opposes the steadfastness of God to the changeableness of creation."\textsuperscript{65} God is a loyal and unchanging provider, just as friends were expected to be, for no friendship could survive without constancy.\textsuperscript{66} Again, God is the opposite of a human patron, for God will continue to provide, and not disappear when calamity strikes.\textsuperscript{67}

Thus the theme of God's friendship was introduced in Jas 1:5-8, perhaps dissuading the audience from counting potential patrons as friends, and maintained in Jas 1:16-18. By describing the character of a true friend, James has begun to expose the superficiality of patronal "friendships". In contrast to God, these rich patrons are not reliable and moreover, they will disappear as they will "pass away" and "wither away." Upon

\textsuperscript{64} The best attested text for Jas 1:17b (παραλλαγή ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα) is supported by the corrector of Κ, A, C, K, P, Ψ, most minuscules, many lectionaries, the Vulgate, the Peshitta and Harclean and Armenian versions, and Jerome. A second reading (παραλλαγή ἢ [or ἢ] τροπῆς ἀποσκίασματος) is supported by the original author of Κ, and B. A third reading (παραλλαγή ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασματος) appears in several minuscules, a fourth (παραλλαγής ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασματος) only in P\textsuperscript{23}, a fifth (ἄποσκίασμα ἢ τροπῆ ἢ παραλλαγῇ) only in the Sahidic Coptic manuscript, a sixth (παραλλαγή ἢ ῥοπῆς ἄποσκίασμα) only in Augustine, and a seventh (παραλλαγή ἢ ῥοπῆ ἀποσκίασματος) in the Old Latin version Corbeiensis I and possibly the Bohairic Coptic manuscript.

\textsuperscript{65} Johnson, \textit{The Letter of James}, 197.

\textsuperscript{66} Cicero, \textit{Lael}. 92.

\textsuperscript{67} See Kloppenborg Verbin, "Patronage Avoidance," 770.
hearing such an introduction, would not questions about the wisdom of seeking the patronage of the rich emerge in the minds of James’ listeners?

The exordium creates an *ethos* of authority for the speaker, a *pathos* that will predispose the audience to listen to the speech, and introduces themes that will be developed throughout the rest of the letter. We have already explored how Jas 1:2-18 does this in the previous chapter, but now we see how James’ language here is connected to ethical positions, such as testing, seeking perfection, being of "one mind" and being a generous and unchanging provider, that resonate with the *topos* of friendship within the ancient world, and that suggest a rhetorical exigence of patronage. This ethical stance will then continue in other sections of the letter of James.

2. James 2:14-26

As we have seen, this self-contained unit expresses the author’s wish that the audience attend to the needs of the poor. It follows the previous argument in which attitudes towards the wealthy and poor men who enter the assembly are criticized sharply, and which, as several authors have discussed, likely presumes a background of patronage.

Jas 2:14-26 contains the reference to Abraham as a "friend of God" (Jas 2:23), a phrase earned in this case from both Abraham’s works of hospitality as well as his willingness to undergo a great test and nearly sacrifice his son. Thus the theme of testing is maintained; one must endure tests in order to achieve friendship with God, but also, an emphasis upon providing hospitality, further substantiated by the reference to Rahab (2:25). James exhorts the audience to practice hospitality and in order to encourage such charity, the writer supplies a human example, Abraham, of friendship with God. Therefore, to be a friend of God not only involves trials, but works of hospitality and
care for those in need. One’s relationship with God is intimately dependent upon how one treats others, especially the poor.

As many scholars have determined, there were people from different social strata within early Christian communities. Such complex groups likely experienced inner conflicts and problems similar to other associations of people in the ancient world. James’ audience is unlikely to be any exception, although the letter indicates that the recipients are not terribly wealthy, given the hostility displayed towards the rich. Some members of the community had more serious needs than others, and this section of the letter suggests that these people were not always assisted. For example, Jas 2:15-17 explicitly addresses the plight of a “brother or sister” in shabby clothes, without enough food, who requires things “needed for the body.” Rather than aiding these poor in their own community, it is possible that some members were seeking advantages through alliances with the leisure class, as rendered explicit in Jas 2:1-13. The author adamantly rejects such liaisons, calling the audience to offer hospitality to those who truly need it.

Although James does not bluntly state that the audience is to be a community of φίλοι, such an emphasis upon mutual aid within the community is consistent with the ethos of friendship. Epicurus, as we saw, associates friendship with practical aid.

---


69. Verseput, ("Genre and Story," 107-108) provides some helpful comparisons with some ancient associations, but it must be remembered that these inscriptions generally do not provide moral and theological grounds for their moral codes in the manner that James does.

70. Patterson ("Who are the ‘Poor in the World,’ 6-7, 10) thinks that this emphasis upon hospitality in Jas 2:14-26 may reflect problems in the community related to hospitality towards itinerant prophets, whom the author of the letter supports. These wandering radicals may be the τέλατοι comparable to those of the Didache (6:2) and those in Matt 19:21 "who embrace a more radical form of discipleship." In James, they may be those who have the true authority to teach (Jas 3:2). This argument is also presented in Patterson’s monograph, The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus (FFRS; Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1993) 178-88.
although help should not be the foundation of friendship.\textsuperscript{71} Friends were expected to be supportive of one another, even to the point of suffering and death for the well-being of their φίλος. Prov 14:21 contrasts the sinfulness of hating a friend with the blessedness of caring for the poor, thereby suggesting that to love friends is also to have compassion for the needy. In contrast to the frantic jostling for attention and favours from the affluent combined with an indifference to truly destitute, it is precisely this sort of ethos that James promotes.

3. James 3:13-4:10

Next, we turn to Jas 3:13-4:10, which I have argued is a unified segment, the central theme being that true wisdom resides in humility and meekness in contrast to a life of jealousy and selfishness. The explicit use of the language of friendship appears here in Jas 4:4, a maxim which I suggest recalls a saying of Jesus, albeit recast in different terms.

The maxim, as we saw, is connected with the ethical exhortations in this section of James, for it directly follows a description of a life not lived according to the wisdom from above; that is, a life of envy and subsequent war. Such a lifestyle is antithetical to the values of friendship, for true friends do not possess covetousness or envy, as Plutarch makes abundantly clear (\textit{Flatterer} 54C). James has used the word ζηλος or one of its cognates three times\textsuperscript{72} in this section of the letter, ζηλος being a chief characteristic of living without God’s wisdom from above. This is conduct characteristic of

\textsuperscript{71.} \textit{Sent. Vat.} xxxix.

\textsuperscript{72.} Jas 3:14, 16; 4:2.
a "friend of the world" and is completely counter to "friendship with God." Moreover, the second reference to the διψυχος person appears in Jas 4:8 as a description of "sinners" or those who need to draw near to God; those who are living according to friendship with the world. This reiterates the idea that to be διψυχος is not to be a friend of God, for it recalls the common friendship motif of friends being joined by "one soul" (μία ψυχή).

Maxims are powerful rhetorically, for an audience has difficulty rejecting common wisdom; moreover, maxims enhance the authority of the speaker, especially if they are recognized as originating from Jesus himself. The question that occurs to me is why James would not simply cite the Jesus saying, "You cannot serve God and mammon," rather than change it to contrast friendship with the world and friendship with God? The best explanation appears to be that James was aware of the rhetorical power of the notion of friendship with God, and such a notion was important in the overall framework of the composition as we have seen in the few sections studied so far. Moreover, the idea of friendship with God could be an effective means of exposing the specious nature of "friendship" with well-to-do patrons, who unlike God, could be changeable, and are ultimately outside the plan of salvation. "Friendship" with these people equals friendship with the world, made manifest in the envy, squabbling and the resultant killing that emerges. James' audience, I have argued, would have associated this wisdom with Jesus, but James' alteration of it would have been more appropriate given the struggles his audience was facing, and the overall language and thought world of the letter.

73. Kloppenborg Verbin ("Patronage Avoidance," 770) writes "'Friendship with the world' is characterized in the immediately preceding verses as filled with conflict and rivalry (4:1-2a). ..... With such 'friendship' James immediately juxtaposes adherence to God, who 'gives grace to the humble' and exalts them (4:6-10)."
4. Other Glimpses of Friendship vs. Patronage in James

A few other sections of James that support the argument for an overall context of struggles with patronage require some attention. By themselves, they may not immediately call to mind issues related to patronage and friendship, but when read with these topics in mind, they assume a slightly different nuance.

For example, consider the letter's serious interest in the use of speech. As we have explored, speech was an important issue within discussions of friendship for friends were expected to speak honestly, and sometimes critically, to one another, with παρεπησία. Those "friendships" between patrons and clients were often lampooned because of the prevalence of insincere talk, namely flattery, that for some writers exposed the falsity of such "friendships." James does not deal directly with flattery, but there is a deep suspicion of the tongue, to the point that the tongue cannot be tamed by a human being (Jas 3:8). James claims, although it should not be so, that both blessing and cursing come from the tongue (Jas 3:10), making it somewhat comparable to the διψυχος person, who weaves to and fro with the wind.

The primary context for such criticism of speech is James' desire for the community members to get along and stop grumbling against one another (Jas 4:11-12; 5:9), problems typical of many types of associations in antiquity. But James is a little atypical of associations in that it prohibits the use of oaths in Jas 5:12, a verse that recalls Jesus' instructions in Matt 5:33-37. The oath was quite common among associa-

74. For example, Prov 27:6 states: "Well meant are the wounds a friend inflicts, but profuse are the kisses of an enemy."

75. See Baker, "'Above All Else,'" 63.

tions, for it guaranteed obedience to the regulation of conduct, and it was used generally within ancient society for sealing contracts and making promises. Some religious groups, such as the Pythagoreans, resisted taking the oath for it was perceived to be useless and insincere. Plutarch also indicates a certain mistrust of oaths, for he describes the flatterer as one who repeatedly takes oaths, in contrast to true friends who do not require such "trifles" (Flatterer 21). It could be, then, that James has in mind the ethics practiced by sincere friends as he attempts to offer concrete guidance to his listeners; guidance that would again amplify the useless nature of flattery and the system it upheld, namely patronage.

Finally, James unequivocally attacks and condemns the rich in Jas 5:1-16. Aspects of this assault find parallels within Jewish literature, as the notion that those who exploit the poor (Jas 5:4) should be condemned was a common idea, especially among the great social prophets. This section is comparable with the previous, Jas 4:13-17, as they both sharply denounce specific attitudes and behaviours, and both begin with "come now, you" (Jas 4:13; 5:1), but they are quite different in content.

77. For example, see IG V/1.1390 and SIG 985.
78. See Burkert, Greek Religion, 250. For example, Pliny's famous letter to Trajan (Letters 10.96 [LCL: trans. William Melmoth; London: Heinemann; New York: Putnam, 1924]) reports of Christians who "bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to any wicked deeds, but never to commit any fraud, theft or adultery .... "
80. Similarly, Coleman (Patronage and the Epistle of James, 120-21) provides evidence supporting the view that oaths were often used in patron-client contracts, and concludes, regarding Jas 5:12, that "James is warning against an official oath in which a client, in return for patronal benefactions, promises service for a period of time."
81. See Kloppenborg Verbin, "Patronage Avoidance," 773 n. 63 and 64.
82. See, for example, LXX Mal 3:5.
83. Dibelius, James, 230.
What is specifically noteworthy for our purposes are some of the details that James provides. For example, there is reference to the rusting of gold and silver, indicating that these are people who let their riches pile up, putting their faith in wealth instead of God. Moreover, they exploit their workers, the equivalent of murder (Sir 24:37) and thus have lived out the life of envy and fighting that was contrasted with friendship with God in Jas 3:13-4:10.\textsuperscript{84} If these rich people represent potential patrons for the audience, here they are categorically scorned and exposed in the worst possible terms. It is hard to imagine that an author would simply craft such a polemic, despite the fact that it draws upon prophetic ideas and imagery, unless he or she had been provoked by some sort of social problem related to how the rich exploit the poor.

**Patronage as an Exigence**

Before summarizing the evidence in support of patronage as an exigence within the rhetorical situation of the letter of James, a few general observations about the letter are required. I have agreed with Patrick Hartin that perfection is a central theme of this text, but it is important to remember that this call to perfection is a call to the community as a whole, and not to each person to seek perfection separately from one another. As Hartin explains, the notion of perfection demands dedication to God but also righteousness, and a righteous person "is one who leads a perfect relationship with God and with others."\textsuperscript{85} Moreover, perfection within Judaism requires obedience to the Torah (Jas 1:25; 2:8-13), thus again underlining the communal nature of perfection.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{84} See Johnson, *The Letter of James*, 309.

\textsuperscript{85} Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, 58.

\textsuperscript{86} Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, 59.
As one reads through James, communal relations are consistently the overriding concern. Whether it focuses upon proper speech (3:1-12), anger (1:19-21); treatment of the poor (1:27; 2:1-26); true wisdom (3:13-4:10), or daily experiences of the community (5:13-20), each issue relates directly or indirectly to the life of the community.

Within this context of concern for community life, James does not offer us a treatise extolling the virtues of friendship nor a systematic critique of patronage, but there are sufficient indications that these forms of human interaction, both present and undoubtedly familiar to many ancients, lie behind some of the arguments within the text. The author draws upon the *topos* of ancient friendship, both from the Jewish and Graeco-Roman worlds, in order to describe God as a true friend and benefactor, a description that could operate as a foil against which the potential patrons of the community could be compared. I suggest that James does this deliberately in order to expose the instability and manipulative character of the rich, or those who James’ audience believe can be their patrons. By offering the possibility of friendship with God, James may be underscoring the futility and illusory nature of "friendship" with human patrons.

Secondly, the notion of friendship with God is tied to a specific type of moral life, characterized by testing and endurance (Jas 1:2-4, 12), by aid to the poor (Jas 1:27; 2:14-17), consistency between faith and action (Jas 2:14-17), and careful control of speech (Jas 3:1-12; 4:11). Such a life is difficult and requires patience and suffering (Jas 5:10), but it is also joyful (Jas 1:2). In addition, it is a life lived according to the wisdom from above, and is opposed to a life of envy and ultimately fighting and death (Jas 3:13-4:10). In some ways, as we saw, a life according to God’s wisdom is similar to the existence a true friend leads, for it focuses upon the good of the other. James’ audience must rely upon God to provide them with the wisdom that will lead to this

---

life, for indeed, wisdom can make people friends of God (Wis 7:27). In contrast with such a life is the life of friendship with the world, identified by envy, seeking after gain, and fighting. Such a lifestyle is lead by the rich, who exploit the poor (Jas 5:4) and live in luxury, but who will disappear (Jas 1:11).

James is contrasting two "worldviews" in this letter, consistent with Engberg-Pedersen’s reading of Plutarch’s *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend*. For Engberg-Pederson, Plutarch’s essay represents an attempt to preserve the noble idea of friendship as the "apogee" of a moral system in which trust and sincerity were central, and status issues were not the constant preoccupation. The contrary to that system is one based upon distinctions in social rank, in which patronage and flatterers thrive. and, when it adopts the language of friendship, threatens to demean and pervert the true meaning of friendship. Thus Engberg-Pedersen suggests that

> whenever Christian writers make use of concepts belonging within the nexus of friendship, flattery and frank criticism ..., they too betray a concern about the status system and a set of counter-values. To the extent, therefore, that their use of those concepts enters directly into the formulation of their own religious message (as I think it often does), that message too will be partly about the status system and a set of counter-values.88

This suggestion is especially compelling for the letter of James, for despite the fact that James’ use of the language of friendship is limited, there is great concern in this letter for status distinctions and the effect of status distinctions upon the economically weak. For example, the result of the "showing partiality" example in Jas 2:1-13 is that the poor man has been "dishonoured" (Jas 2:6) and this showing of partiality to the rich is in fact a sin (Jas 2:9). Friendship, especially friendship with God, serves to undermine those status distinctions for in pursuing such a friendship, one must abandon this scramble for status and material gain and humble oneself before the Lord (Jas 4:10).

---

Audience

James’ letter addresses a specific rhetorical audience, that is, an audience that is capable of putting James’ teachings into action and in this case, of resisting patronage and pursuing friendship with God. Whether they in reality did put these exhortations into practice is another issue.

Given the fact that patronage was a virtually universal phenomenon in the ancient Mediterranean world, as well as the evidence that the topos of friendship was familiar to Graeco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish writers, these two issues within the letter do not help us when considering the whereabouts of the letter’s recipients. However, the letter is addressed to "the twelve tribes in the Diaspora." Commentators have read this either as an actual reference to Jewish Christians living outside of Palestine, but who still considered themselves to be within the bounds of Judaism, or a metaphorical description of these Christians as the true Israel, heaven being their real home. This problem is difficult to solve, for early on, Christian churches, consisting of both Jews and Gentiles, came to understand themselves as the "new Israel" with heaven being their true home.

However, even though some groups had broken off from Judaism at an early date but retained the language of the diaspora and "new Israel," there are other clues in the letter that support a literal reading of "twelve tribes in the Diaspora." Abraham is

---

89. Franz Mussner, Der Jakobusbrief (5th ed.; HTKNT 13, 1; Freiburg, Basel and Vienna: Herder and Herder, 1987) 2-23.


91. For example, see Gal 6:16. 1 Peter is generally considered to be a late first century or early second century letter, but it does use the language of dispersion (1 Pet 1:1) although most scholars agree that its audience was largely Gentile.
referred to as "our father" (Jas 2:21), a phrase which Joseph Mayor thinks must be taken literally "unless reasons can be shown to the contrary." Other references that underline the Jewish-Christian character of this letter include the mention of the "Lord of the Saboath (Jas 5:4), "synagogue" (Jas 2:2) as the term for a place of meeting, "Gehenna" (Jas 3:6), and the examples of Rahab (Jas 2:25), Job (Jas 5:11), the prophets (Jas 5:10) and Elijah (Jas 5:17). Would a Gentile audience have understood these references easily, with no explanation? Although the precise relationship between James and Paul is disputed, James clearly takes a different position on the Jewish Law than Paul, placing a very high value upon it (Jas 2:8-13) and, as is well known, a contrasting position on works (Jas 2:14-26). Thus James, unlike Paul, exhibits no worries or concerns about issues that might arise in a Jewish Gentile audience. There are no references to a Gentile presence or set of concerns.

A literal interpretation of the prescript is further strengthened by the fact that the letter claims to have been composed by James (Jas 1:1). Most authors conclude that the only James that this could be is James the Just, the brother of the Lord (Gal 1:19) and a pillar of the church (Gal 2:9). James, of course, was an apostle and leader in the Jerusalem church, and was martyred by stoning prior to the Jewish War. Whether or not the text was actually written by James is not the question here, but it is important to notice that the author claims to be James, and thus it must have been written to people who would have held this person in high regard. Moreover, this letter bears similarities to other Jewish encyclicals that were written to diaspora Jews, such as the Letter of

92. Mayor, The Epistle of St. James, cxlii.

93. See Wachob, The Voice of Jesus, 165.

94. For a collection of the texts describing James' martyrdom, see R. A. Lipsius, Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und Apostellegenden II.2 (Braunschweig: G. Westerman, 1884) 238-57. For a discussion of the reasons why James may have been put to death in Jerusalem by Jews, see Richard Bauckham, "For What Offence was James Put to Death?" James the Just and Christian Origins (eds., Bruce Chilton and Craig Evans; NovTSup 98; Leiden, Boston, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1999) 199-232.
Jeremiah, 2 Maccabees 1:1-9; 1:10-2:18 and 2 Baruch 78-66. Together, these factors provide strong support for a literal interpretation of the prescript.

Where exactly these diaspora Jewish Christians were is very difficult to answer. No one is specifically named in the letter, and the exhortations, as we have seen, are addressed to the community, not to individuals. However, it seems plausible that at least one of these communities was in Rome. We know that the earliest Christian communities in Rome were largely shaped by Judaism, and secondly, there is evidence that many of these Christians were likely "poor, non-citizen, Greek-speaking foreigners, slaves and former slaves." In addition, many of the leaders in Roman house churches appear to have derived their status from their wealth and as patrons to the church. William Lane, in a study of Roman churches between the rules of Nero (54-68 CE) to Nerva (96-98 CE) argues that the household and patronage were key features of Roman Christianity from the time of Paul through to 1 Clement. Lane bases his findings on an examination of Paul's letter to the Romans, Hebrews, 1 Clement and indirectly, the Shepherd of Hermas. He points to Paul's awareness of house churches in Rome (Rom 16:3-15) and of Paul's dependence upon patrons in Corinth (16:23) and Cenchreae (Rom 16:2). He then argues that leadership in the Roman churches was likely based upon wealth; that is, people who owned houses, who provided services to Paul and the church, and who were able to travel were more likely in leadership posi-


96. See the collection of essays, virtually all of which make this point, in Karl P. Donfried and Peter Richardson, eds., Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome (Grand Rapids, Mich.. Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1998). See also, George La Piana, "Foreign Groups in Rome during the First Century of the Empire," HTR 20 (1927) 183-403.

tions, and as such could exercise a patronage role.\textsuperscript{98} Such a leadership structure aided in the overall success of the churches, but could also be a cause of dissension. Lane then examines Hebrews, the audience for which he determines to be in or near Rome between 64 and 68 CE, although he grants that there is no definitive evidence for such a theory.\textsuperscript{99} However, he posits that the model for the community addressed in Hebrews is still the household (Heb 3:6; 10:21), but that the letter addresses and attempts to resolve a tension in the community between householders who were patrons to the community and other authorities, whom the author "recognizes as their current leaders on the basis of charismatic endowment and wider church recognition" (Heb 13:7, 17).\textsuperscript{100} Thus problems related to households, patronage and leadership continued to plague the Roman churches at the end of Nero’s reign.

Turning to \textit{1 Clement}. Lane dates this letter between 94-97 CE.\textsuperscript{101} Although the letter addresses problems in Corinth, it admits that similar struggles, relating to jealousy and strife, are occurring in the churches in Rome (\textit{1 Clem.} 7.1). The letter does not refer explicitly to household churches, but it does underline the household virtue of hospitality (\textit{1 Clem.} 1.2; 10.7; 11.; 12.1.3). Using the work of Harry Maier, Lane then draws in the \textit{Shepherd of Hermas} which Maier dates to the late first century in the context of household churches in Rome,\textsuperscript{102} thus providing more evidence for Lane that

\textsuperscript{98} Lane, "Social Perspectives," 211.

\textsuperscript{99} For a review of his evidence in support of such a time and place, see "Social Perspectives," 215-17.

\textsuperscript{100} Lane, "Social Perspectives," 223.

\textsuperscript{101} For Lane’s evidence, see "Social Perspectives," 226-27.

\textsuperscript{102} Harry O. Maier, \textit{The Social Setting of the Ministry as Reflected in the Writings of Hermas, Clement, and Ignatius} (Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, Dissertations SR 1; Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1991) 59-65. Carolyn Osiek’s recent commentary (\textit{The Shepherd of Hermas} [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999] 18-20) dates the text from the late first century up until the middle of the second century and confirms the wide consensus that the \textit{Shepherd of Hermas} was produced in central Italy and probably Rome.
Roman households persisted as the primary social location for late first and early second century Roman Christianity. In contrast to Romans and Hebrews, however, *1 Clement* reflects a more developed degree of church structure, with reference to distinct positions in the church (ἐπίσκοποι, πρεσβυτέροι, διάκονοι in *Clem.* 42.4; 44.4; 47.6.54.2; 57.1) and "the language of appointment (καθιστάναι, 42.4; 43.1; 44.3; 54.2; ἱδρύεσθαι, 44.5)". Given the reverence for age in antiquity, Lane thinks that many of these Christian leaders are likely wealthy house patrons who had served the longest in the Christian communities. Referring again to *Hermas*, which for Lane emerges from the same social setting as *1 Clement*, he finds evidence that there are problems over the abuse of wealth and the dissensions such abuse could create in the church (*Sim.* 9.26.2; 9.31.2-6). This leads Lane to suppose that *1 Clement*, in its role as a conflict mediator of the church in Corinth, was reflecting some of the experiences of the churches in Rome, related to who has the legitimate authority to lead. *1 Clement* affirms a more centralized and structured pattern of leadership which is instituted by God (37-38.3) just as the civil authorities are instituted by God (61.1). One of the reasons *1 Clement* needs to do this, argues Lane, is because of the history of leadership by wealthy householders/patrons, whose striving for authority is disrupting the unity of the Christian community. As Lane states:

> Prevailing social attitudes toward patronage and the bestowal of honor are reflected in the formal structures of leadership in the church. Those same social norms exerted a disruptive influence on certain house churches in Rome where a striving for status created social tension, dissension, and even schism.\(^{104}\)

Thus patronage, although likely a key factor in the survival of many of the Roman churches, was also a source of quarrels and even separation in some of these communities.

---

Fourth, the parallels between James, *1 Clement*, and the *Shepherd of Hermas* render possible the notion that these latter texts used James, or at least, were quite familiar with the letter. Vocabulary parallels abound between James and these documents. Although James only refers to διψυχος twice, this word and cognates of it are all over *Hermas*, appearing over fourteen times in *Mand.*.\(^\text{105}\) As in James, those who are perfect (ὅλος ἡλικίας) in faith are those who do not doubt; rather, they are "double-minded in nothing" (μηδὲν διψυχοῦντες) (*Mand.* 9.6). *Hermas* also shares with James the rare word ἐπίγειος (Jas 3:15; *Mand.* 9.11) which for *Hermas*, is a characteristic of διψυχία. Finally the references to the great compassion of God (τολῆς ἐν εὐσπλαγχνίαν), a rare "compound noun not found in the LXX or other earlier literature",\(^\text{106}\) in *Hermas* (*Mand.* 9.2), and the adjective, πολύσπλαγχνός, in Jas 5:11, is another parallel.\(^\text{107}\)

*1 Clement*, like *Hermas*, contains the word διψυχέω and like James, contrasts it with the person of "simple mind" (ἀπλὴ διανοίᾳ) (*Clem.* 23.1-2.), granted. the use of this word in all three documents may emerge from a shared dependence upon another source, possibly an apocryphal writing quoted in *Clem.* 23.3.\(^\text{108}\) Such a theory may also explain the use of ἀτμίς in both Jas 4:14 and *Clem.* 17.6. There are several other vocabulary parallels between James and *1 Clement*, and while they may be explained simply as a shared vocabulary, they provide evidence that the two documents may have been used in the same milieu as they draw upon a common fund of language and ideas.

---

\(^\text{105}\) Mayor, *The Epistle of James*, lxxiv.


\(^\text{107}\) Although some might accuse him of parallelomania, Mayor (*The Epistle of St. James*, lxxiv-lxxviii) provides a long list of parallels between James and *Hermas*.

The conceptual parallels between James, Hermas, and 1 Clement are compelling. Both James and Hermas emphasize the cleansing and purifying of the heart (Jas 4:8; Mand. 9.4). Hermas makes reference to the διψυχος (Sim. 8.7.2) who quarrel over the "first place" (πρωτείος): And they who gave up their sticks green and with cracks, these were ever faithful and good, but had some jealousy among themselves over the first place and some question of reputation. But all these are foolish, who quarrel among themselves about the first place (Sim. 8.7.4).

This reference recalls the teaching against partiality in Jas 2:1-13. Mand. 9.11, "that faith is from above, from the Lord, and has great power; but double-mindedness (διψυχία) is an earthly spirit, from the devil and has no power," is similar to Jas 3:15. Both James and Hermas express concern for the poor and criticism of the rich, although Hermas indicates that the rich have a responsibility to the community (Vis. 3.9) whereas James flatly condemns the rich and does not allude to any positive role that they might have.109 Both documents emphasize the need to care for widows and orphans (Sim 1.8; Jas 1:27), and they criticize evil speech (Mand. 2; Jas 4:11) and the possession of faith without works (Mand. 10.1.4-5; Sim. 8.9.1) although again, Hermas is not as blunt as James. Again, these parallels could be explained as common references to Jewish moral instruction,110 although there is a "strong impression"111 that Hermas was familiar with James.112 Perhaps the differences in tone reflect different social situations, such that Hermas was written in a context in which one could not risk making such sharp criticisms of wealth, and of faith without works, as James expresses? If Lane is correct, and Hermas was produced within the context of a history of household patronage, it is


111. Laws, The Epistle of James, 23.

112. Johnson (The Letter of James, 75-79) is "virtually certain" that James knew Hermas.
possible that James' acute criticism simply would not be acceptable and had to be compromised.

A similar claim can be made for the relationship between James and *1 Clement*, although here the discussion is a little more complex, for Clement has used Hebrews, and some of the parallel material between Clement and James is also found in Hebrews. For example, both Abraham and Rahab are cited as examples of faith in Heb 11:17-19, 31, and they appear also in *1 Clem.* 10.1-7 and 12.1-8. However, Clement, despite his dependence on Hebrews, calls Abraham the "friend" (φίλος) who was obedient to God and praises Abraham and Rahab not only for their faith, but for their good works, namely hospitality (*1 Clem.* 10.7; 12.1) which, as we have seen, both Abraham and Rahab are praised for in Jas 2:18-26. Despite Clement's possible influence by Midrashic parallels that emphasize the works of Abraham and Rahab, for Donald Hagner, the above parallel between the two documents makes Clement's dependence upon James a "convincing possibility."\(^{113}\)

Clement also expresses his wish that the wise manifest their wisdom in good deeds, that people be humble and that they resist boastfulness:

> let the wise manifest his wisdom not in words but in good deeds; let him who is humble-minded not testify to his own humility, but let him leave it to others to bear him witness; let not him who is pure in the flesh be boastful ... (*1 Clem.* 38.2).

Again, this exhortation recalls that provided in Jas 3:13-14. We also see this contrast between arrogance and humility in *1 Clem.* 2.1; 13:1.\(^{114}\) Clement's concerns with conflicts and angers (*1 Clem.* 46.5) bear comparison to Jas 4:1 and his condemnation of the Corinthian's envy (*1 Clem.* 3-4) suggests the use of Jas 3:13-4:10.\(^{115}\) Even more

---


114. Moreover, *1 Clem.* 59.3 recalls Jas 4:10 and 4:12.

compelling is the section in *1 Clem*. 29.1-31.1-2, where Johnson has found a concentration of items that Clement and James share: in 29.1, Christians are to approach God with pure hands and holiness of soul (cf. Jas 4:7-8); in 30.1-5, Christians are to flee evil speech (*καταλαλια* cf. Jas 4:11), evil desire (*ἐπιθυμία* cf. Jas 4:2), adultery (*μοιχεία* cf. Jas 4:4) and arrogance (*ὑπερηφανία* cf. Jas 4:6). Then Clement cites Prov. 3:34 as James does in 4:6 and returns to the themes of God giving grace (cf. Jas 4:6a) and being humble (cf. Jas 4:10). Evil speech is then forbidden in *1 Clem*. 30.3 (cf. Jas 4:11), and there is an emphasis on justification by works and not by words (cf. Jas 2:24). Brevity of speech is advised in 30.5 (cf. Jas 1:19), arrogance is described as accursed by God in 30.8 (cf. Jas 4:16) in contrast to fairness (*ἐπιείκεια* cf. Jas 3:17), humility (*ταπεινοφροσύνη* cf. Jas 4:10), and meekness (*πραΰτης* cf. Jas 3:13) which are "with those who are blessed by God" (*1 Clem*. 30.8). Clement then concludes this section with a reference to Abraham as one who is blessed by God because "he wrought righteousness and truth through faith (*1 Clem*. 31.2), again recalling James' emphasis upon Abraham as a prime exemplar of one loved by God.116 With such a density of thematic and vocabulary similarities between James and *1 Clement* in this section, it seems quite possible that there is some type of relationship between the two.

The reasons outlined above, therefore, suggest that James was likely sent to the churches in Rome (and possibly to churches elsewhere), and perhaps, given the role of patronage within these particular communities, the letter was especially cogent as traditions from it were likely preserved, although not unaltered, in later Roman Christian literature such as *1 Clement* and the *Shepherd of Hermas*.

---

Davids has recently laid out some evidence to suggest that the letter was written from Palestine, as there is no doubt that James the Just was highly revered there.\textsuperscript{117} The fact that James is written in good Greek and contains Hellenistic ideas no longer weakens the Palestinian hypothesis as Greek was widely spoken in this region in the first century. There are phrases that support a Palestinian setting, such as the tongue being "set on fire by Gehenna" (Jas 3:6). The word "Gehenna" appears three times in Mark, seven times in Matthew, once in Luke 12:5 (from Q) and here. Its use does not prove a Palestinian setting but James uses it without explanation,\textsuperscript{118} as if he assumed the audience would understand (perhaps a wrong assumption, if the letter were sent to Jewish Christians in Rome). The phrase "early and late rain" (Jas 5:7) does not appear in non-Palestinian Jewish or Greek, including Christian, writings and the phrase does reflect the climate of Palestine.\textsuperscript{119} Again, it is not conclusive evidence for a Palestinian origin but would fit well within such a provenance. Although he admits that they do not prove that the letter came from Palestine, Kloppenborg Verbin refers to several other details in the letter, such as the "searing effects of the hamsin wind (1:11); the existence of brackish springs alongside fresh springs (3:11; eg. at Heptapegon); [and] the cultivation of figs, olives and grapes,"\textsuperscript{120} all of which would make sense in a Palestinian environment. Moreover, the references to the rich in Jas 5:1-6, although drawing from prophetic denunciations, would be meaningful in a first century Palestinian agricultural context with the abuses caused by absentee landlords, even

\textsuperscript{117} Again, I am not suggesting that James the Just wrote the letter, but that there would have been a significant following of him in Jerusalem who were attempting to preserve his teachings after his death.

\textsuperscript{118} See Kloppenborg Verbin, "Patronage Avoidance," 780.

\textsuperscript{119} Davids, "Palestinian Traditions, '47-48; Johnson, The Letter of James, 315.

\textsuperscript{120} Kloppenborg Verbin, "Patronage Avoidance," 780.
though absenteeism was not limited to Palestine. Moreover, we have argued that the letter was probably sent to Christian churches in Rome (and perhaps elsewhere) and intended, in part, to address the exigence of patronage. Such resistance to patronage could have been associated with the difficulties that the author was encountering within Palestine, where patronage was an everyday reality for many.

As to the dating of this letter, a very difficult question, there are a number of factors to consider. We have seen that James shares many traditions in common with the synoptic tradition, but James shows no sign of dependence upon the Synoptics themselves. This does not prove a pre-70 date, however, as Helmut Koester has shown that Christian writers did not quote the gospels' texts until 150 CE. But if, "despite the danger of circularity in such arguments", 124 1 Clement, usually dated to the late first century, used James, then we can narrow the date a little more. Next, many have noticed that James appears to be familiar with sayings from Q, and that these sayings, recognized by the audience as sayings of Jesus, formed part of the authority of the argument. This suggests that James is familiar with traditions that predate the gospels, again not proving an early date, but suggestive of one. Although they share similar examples and terms, especially Jas 2:14-26 compared with Rom 3:27-4:12, there is no proven connection to Paul, a question that has been debated many times. Indeed, both texts refer to Abraham, works, and righteousness, but Paul focuses upon

---


122. The earliest extant citation of the letter of James, by name, is by Origen (d. 253 CE).

123. Helmut Koester, Synoptische Überlieferung bei den apostolischen Vätern (TU 65; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1957) 62-111, finds the earliest citations from the gospels in 2 Clement, which he dates around 150 CE.


"works of the law" vs. James' "works," and while Paul focuses upon the issue of Abraham and circumcision, James refers to the near sacrifice of Isaac, as well as Abraham's works of charity, including hospitality. Moreover, Paul focuses upon faith in Jesus Christ, whereas for James, faith is a commitment to the notion that God is one (Jas 2:19). If James is reacting to Paul, then James does not seem to have understood Paul, and appears not to have read Paul's letters, but at most, "had had contact with an antinomian distortion of Paul's teaching." Finally, James does not reflect a complex doctrinal or theological development, there is no attempt to explain the delay of the parousia, and little evidence of highly structured institutionalization. The letter of James is more about survival in a hostile world than doctrinal heresy and more of a challenge to the surrounding society than an accommodation to it. In sum, the evidence suggests an early date for James, perhaps just before or after the Jewish War, by an author or community still deeply rooted in Judaism, and familiar with many of the sayings of Jesus prior to their incorporation into the gospels.

Rhetorical Constraints


128. This is not to say that certain people did not have specific roles in the community, such as teachers (3:1-2) and elders (5:14-15) nor that there were no regular church practices (eg. praying, anointing of the sick, confessing sins, caring for the poor).

129. I cannot conclusively prove that James of Jerusalem did not write this letter, although I think it more likely that it was composed, in part, by those who sought to keep his memory and message alive. If he did write it, however, then it must have been composed prior to the Jewish War, as James was martyred before this catastrophe. For a discussion of the accounts of the martyrdom of James, see John Painter, Just James. The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition (Studies on Personalities on Personalities of the New Testament. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999) 118-42; 273-76.
James, as we have seen, resorts to various methods of persuading the audience to resist friendship with the world and seek perfection. In so doing, the author hopes that the listeners will resist the pressures to succumb to forming alliances with wealthy patrons.

At the very beginning, the author claims to be James the Just, a claim which would have immediately endowed the writer with an authoritative ethos, necessary at the beginning of a letter. This letter prescript thus serves one of the purposes of the exordium - to establish the the authority of the speaker - even though it is not part of the exordium proper. Throughout the letter, this ethos of authority is maintained, however, by the use of frank speech (παρηγορία) and the use of imperatives, maxims, and assertions about the nature of God and human existence. An orator who lacked authority would not dare make such statements if the audience had little respect for him or her.

The letter of James is not cold and austere, however, but exemplifies pathos in expressing true concern and sympathy for the listeners' plight, affirming eschatological rewards, and offering constructive advice for communal relations. James addresses the recipients as "brothers" and "beloved brothers," and perhaps most importantly, the author presents a portrait of a God who is reliable and "simple".

I have argued that the topos of friendship is presented in at least 3 sections of James (1:2-18; 2:14-26; 3:13-4:10), a considerable portion of the letter, and that the opposite of friendship, namely patronage, is possibly alluded to when James offers criticisms of speech and wealth. It is of note that the most numerous allusions to friendship appear in the exordium, a unit of the letter that functions to introduce some of its basic themes, and to establish an ethos and pathos. This observation suggests to me that the language of friendship was important to this author for rhetorical purposes.

Even without the appearance of the topos in the exordium, given the old and rich traditions of this ideal in both Graeco-Roman and Jewish contexts, the appeal to friend-
ship would have been powerful. James uses it to debunk the "friendships" that were forming with patrons, for by describing what a friend (and a benefactor) truly was, the audience would soon see that these patrons did not correspond very well. James even restates a saying of Jesus, but in friendship terms, so as to provide theological proof of the validity of his advice.

These are only a few of the rhetorical constraints used in the letter of James.¹³⁰ but they provide further evidence that this document was designed to persuade an audience to take a particular course of action. In part, such actions required a resistance to patronage, and a seeking after friendship, both with God and with other members of the community. Both types of friendship were inseparable from "works." And whether "works" include feeding the hungry or restraining the tongue, all are exhorted to them in the letter of James.

¹³⁰ See Wachob, (The Voice of Jesus, 170-71) for a discussion of other sorts of constraints that he sees in the letter.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Historically, the letter of James has been dealt a double blow by biblical scholars. Martin Luther disparaged it as an "epistle of straw" and Martin Dibelius, although he had great respect for this text, determined that it was paraenesis, a position still held by some today, and as such, lacked a clear order and overall design. Intentionally or not, these two judgments of James have lead to its relative neglect and a certain underestimation of its structure and theological importance. Happily this assessment of James is currently receding as increasing numbers of studies of the letter emerge.

One of the purposes of this dissertation, as mentioned in the first chapter, was thus simply to join in bringing more attention to this letter, to its structure and rhetoric, as well as to its message and potential context. Second, we observed that James uses the topos of friendship, as do other New Testament writers, and thus a chief aim of the project was to investigate what aspects of this topos James was emphasizing, in what way, and to what end. The method included research into the long "story" of friendship in antiquity, and rhetorical analyses of those sections of James in which the topos was most evident. Such analyses would aid in positing a possible rhetorical situation that a letter such as James could address.

In the second chapter we saw that friendship has a long and impressive history in various Greek, Roman, Jewish and Christian literary contexts. Foremost among the characteristics of friends are the notions that friends share things in common, including a "mind" or a "soul," that friends withstand trials for one another, often to prove their

---

friendship, and in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, that they speak frankly to one another, with παραποσία. The sources agree, moreover, that friends must be virtuous people, because friendship requires such things as honesty, loyalty, courage, and equanimity, to withstand trials that it may encounter. Despite dramatic historical developments, friendship seems to be a bond that has maintained the respect and admiration of many writers through the ages, and spanned many cultural differences.

Despite the similarities in how writers view friendship, however, there are distinctions to be made. For example, the concept of friendship with God is primarily a Jewish one, although there is some dispute as to whether a few Greek philosophers, notably the Stoics, accepted such an idea. Aristotle, as we saw, would never have approved because for him, friends must be equals. For James, it is fair to conclude that he inherited this concept from Judaism, especially because his clearest example of a friend of God is Abraham, who is so named in other Jewish texts.

When patronage developed into a systematic social and economic system throughout the Roman empire, patrons and clients would use the language of friendship to describe their relationship. We observed that some writers reacted to such practices, indicating that they were disturbed by the attempts to mask an exploitative affiliation with the illusion of friendship. It is not the case that these writers, such as Plutarch, wanted to destroy patronage and the status system; they simply wanted to preserve the noble ideal of friendship. However, other writers, notably the author of the Gospel of Luke, seem to invoke the language of friendship in order to challenge barriers created by social class, and to extend friendship to those who would not think themselves worthy of it, such as the poor.

In the third chapter, we observed that James can no longer be analysed simply as paraenesis, but as a text informed by ancient rhetorical practices. I contended that James uses some vocabulary and concepts associated with friendship in order to build a
persuasive argument. The exordium (Jas 1:2-18) resorts to practices associated with friendship, such as frank speech and the use of fictive kinship terms, as well as other techniques in order to build an *ethos* and *pathos*. It also introduces some themes that will be developed subsequently in the body of the letter. One such theme is the notion of God as a friend and benefactor, for God is portrayed as "simple" and unchanging, as ideal friends were. Such a friendship demands testing and is not possible for those who remain "double-minded." This theme emerges again in the main argument of the letter, with the explicit example of Abraham and especially in Jas 4:4, where friendship with the world is equated to enmity with God. I argued that this latter maxim recalls a saying of Jesus in order to supply a persuasive theological proof of the wisdom of the letter's teachings, and to further maintain the authority of the speaker. Thus, although friendship with God is not the main theme of this letter, it serves as an important rhetorical purpose of motivating the audience to accept the ethics that are packed into this brief text.

Chapter four explored the rhetorical situation of James, seeking to determine what type of situation ideas and language associated with friendship could address. Given the fact that ancient people would attempt to feign a friendship when in reality they were behaving as patrons and clients, and the occasional sharp criticism of this charade in Graeco-Roman literature, I argued that James was challenging patronage by furnishing the characteristics of a true friend. This is especially true of James' depiction of God. Unlike the changeable and insincere patron, God is a reliable friend and benefactor. Such a characterization would thus expose the futility of seeking alliances with human patrons, for the audience would see the contrast between the characterization of God and that of wealthy patrons. When we consider James' criticism of the rich, and the outright attack on showing partiality in Jas 2:1-7, this argument becomes more compelling. By insisting upon God as a true friend and provider, James' audience
should see that their dependence or potential dependence upon the wealthy is an empty pursuit, and indeed, it is a sinful one for it leads to mistreatment of the poor. Thus friendship with God motivates the audience to resist a major exigence, namely patronage, within the rhetorical situation.

This discussion does not directly aid in positing a concrete place for the whereabouts of James' audience although I suggested Rome as one context, given the character of the Christian churches as they developed there, as well as the numerous parallels between James, 1 Clement, and the Shepherd of Hermas. I also join the various scholars who argue for a Palestinian provenance for the letter of James, and for a fairly early date, possibly just before or after the Jewish War, given James' acquaintance with pre-Synoptic sayings of Jesus as well as the other factors outlined in the chapter.

In many ways, this dissertation complements Wesley Wachob's work, which analysed James rhetorically but with an eye to the social situation. Wachob's study focused on how Jas 2:5 is a performance of the first beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount. He observes that some of the earlier writings in the New Testament, including James, were "written by authors who were quite capable of, and had no hesitation in, performing Jesus' sayings in ways that justified their own views of how their communities should appropriate Jesus' interpretation of the Torah." Although this project does not focus upon Jesus' understanding of the Torah, I have pointed to another example of James' adaptation of one of Jesus' sayings in Jas 4:4. Such a modification of Jesus' teachings into the language of friendship serves an effective rhetorical purpose and fits well within the context of this brief letter.

Although many of the ethical teachings found in James conform to conventional Hellenistic Jewish wisdom and Graeco-Roman teachings, James' attack on patronage

must have been a risky position to take, at least by ancient standards. Patronage seems to have been so pervasive that one wonders how anyone could have thought to challenge it, and certainly patronage was accepted by and practiced in other Christian communities. But in contrast to some of the other New Testament epistolary literature, James seems to be directly inspired, in part, by the teachings of Jesus. As such, it remains a radical voice upon the ancient landscape.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


______. Rhetoric to Alexander. Translated by H. Rackham. LCL. London:


Blundell, Mary W. Helping Friends and Harming Enemies: A Study in Sophocles and...


Davids. "The Epistle of James in Modern Discussion." ANRW 2.25.5 (1988): 3621-
45.


Drummond, Andrew. "Early Roman Clientes." In Patronage in Ancient Society, edited


Fichtner, Johannes. "πλησιόν in the LXX and the Neighbour in the OT." TDNT 6 (1968): 312-14.


Fitzgerald, John T. "Philippians in Light of Some Ancient Discussions of Friendship." In


Hanson, Anthony T. "Rahab the Harlot in Early Christian Theology." JSNT 1 (1978): 53-60.


______.


______.


______.


______.


______.


______.


______.


Hollander, H. W. and M. de Jonge. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. SVTP,


Hunter, R. L. "Horace on Friendship and Free Speech (Epistles 1.18 and Satires 1.4)." Hermes 113 (1985): 480-90.


"Jewish and Christian Families in First-Century Rome." In Judaism and
Christianity in First Century Rome, edited by Karl P. Donfried and Peter


"James 3:13-4:10 and the Topos ΠΕΡΙ ΦΘΟΝΟΤ." NovT 25 (1983): 327-
47.

The Letter of James: A New Translation with Introduction and Com-


"The Social World of James: Literary Analysis and Historical Reconstruc-
tion." In The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne
A. Meeks, edited by L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarbrough, 178-97. Min-

"Taciturnity and True Religion (James 1:26-27)." In Greeks, Romans and
Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe, edited by D. L. Balch, E.


Joly, Robert. Le Vocabulaire chrétien de l'amour est-il original? Φιλεῖν et Αγαπᾶν


Joubert, Stephan. "One Form of Social Exchange or Two? Ancient Graeco-Roman
Benefaction, Patronage and Second Testament Studies." Paper Delivered at the


Juvenal. Satires. Translated by G.G. Ramsay. LCL. London: Heinemann; Cambridge:


New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism. Chapel Hill

Kennedy, H. A. A. "The Hellenistic Atmosphere of the Epistle of James." Exp 2, 8th

Kenny, Anthony. The Aristotelian Ethics: A Study of the Relationship Between the
1978.


_____. "Friendship, Frankness and Flattery." In *Friendship, Flattery, and Frank-


Marshall, Peter. *Enmity at Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the*


Mitchell, Alan C. "'Greet the Friends by Name': New Testament Evidence for the


Pardee, Dennis. Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters. SBLSBS, vol. 15. Chico:
Scholars Press, 1982.


Philo. Works. Translated by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker. LCL. London:


Porter, Stanley E. "Is dipsuchos (James 1,8; 4,8) a ‘Christian’ Word?" Bib 71 (1991): 469-98.


Powell, J. G. F. Cicero: Laelius, On Friendship and the Dream of Scipio. Warminster:


________. "Antecedents and Signification of the Term ΔΙΨΥΧΟΣ." *JBL* 63 (1944): 211-19.


Stewart, Charles. "Honour and Sanctity: Two Levels of Ideology in Greece." Social


van Selms, A. "The Origin of the Title 'The King's Friend'" JNES 16 (1957): 18-23.


