

Form and Content in Hebrews 1 - 6

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One of the undoubted advances in recent Scripture study has been the focussing of attention on structure (1). Of necessity anything written has a structure, a form — even if that form is basically a lack of form. This form (or lack of form) is also of necessity bound up with the content. Form and content are simply two aspects of one reality — that which is being communicated. Hence any real understanding of the form of a passage is bound to help in the understanding of the content.

Some recent works on Scripture have been based on the supposition that an analysis of the form of a particular passage can furnish clues as to the content of that passage. Thus, for example, John Bligh has devoted a small volume to the study of the structure of the entire Epistle to the Hebrews (2). He finds that the epistle is divided into thirty-five sections, each of which is made up of chiasmically ordered verses. On the basis of this structural analysis he claims to obtain insights into the choice of words and the sequence of thought. These insights are eventually to find their place in a full-blown commentary. A much more detailed study of the structure of Hebrews has been made by Albert Vanhoye (3). He divides the epistle into five principal sections plus introduction and conclusion. On the basis of this structure he has recently published a detailed commentary on chapters 1 and 2 (4).

(1) "Structure" is here taken to mean the arrangement of the several parts of a written text according to criteria discernible on literary grounds.

(2) J. BIRGH, *Chiasmic Analysis of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Heythrop College, Oxon, England 1966).

(3) A. VANHOYE, *La structure littéraire de l'Épître aux Hébreux* (Paris-Bruges 1963). A very useful companion volume is A. VANHOYE, *Épître aux Hébreux: Texte grec structuré* (Fano 1966).

(4) A. VANHOYE, *Situation du Christ. Épître aux Hébreux 1 et 2* (Lectio Divina 58; Paris 1969).

But worthy as this attention to form is, there is a concomitant danger which should not be overlooked: if form is too much divorced from content it can lead to a distortion of content, not a clarification (1). That is to say, the discovery of form is an arduous undertaking, and if this undertaking is attempted in complete independence of content it can well result in error as to the form. And any subsequent use of this alleged form to interpret the content is of necessity conducive to error about the content. Rather than establish form on purely formal principles it would seem preferable to establish form on formal principles but in the light of content, just as content should be studied on the basis of content but in the light of form.

The present paper will attempt to analyze the structure of the first six chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrew with attention being paid to both form and content. In particular, three key problem words of the first six chapters will be examined: ἀπόστολος (3,1), Μωϋσῆς (3,2) and ὑπόστασις (3,14).

Jesus as ἀπόστολος

In Heb 3,1 Jesus is called ἀπόστολος. This is the only time in the entire New Testament corpus that he is so designated. The use is one of the many puzzles associated with the epistle (2). The solution to this puzzle would seem to depend on recent work done on the nature of the Christian ἀπολογία (3). The Christian ἀπολογία is a brief statement of what the Christian "confesses" publicly. In form it is a continuation of the tradition of the Jewish "Shema", the précis of Old Testament faith found at Dt 6,4 (4). Just as the Jew confessed that God was one, so the Christian confessed that Jesus was Lord,

(1) "Form can be considered apart from content, but the dissociation is a perilous one; and the resulting analysis is of necessity incomplete (and hence of necessity not really convincing) until the material element is brought in" (J. SWETNAM, review of Bligh, *Chiasmic Analysis*, in *CBQ* 29 [1967] 134).

(2) For a convenient summary of background material and varying viewpoints cf. O. MICHEL, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* (Meyer; Göttingen 1966) 171-175.

(3) V. H. NEUFELD, *The Earliest Christian Confessions* (New Testament Tools and Studies 5; Leiden 1963).

(4) *Ibid.* 34-41, 141.

i.e., that Jesus was divine⁽¹⁾. This use of the ὁμολογία appears at Heb 4,14 where Jesus, the "Son of God", is portrayed as the object of the ὁμολογία which the Christians should conserve⁽²⁾. In fact, the association of the word ὁμολογία with words denoting the content of Christian faith at 4,14 and with words which seem to imply that content at 10,23 has led one authority to see this basic meaning also at 3,1⁽³⁾. An objection to this interpretation can be made on the basis of the words "apostle" and "high priest" at 3,1: how can these terms be linked with the traditional content of the ὁμολογία as concerning the divinity of Christ? This objection can be answered only by examining the structure of Heb 1-2.

The substantive ἀπόστολος is not found elsewhere in Hebrews, but the verbal form — ἀποστελλόμενα — is: in 1,14 the angels are called "ministering spirits . . . sent for service (λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα . . . εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα)"⁽⁴⁾. The coincidence of the *hapax* with the *hapax ἀποστελλόμενα* suggests a mutual relevance for the author of Hebrews, a relevance which depends on the structure of Heb 1-2 for elucidation. For the last ten verses of ch. 1 and the first four verses of ch. 2 of Hebrews are devoted to a discussion of the ἀποστελλόμενα. Why? In order, it would seem, to indicate Christ's divinity. For the Jews of the inter-testamental period and for the Jews and Christians of the first part of the Christian era angels were semi-divine figures⁽⁵⁾. The author of Hebrews simply builds on this commonly accepted belief and shows that Christ is superior to these semi-divine figures, i.e., is fully divine. The supposition that angels are semi-divine is so important for the argumentation that, paradoxically, it is not explicitated — a not unusual way of handling basic suppositions.

Preparation for the use of the angels to illustrate the divinity of Christ is found in the prologue of the epistle (1,1-4) where Christ's

(1) Ibid. 143.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid. 134.

(4) C. SPIEGEL, *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, vol. II (Paris 1953) 65: "Il [sc., the term ἀπόστολος] doit se référer à 1,1-2,14: πνεύματα . . . ἀποστελλόμενα".

(5) "Die altlich-jüdische Anschauung von den Engeln als *Verleiher der himmlischen Welt und Boten Gottes* wird von den Männern des NT als eine selbstverständliche übernommen. Sie repräsentieren die 'andere' Welt Hebr 12,22; 1 Tim 5,21. Wer ihnen gleicht, spiegelt die Gotteswelt Apg 6,15; ihnen verglichen werden heisst, mit Göttlichem verglichen werden Gal 4,14" (G. KITTEL, art. "ἄγγελος", *TWNNT* I, 82).

pre-existence is alluded to (vv. 1-3)⁽¹⁾ and where Christ is said to be as superior to the angels as his "name" is superior to theirs (v. 4). The allusion, to the pre-existence of Christ prepares the way for the use of ἀποστελλόμενα and ἀπόστολος; one must exist before one can be sent. The mention of the "name" of Christ prepares the way for the discussion of Christ as "son" (cf. v. 5), the name *par excellence* by which Christ is designated in the epistle⁽²⁾. Christ is as superior to the angels as his title "son" is superior to theirs. And what does the title "son" imply? Heb 4,14; 6,6; 7,3; and 10,29 give the explicit answer: "son of God". But this explicit answer has been presented implicitly in 1,5-2,4 where Christ is pictured as being superior to the semi-divine angels.

But if ἀπόστολος in the ὁμολογία of 3,1 refers to Christ's divinity as *the* one sent⁽³⁾, what does the ἀρχιερεὺς of the ὁμολογία of 3,1 refer to? Why is ἀπόστολος paired with ἀρχιερεὺς? Again the structure of Heb 1-2 yields a coherent answer, if it is examined in the light of content as well as of form. For following 1,5-2,4 and the discussion of Christ superior to the angels the author of Hebrews discusses Christ as man. The section begins with a citation from Ps 8: "What is man, that you should remember him? Or what is the son of man, that you should provide for him?" Christ is then portrayed as being the brother of men and the seed of Abraham. The word ἀρχιερεὺς of 3,1 refers to Christ as man.

(1) Cf. the excellent discussion in VANHOYE, *Situation du Christ*, 52-116.

(2) "Es geht hier [sc., 1,4] im Hebr um den Sohnesbegriff, der nach 1,2 Jesus Christus immer zusteht. . ." (MICHEL, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 105). Cf. also VANHOYE, *Situation du Christ*, 93-94.

(3) Perhaps the connection suggested here for Hebrews between the word ἀπόστολος and the divinity of Christ is not as unique in the New Testament corpus as might at first appear. In the Fourth Gospel the statements of Jesus concerning his relation to God are largely controlled by the word ἀποστέλλειν (cf. K. H. RENGSTORF, art. "ἀπόστολος", *TWNNT* I, 445). Further, it may be that the word ἀπόστολος, when referring to a select group of Christ's disciples, has an analogous meaning in that it indicates one "sent" by Christ inasmuch as Christ is divine. In 1 Cor 15,9-10 where Paul gives what is virtually a definition of ἀπόστολος. He says that he is the least of the apostles because he persecuted the church "of God", and that he is what he is because of the grace "of God". The emphasis on the divinity might imply a link between the office of apostle and God.

As man Christ is beneath the angels: "You made him a bit less than the angels" (2,7) ⁽¹⁾. The apparent contradiction between this reference to inferiority with regard to the angels and the previous section where Christ is portrayed as superior to the angels is resolved by positing two aspects of Christ, one divine and the other human. As divine, Christ pre-existed his "being sent"; as man, he "became" high priest. It is worth noting how often the word "become" (*γίνωμαι*) is used with Christ's role of *ἀρχιερεὺς* in Hebrews: 2,17; 5,5.9; 6,20; 7,26; 9,11. In all these instances the aorist tense of the verb is used, a tense which implies that there was a moment when Christ began to be high priest. This square, well with the view that Christ began to exist as man ⁽²⁾.

Thus a consideration of the meaning of *ἀπόστολος* has led to a structuring of the first two chapters of the epistle into an introduction (1,1-4 — an obvious and commonly accepted division) followed by two parallel sections, the first of which (1,5-2,4) treats of Christ as superior to the angels, i.e., as divine, and the second of which (2,5-18) treats of Christ as brother of men, i.e., as man ⁽³⁾. These two sec-

(1) "One peculiar difficulty meets us in the use made of the Psalm [i.e., Ps 8] by the writer of the Epistle. The thought expressed in the original by the words rendered in the LXX *ἡλιττωσας αὐτὸν βραχὺ τὴν κορυφῆν* is that of the nobility of man's nature which falls but little short of the divine. The words on the contrary as applied to Christ describe a humiliation. The application is facilitated by the LXX rendering, but does not depend upon it. The essential idea is that the true destiny of man described by the Psalmist, which experience teaches us that man himself has missed, was fulfilled otherwise than had been expected. Words which were used of man in himself became first true of One Who being more than man took man's nature upon Him. In such a case the description of dignity was of necessity converted initially into a description of condescension" (B. F. WESTCOTT, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* [London 1906] 43).

(2) For the use of the verb *ἐμορφώσω* in relation to the incarnation of Christ cf. 1 Jn 4,2-3 and 2 Jn 7. VANHOYE stresses the intrinsic relation in Hebrews between Christ's humanity and Christ's priesthood (*Situation du Christ*, 367-371).

(3) "The Christology of Hebrews is interesting both in itself and for the light which it throws upon the origin of the work. Christ is called the Son of God, and the author defines the meaning of this title very clearly, arguing Christ's superiority to angels in the order of being by a number of citations from the scriptures. Other arguments establish the reality of his humanity and his solidarity with his fellow-men" (A. R. C. LEANEY in R. DAVIDSON — A. R. C. LEANEY, *The Pelican Guide to Modern Theology*, vol. III: *Biblical Criticism* [Harmondsworth 1970] 313).

tions are approximately equal in length (each has fourteen verses) and thus could be sensed as being parallel by the reader/listener.

But more important than length as a formal criterion for the structure of 1,5-2,18 is the use of a sentence or phrase at the end of one section to announce the beginning of the next. Thus, at 1,4 Christ is presented as having a name superior to the angels: this prepares for the first section in which Christ is portrayed as superior to the angels, i.e., as divine. The final verses of the first section (2,3a-4) tells how the message of Christ is transmitted by those who heard it, thus preparing the way for the second section in which Christ is portrayed as brother to these transmitters, for the contrast between 2,2 and 2,3 shows that the transmitters are men.

The predominantly expository tone of 1,5-2,18 is another principal reason for seeing this section as a unit over against what follows, for in 3,1 the use of direct address signals the beginning of an exhortation ⁽¹⁾.

Vanhoeye regards 1,5-2,18 as one entire section treating the name of Christ ("A Name so different from the name of the angels" is the title Vanhoeye uses for the section) ⁽²⁾. He bases his division on the following literary criteria ⁽³⁾: 1) the "announcement of the theme" in 1,4; 2) the "hook word" *ἀγγελος* which links the introduction with the section by being used in 1,4 and 1,5; 3) the "characteristic word" *ἀγγελος* which is found all through the section (1,5.6.7.7.13; 2,2.5.7.9.16); 4) the "inclusion" formed by the use of the word "angels" at 1,5 and 2,16; 5) the "genre" of the section which, except for the paraenesis at 2,1-4, is expository.

Vanhoeye's "announcement of the theme" in 1,4 is well taken; the verse clearly refers to what follows. But it can hardly be applied to the entire section 1,5-2,18, for the announcement states that Christ is *superior* (*ὑπερίστων*) to the angels and only 1,5-2,4 speak of this superiority; the remainder of ch. 2 speaks of his inferiority to the angels by dwelling on his suffering and death (cf. 2,9.10.14) and his brotherhood with men (cf. 2,11-16) in the context of Ps 8 with its catch phrase on the inferiority of men to angels (2,6-9). To

(1) "Au 'nous' par lequel l'auteur s'identifiait jusqu'ici à ses lecteurs (1,2; 2,2.3) succède pour la première fois le discours direct" (SPICQ, *Épître aux Hébreux*, I, 64).

(2) Cf. A. VANHOYE, *A Structured Translation of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Rome 1964) 8.

(3) VANHOYE, *La structure littéraire*, 38.

be sure, Christ glorified is superior to the angels and he is such as man (2,7-8,9), but as man only after he has been subject to suffering and death. The supposition throughout is that it was fitting for the leader of salvation of men to share in the lot of men (cf. 2,10,16). The air of paradox with which the author states that God has not subjected the world to come to angels but to a man (cf. 2,5,8-9) shows that of him there is in Christ as man an element of inferiority to the angels. By seeing in 2,3a-4 another "announcement of the theme" one can distinguish the section dealing with Christ's superiority to the angels from the section dealing with Christ's inferiority (1). This criterion of the "announcement of the theme" is a trustworthy primary formal criterion for structure because it is essentially tied in with a judgment about content, i.e., it is intelligible only insofar as it is explicitly related to statements about the content (2).

In contrast with the trustworthiness of the "announcement" as a primary criterion of structure, criteria 2 ("hook words"), 3 ("characteristic words"), and 4 ("inclusions") are at best only secondary formal criteria for structure inasmuch as they are essentially related not to judgment but to simple concepts and hence cannot function by themselves. For example, the "characteristic word" ἀγγελος appears four times in 2,5-18, but in all of these texts (2,5,7,9,16) it is used in contexts to show the superiority of angels to men, whereas in 1,5-2,4 it is used in contexts to show the inferiority of angels to the Son. The word "angel" is, then, not a sign of unity between 1,5-2,4 and 2,5-18 but of diversity. But only through use of a criterion which reveals the author's judgment about the word can the proper function of the word be assessed; of itself as a simple concept it is not only inadequate but positively misleading, at least potentially (3).

The fifth criterion of Vanhoye, "genre", is again a principal formal criterion because it is essentially involved with judgments about

(1) Cf. VANHOYE, *Situation du Christ*, 252-254, where the relation of 2,1-4 with what precedes and with what follows is developed.

(2) Relevant here is the importance attached by James Barr to sentences and larger thought units as contrasted with simple words as purveyors of theological meaning (J. BARR, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* [London 1961] 249-250).

(3) After listening for hours to the Epistle to the Hebrews the present writer has to admit that the criteria Vanhoye uses for distinguishing the structure of the writing are too numerous and too subtle for him to follow on a tape recording.

content. But in the case of Heb 1,5-2,18 Vanhoye attributes too much weight to the exhortatory aspects of 2,1-4: the paraenetic part begins at 3,1 with the first direct address to the readers/listeners (4). The true function of 2,1-4 is to prepare the way for the section 2,5-18 on Christ's humanity. The difference of tone reflects this function. By failing to divide 1,5-2,18 into two parts according to the content Vanhoye is misled as to the true purpose of 2,1-4 (2).

In summary, if Heb 1,5-2,18 is read according to the content and according to the three principal formal criteria of structure peculiar to that content — announcement, genre, and length — the discussion is seen as centering first on the divinity of Christ and then on his humanity. And all this in an expository way. The exhortation takes place only when this groundwork is laid (3).

Jesus and Moses

The section on Christ's humanity (2,5-14) comes to an end with the announcement of what is to follow: Christ had to become like his brothers in order to become a merciful and faithful (4) high priest (cf. 2,17). In 3,1 the change to direct address signaled by the words "holy brothers" indicates that the section announced in 2,17-18 has begun. This section builds on what has gone before: the first

(1) This paraenetic part is based on the exposition, as the present study will endeavor to show.

(2) The *via implicitis* for the modern reader is circuitous; but the presupposition which seems to be indicated for the original audience is that they could follow the argument of the epistle point by point, at least if 8,1 is any indication.

(3) The way in which Christ's divinity and humanity are summarized in such allusive fashion seems to indicate that the Christology of Hebrews was well known to the addressees. It is the exhortation beginning at 3,1 which dominates the author's thought in the early part of the epistle.

(4) The word πιστός is translated "faithful" instead of "trustworthy" in line with the Hebrew tradition of the role of the priest which finds expression in 1 Sm 2,35 (cf. MICHEL, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 164-165). As the present paper will subsequently suggest, the adjective πιστός refers to Christ inasmuch as he is divine — he is superlatively "faithful" to God because he is God. The adjective ἐλεήμων refers to Christ inasmuch as he is human — he is superlatively "merciful" to men because he is man.

word, "wherefore" (ὅθεν), makes this explicit. And the following phrase "consider the apostle and high priest of our confession, Jesus" (κατανοήσατε τὸν ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα τῆς ἀμολογίας ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν) shows that the author is about to consider Jesus as divine and Jesus as human.

3,2 indicates that it is Jesus as "faithful" who is going to be discussed first, through a comparison with Moses. This comparison between the fidelity of Jesus and the fidelity of Moses is puzzling inasmuch as Moses was not allowed to enter the promised land precisely because he was unfaithful⁽¹⁾. The author of Hebrews has chosen to ignore this aspect of the Old Testament tradition and focus instead on the tradition which lauded Moses as faithful, following Nm 12,7⁽²⁾. This linking of Heb 5,3 with Nm 12,7 is common knowledge. But what is lacking is a development of what this distinction implies. For it is not Moses as leader with whom Christ is compared, but Moses as law-giver. Moses is designated faithful in Nm 12,7 because he expressed faithfully what had been told him, and this is the thought of the author of Hebrews: Moses was "faithful" as a "servant" (δερῶπων) "for witness to the things which shall be spoken" (εἰς μαρτύριον τῶν λαλῶντων ὁμῶν — Heb 3,5). Christ, then, by implication, is praised as "faithful" because he, like Moses, is one to whom God has spoken face to face and one who has transmitted this message exactly.

Development of the theme of Moses' fidelity in ch. 3 of Hebrews has been impeded by the obscure sequence of thought in vv. 2-6. This obscurity is the result of the confusion about the function of cc. 1 and 2 in the epistle as a whole. Once the divinity of Christ is recognized as constituting a major theme of the first two chapters of the epistle, the role of the divinity of Christ in ch. 3 can be recognized⁽³⁾. And once the role of the divinity of Christ in ch. 3 is re-

(1) "Hebr hätte die Untreue des Moses oder sein Murren wider Gott hervorheben können (Num 20,12); die Treuer des Moses wird vielmehr zugegeben" (MICHEL, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 176). Cf. Dt 32,51.

(2) In Hebrews the Old Testament prototype of Jesus as leader is Josue. Cf. Heb 4,8.

(3) "The pertinence of this verse [sc., v. 3,3] in establishing Jesus' superiority to Moses is not immediately apparent. Since Moses was a member of the house of Israel, it is understandable that he should be called inferior to God, the founder, but not to Jesus, whose relations with the house have not been mentioned. There would be no difficulty if one could suppose that the author thinks of the pre-existent Son as found-

cognized the relevance of this factor for Christ's fidelity in relation to Moses' fidelity can be properly assessed. In Heb 3 there seems to be a confusion between Christ, Moses, and God in regard to the use of the pronoun αὐτός in vv. 2, 5, and 6, and between Christ and God with regard to the same pronoun in v. 4. 3,3 has problems all its own. The obscurity of vv. 2-6 begins in v. 2 with the final word, αὐτοῦ. In itself the word could refer either to God (indicated in the context by the phrase τῷ ποιήσαντι αὐτόν), to Moses, or to Jesus. Moses is ruled out because the verse is basically a quotation from Nm 12,7. Jesus is ordinarily ruled out because the original context of Nm 12,7 seems to demand that God be referred to. But is this certain? To avoid confusion the author of Hebrews could easily have written ἐν τῷ ὄκῳ τῷ Θεοῦ instead of ἐν τῷ ὄκῳ αὐτοῦ had he wanted to indicate that he was thinking of God. But he has chosen the same pronoun (αὐτός) which he used in the first half of the verse to refer to Jesus⁽¹⁾. If the author is viewed as writing against the background of the divinity and pre-existence of Christ, his use of the second αὐτός with the same meaning as the first in the same verse could well mean that he regards Jesus as the one to whom the house belongs in which Moses was servant. V. 3 is obscure because of the traditional identification of αὐτοῦ in v. 2 with God. But if the αὐτοῦ of v. 2 is taken to refer to Christ, v. 3 is then seen as explaining why Jesus (οὗτός) deserves to be heeded, as the author exhorts in v. 1. For Moses is in the house whereas Jesus is the one who fashioned the house, i.e., Moses is human whereas Jesus is divine. The article with ὄκῳ in v. 3 is important, for it indicates that there is only religious economy in question, and that Jesus is in some way its founder, while Moses is "within" it as servant⁽²⁾. In v. 4 Jesus is said to be "divine" (there is no article

der of the house of God ...; but there is no indication of that" (M. M. BURKE, "The Epistle to the Hebrews", *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* ed. R. E. BROWN, J. A. FITZMYER, R. E. MURPHY (Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1968) §61:21 [= vol. II, p. 387]). On the relevance of Heb 8,2 for the interpretation of Heb 3,3 cf. J. SWETNAM, "Hebrews 9,2 and the Uses of Consistency", *CBQ* 32 (1970) 219.

(1) The phrase τῷ ποιήσαντι αὐτόν refers to Jesus as explicitly having a charge from God. Cf. MICHEL, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 175.

(2) "... on peut préciser ... et relever la valeur de l'article τῷ devant ὄκῳ. Il semble bien que la comparaison entre Jésus et Moïse porte sur leur rôle respectif par rapport à une seule économie religieuse, qui comprend à la fois le judaïsme et le christianisme, et dont le Christ,

with Θεός) as the founder of the house and indeed of all things. The allusion is to Christ's role in creation, as stated in 1,2. Vv. 5-6 then apply this distinction between the human Moses and the divine Christ to the matter of faithfulness to God: Moses is faithful as a servant "in" the house, Christ as son "over" the house. The inference is that faithful as Moses was, Christ is even more faithful.

Throughout the rest of the section devoted to exhortation based on Christ as πιστός the comparison with Moses is implicit: 3,7-11 is a lengthy quotation from Ps 95 (94 LXX) warning the addressees not to be faithless as the desert generation was faithless; 3,12 - 4,11 discusses on the theme of faithlessness, first negatively (3,12 - 4,1) and then positively (4,2-11). Even the verses announcing the following section (4,12-13) hark back to Moses-Christ by reason of the word λόγος which was used in 2,1 to designate the Mosaic Law.

The purpose of the entire section is given at the very outset: inasmuch as the addressees are "sharers" (μέτοχοι) in a heavenly calling they should contemplate the faithfulness of Jesus in order to imitate it (3,1-2) (1). 3,14 specifies this faithfulness by saying that the addressees become "sharers" (μέτοχοι) in Christ if they "maintain valid until the end the beginning of the ύπόστασις". With the mention of ύπόστασις the third key problem word of cc. 1-6 of Hebrews appears.

ἐκκλησία

Christ as ύπόστασις

The word ύπόστασις, long a classic crux in Hebrews, is a key word inasmuch as it provides insight into the Moses-Christ comparison which underlies the entire section. For ύπόστασις in Heb 3,14 means

en qualité de Fils de Dieu, est le fondateur réel, aussi bien pour l'Ancienne que pour la Nouvelle Alliance (cf. 11,26; Jn 8,56-58); tandis que Moïse, tout en méritant le titre de fondateur de la société et de la religion israélite, ne l'est qu'à titre subordonné, faisant partie lui-même de cette économie, dont l'origine remonte à Dieu... Cette interprétation permet de comprendre le γὰρ initial, qui se relie à κατονομάσατε... Ἰησοῦν πιστόν (v. 1)" (SPICQ, *Épître aux Hébreux*, I, 67).

An objection to taking the word πῶτος in vv. 2, 5, and 6 as applying to Christ can legitimately be made on the basis of the phrase ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Θεοῦ in 10,21. But the phrase in 10,21 describes how Jesus is over the "house of God" as priest and therefore, according to the interpretation being advanced here, insofar as he is man.

(1) Cf. MICHEL, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 175.

basically the reality of God which lies hidden beneath the transitory and shadowy appearances of the present world (4). This meaning is prepared for in 1,3, where Christ is portrayed as the "imprint" of God's ύπόστασις, i.e., as the visible expression of the unseen reality which is God.

Properly to evaluate the significance of ύπόστασις in 3,14 requires advertence to the full implications of the Moses-Christ comparison which dominates the section. For there are two sets of comparisons involved: 1) Moses as θεόπρων and Christ as υἱός (3,5-6); 2) the Law to which Moses gives faithful witness (3,5)(2) and the σωτηρία which was initiated by Christ's words and passed on to the addressees by those who heard him (2,3 - parallel to 2,2). In other words, Moses is faithful to God by bearing witness the things God says in the Law; Christ is faithful to God by bearing witness to the things God says in the message of σωτηρία (cf. 1,1-2). What precisely is this message of σωτηρία which is parallel to the Mosaic Law?(3) To judge from the way it is used in Hebrews, σωτηρία is a reality which is future but which is also already present in the sense that it is contained in the message of Christ (4). The message of Christ represents future σωτηρία

(1) "So ist ἀρχὴ τῆς ύποστάσεως... Beschreibung der Wirklichkeit, auf der das Dasein der Gemeinde beruht, wie Christus als Apostel des Bekenntnisses die Vergewärtigung der jenseitigen Wirklichkeit Gottes ist, an der die Glaubenden teilhaben" (H. KÖSTER, art. "ύπόστασις", *TWNT* VIII, 586).

(2) MICHEL, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 177 seems to make a disjunction as objects of Moses' testimony between the Law and what is spoken through Christ. But such a disjunction does not seem necessary: Moses, for the author of Hebrews, in giving witness to the Law, was giving witness to that which the Law foreshadowed. This bivalence in the function of Moses is clearer in 8,5, but even in 3,5 it is hinted at by the air of mystery attaching to the words εἰς μαρτύριον τῶν ἀληθινωμένων ("Diese Bestimmung des Dienstes des Moses bleibt rätselhaft, apokalyptisch" - MICHEL, *ibid.*).

(3) "Die in 2,3 geschilderte Gefahr, am Evangelium vorbeizuhören (ἀμελεῖν σωτηρίας), ist eine deutliche Entsprechung zu dem 'Vorarbeiten am Wort' von 2,2" (MICHEL, *ibid.*, 127).

(4) "... das Heil selbst [bleibt] ebenfalls an den zukünftigen An und an die zukünftige Welt geknüpft. Im Wort ist dies Heil schon gegenwärtig und verborgen, und es erinnert an die Kompliziertheit und Grösse des synoptischen Reich-Gottes-Begriffes, wenn nach Jer 31,33ff. das ins Herz geschrriebene Gesetz, die vollkommene Gotteskenntnis und -gemeinschaft, die volle Sündenvergebung schon jetzt gegeben sind" (MICHEL, *ibid.*, 128, note 3).

but in representing future σωτηρία it is σωτηρία here and now for the addressees⁽¹⁾. The author of Hebrews is saying that the future good of entrance into God's rest promised and, in a sense, already contained in the Law is paralleled by the future good of salvation promised and, in a sense, already contained in Christ's message.

The message of Christ demands faith if it is to be properly accepted (cf. 4,1-3). But this faith should have as its object not only the reality of the future salvation but the future salvation as in some way already present. But what does this mean? The long citation of Ps 95(94) gives the answer: God himself actually present among his people. The fundamental failure of the desert generation was in their refusal to believe that God was actually present in their midst⁽²⁾. In refusing to believe in this presence they automatically forfeited the possibility of entrance into God's Rest, for God's presence and God's promise are intrinsically linked. In parallel fashion, the addressees are warned not to lose faith in the presence of God among them, for if they do they will not enter into God's Rest.

This is the background for the use of ὑπόστασις in 3,14. And its use there occurs after its striking occurrence in the introduction (1,3): the two uses cannot be mutually irrelevant. In 3,14 the addressees

are being told that belief for them in God's presence means maintaining valid the "beginning" of God's presence among them. A paradoxical phrase designed to parallel the "beginning of being spoken" in 2,3. Christ's message involves God's presence, and it is this presence which is the present pledge of the future σωτηρία. This presence of God is to be understood with reference to Christ: the addressees are "sharers" in Christ⁽¹⁾ if they maintain the beginning of the divine presence valid⁽²⁾ until the "end", i.e., until salvation arrives. In view of the accent placed on Christ's divinity in the previous sections of the epistle the juxtaposition in 3,14 seems intended to convey the idea that maintaining the divine reality valid is the same as sharing in Christ: it is Christ's presence which is to be maintained valid.

More light is shed on the precise force of ὑπόστασις in 3,14 by the Moses-Christ parallel in cc. 8 and 9. There Moses is presented as a cultic figure, confirming the suggestion of Spicq, that the word θεόπτων in 3,5 may have cultic overtones⁽³⁾. Further, Moses is pictured in 9,20 as purifying the Book of the Law and the people in words which have been brought into conformity with Christ's eucharistic words⁽⁴⁾.

Putting all these indications together the suggestion seems warranted that in 3,14 the ὑπόστασις alludes to Christ present in the eucharist. In the eucharist the presence of Christ is the divine reality which

(1) The interplay of future salvation and present salvation is brought out more clearly by the terminology of the "testament" (διαθήκη) used in cc. 8 and 9 of Hebrews. The testament is something which is actually present to the Christians giving them present title to a future good. Cf. the remarks of MICHEL: "βέβαιος λόγος fällt zunächst deshalb auf, weil bei Plato βέβαιος λόγος als 'wohlbegründeter λόγος' mehrfach bezeugt ist... βέβαιον als 'gütig machen, beständigen' ist in diesem Sinn sowohl im Griechentum als auch in der LXX zu finden.... Hinter dem βέβαιος λόγος steht die Rechtsordnung Gottes (διαθήκη), die für die Wirksamkeit des Wortes garantiert. Nicht die Tatsache, dass die Engel das Wort ausrichten, sondern dass das Wort durch die Rechtsordnung Gottes am Sinai getragen wird, schenkt ihm seine Unverbrüchlichkeit und Rechtskraft" (ibid. 127).

(2) "Das 'böse Herz' (3,12) und das 'böse Gewissen' (10,22) bezeichnen den Menschen, der ausserhalb des Wortes Jesu steht. Abfall vom 'lebendigen Gott' ist eine durch das AT nahegelegte Formel, wobei darauf zu achten ist, dass 'lebendiger Gott' eine festgeprägte Bezeichnung in allen neutestamentlichen Schriften ist.... Die innere Loslösung besteht darin, dass man sich nicht mehr zur Verheissung Gottes bekennt, dass man nicht mehr Gott in der eigenen Mitte weiss (= versucherische Frage von Ps 95), dass man sich aber unter Umständen in eine Form des Antichristentums flüchtet" (ibid. 188-189).

(1) 'Der Begriff des μέτρος Χριστοῦ (vgl. im Zitat Hebr 1,9) muss hier ein Ausdruck der besonderen Würde sein.... Es scheint... als wenn ein doppeltes Motiv in dem theologischen μέτρος-Begriff vereinigt sei: Genossenschaft (= Bruderschaft) und Anteil am Christus (Joh 13,8)' (ibid. 189).

(2) "Dass von einem Anfang ἀρχή dieser paradoxerweise gegenwärtigen Wirklichkeit Gottes geredet werden kann, wird am besten durch IIb 2,3 erläutert, wo es von der σωτηρία heisst, dass sie mit der Verkündigung des Herrn einen ganz realen, sichtbaren Anfang nahm. Am Anfang der Wirklichkeit (Gottes) festzuhalten heisst also nicht anderes als sich der einmal im Leben der Gemeinde ganz real begonnenen Wirklichkeit Gottes zu versichern bis zum Ende..." (KÖSTER, "ὑπόστασις", 586).

(3) "Peut-être θεόπτων garde-t-il aussi la nuance culturelle qu'il a parfois dans le grec profane..." (SPICQ, *Épître aux Hébreux*, II, 68).

(4) G. THEISSEN, *Untersuchungen zum Hebräerbrief* (Gütersloh 1969) 72. Cf. also MICHEL, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 319-320 ("Ohne Zweifel wirkt der synoptische Bericht auf die alttestamentliche Textvorlage ein"), and SPICQ, *Épître aux Hébreux*, II, 264 ("En substituant τούτο a τῶν, Hébr. a certainement dans l'esprit les paroles du Seigneur inaugurant la nouvelle Alliance et instituant l'eucharistie et qui se redisaient dans l'Église...").

lies hidden beneath a transitory and shadowy appearance. In the eucharist there is a reality which was begun by the words of Christ and is continued on by those who heard him either immediately or mediately⁽¹⁾. In the eucharist there is a reality which is a pledge of future salvation⁽²⁾. In the eucharist there is a reality which is accessible only by faith.

In his treatment of the Moses-Christ parallel the author of Hebrews is thinking concretely: for him the Mosaic Law is a concrete reality, a physical book⁽³⁾. A pari, the New Law brought by Christ is a physical reality. The discourse in 3,1 - 4,13 is pointed at insisting that the addressees maintain their belief in the eucharistic presence of Christ among them: otherwise there will be no participation in the future salvation which this eucharist presages.

The section ends with an encomium of the λόγος. Modern commentators are reluctant to see in the word λόγος at 4,12 a reference to Christ⁽⁴⁾ because such an interpretation seems inconsistent with the

(1) "Die ἡγούμενοι [sc., the ones who spoke the "word" of God to the community — cf. 13,7] werden... nicht in ihrer rechtlichen Besonderheit oder in ihrem Verhältnis zu den Charismatikern beschrieben, sondern als autoritative Wortträger (13,7); als Wortträger sind sie Wächter über die Seelen (13,17). Die Autorität dieser Vorsteher wird ihnen durch das Wort Gottes verliehen; nur das Gotteswort hat Autorität im eigentlichen und letzten Sinn, nicht der Mensch" (MICHEL, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 488). These words were not written with the eucharist in mind. But it is the contention of the present study that they accurately describe a situation in which the eucharistic Word was a dominating theme underlying the discourse.

(2) In ch. 9 the author of Hebrews uses the term διαθήκη to exploit this theme more explicitly. There it is Christ who is the διαθήκη (cf. J. SVETNAM, *Bib* 49 [1968] 142). Christ as διαθήκη is often referred to by Justin in his *Dialogue with Trypho* (XI, 2,4; XII,2; XXXIV,1; XLIII,1; I,1,3; CXVIII,3; CXXII,5) with the equation of διαθήκη with "new law" often being made explicitly. On the eucharist as διαθήκη cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Quis dives salvatur*, 3 (PG 9,608B). The whole question of the nature of the διαθήκη of Heb 9 still needs study, but a basic defect of the work done up until now is the consistent failure to allow for the possibility of the διαθήκη as a concrete, physical reality.

(3) "Le renforcement de βιβλίον par αὐτό donne à penser que le rédacteur a vu dans cette asperion du livre par le sang un symbole particulièrement significatif" (SVCQ, *Épître aux Hébreux*, II, 264, on Heb. 9,19).

(4) « L'exégèse grecque, depuis Clément d'Alexandrie (*Protrept.* II, 27,2) et Origène (*In I Thess.*), et latine, depuis S. Ambroise (*De Spir. S.* II, 11; *In Lc.* II, 35; *De fide* IV, 7, 73) jusqu'à S. Thomas et Cajetan, a

context. But the division of Hebrews being presented in this paper suggests that the whole of the section 3,1 - 4,13 is an exhortation based on Christ's divinity presented doctrinally in 1,5 - 2,4. Hence a reference is not at all out of place. As for the same word in 4,13, not only inner coherence suggests that it means the same as in the preceding verse: it serves as an announcement for the following section which treats of Christ's intercessory powers with God in his role as high priest⁽¹⁾.

Hebrews 4,14 - 6,20

In 4,14 comes the second occurrence of ὁμολογία. The object of the confession this time is portrayed as the "great high priest", "Jesus, the Son of God". Just as the word ὁμολογία in 3,1 began the exhortation of 3,1 - 4,13 by making a link with the exposition of Christ's divinity in 1,5-2,4, so the word ὁμολογία in 4,14 begins the exhortation of 4,14 - 6,20 by making a link with the exposition of Christ's humanity in 2,5-18: paraenesis is based on doctrine. The point of the exhortation based on Christ's divinity is Christ's faithfulness; the point of the exhortation based on Christ's humanity is Christ's mercy. The virtues which these exhortations are designed to produce in the ad-

entendu ' la parole de Dieu ' du Verbe et l'a identifiée au Fils (v. 14; 1,2), mais elle est rejetée de tous les modernes, le contexte n'autorisant pas à donner à λόγος son sens johannique de personne divine' (SVCQ, *Épître aux Hébreux*, II, 89).

(1) "Λόγος, il est vrai, n'est pas pris les deux fois dans la même acception: au début, il s'agit de la parole de Dieu; à la fin, il s'agit, soit de l'exposé en cours, soit — plus probablement — du compte que nous aurons à rendre. Il en résulte pour le texte une certaine bizarrerie, qui s'accroît encore, lorsqu'on remarque que le πρὸς ὄν (traduit: « et c'est à lui ») désigne le λόγος du début: c'est à la parole qu'il faut adresser la parole!" (VANHOYE, *Structure littéraire*, 102). There is no need to impute literary oddity to the author of Hebrews here: λόγος refers to Christ in both instances, with the two verses speaking of his relation to God. In v. 12 the theme of the preceding section is alluded to by picturing the effects of the faithfulness of Christ to God on mankind; in v. 13 the theme of the following section is introduced, with Christ's relation to God being pictured as that of an intercessor (πρὸς ὄν ἡμῖν) in a context of sacrifice (τερπηλλισμένα). The two occurrences of αὐτοῦ in v. 13 are to be taken as referring to Θεός ("Das doppelte αὐτοῦ in 4,13 kann sich nicht auf das Wort, sondern nur auf Gott selbst beziehen...") — MICHEL, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 199). Thus the phrase πρὸς ὄν automatically refers to Θεός too.

dressees are faith (cf. 4,2-3) in the first section and hope in the second (cf. 6,18).

Christ and Moses are compared in the context of Ps 95(94) in 3,1-11; Christ and Aaron are compared in the context of Christ's being tested in 4,14 - 5,10. The question of apostasy which is considered in the first section first negatively (3,12 - 4,1) and then positively (4,2-11) is matched in the second section by a similar treatment, first negative (5,11 - 6,8) and then positive (6,9-20) (the final verse constituting the announcement of the following section, on Christ as priest according to the order of Melchizedek). In the section on Christ faithful the Moses-Christ parallel involves also a Mosaic Law-New Law parallelism; in the section on Christ merciful the Aaron-Christ parallel involves also the object of sacrifice: in the case of Aaron it is gifts and sacrifices for sins (5,1); in the case of Christ it is himself who is the offering⁽¹⁾.

The criteria for these divisions are the same as for the divisions in cc. 1 - 2: the content, particularly as expressed by several key words; the length (the parallel divisions indicated roughly balance each other in length); and the use of announcements.

Vanhoye divides cc. 3 - 6 quite differently⁽²⁾. 3,1 - 4,14 is assigned to the theme of Jesus who is faithful, with the predominant genre being paraenetic. 4,15 - 5,10, is assigned the theme of Jesus the compassionate high priest, with a predominantly doctrinal genre. The two sections are twins constituting one part. 5,11 - 6,20 is viewed as paraenesis belonging to a part different from the preceding two sections 3,1 - 5,10.

As the basis for these divisions Vanhoye follows his elaborate criteria. The announcement verses which he finds at 2,17-18 are well taken. But he reduces the two occurrences of *ὁμολογία* in 3,1 and 4,14 to an inclusion of only one section, thereby isolating 4,12-13 and forcing the two occurrences of *λόγος* in these verses into an awkward distinction⁽³⁾, and thereby also obscuring the parallelism between

⁽¹⁾ As mentioned explicitly in Heb 9,26 in contrast to the offering of the Aaronic high priest. In Heb 4,14 - 6,20 this equation of Christ's offering with himself underlies the discourse and is the key to the solution of the famous crux of Heb 5,7 as the present writer suggested at the meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association of America at Albany, New York, in September, 1970.

⁽²⁾ A. VANHOYE, *Structure littéraire*, 54-55 and 86-123.

⁽³⁾ Cf. above, note 1, p. 383.

these two verses and the two verses (6,19-20) which terminate the section on the Aaron-Christ parallel. The main reason for cataloguing 4,14 as the second part of an inclusion and not the introduction of a new section is the failure to see that the parallelism of 4,14 with 3,1 is based on a further parallelism between 3,1 / 4,14 on the one hand and 1,5 - 2,4 / 2,5-18 on the other.

For the second section of his second part Vanhoye sees 4,15 as forming an inclusion with 5,8-10. But this is certainly a forced inclusion, for it requires the word *ἐπαθεν* to be matched with *συμπαθεῖ-σα*. And it results in a section (4,15 - 5,10) which is only about a third as long as the section with which it is paired (3,1 - 4,14).

5,11 - 6,20 then become for Vanhoye the introductory paragraphs of a major new division, Part Three, and are characterized as being paraenetic, which, of course, they are. But this means that paraenesis is being presented before exposition, surely a reversal of the normal procedure. It is more consonant with the nature of paraenesis to follow an exposition.

Concluding Reflections

The present paper has not been a detailed attempt to present a literary structure of the first six chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews on purely formal grounds. Formal literary principles alone are not a sufficient basis for analyzing structure⁽¹⁾. Rather it has been an attempt to outline the structure with arguments drawn from both form and content. The success or failure of the attempt is to be judged by the convergence of formal literary principles, content, and structure into a plausible literary whole which is consonant with Christian tradition: for the suppositions on which the present article is based are 1) that Hebrews is a finely worked piece of literary art and 2) that Hebrews was written and transmitted in the milieu of the primitive and early Christian Church. The "proof" — or non-proof — in other words, is the illumination — or lack thereof — which the present paper gives the reader. Does the present article aid the reader to make more sense out of the first six chapters of Hebrews than previous attempts at structuring? That is the question.

⁽¹⁾ The present paper has been negatively critical of much of the structure of Hebrews proposed by Père Vanhoye. But it should be obvious that were it not for Vanhoye's careful work the present paper could never have been written.

Form and Content in Hebrews 7 - 13

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A previous article ⁽¹⁾ presented the following structure of cc. 1 - 6 of the Epistle to the Hebrews:

Introduction (1,1-4)

I. Exposition: Christ as divine and human (1,5 - 2,18)

A. Christ as superior to the angels, i.e., divine (1,5 - 2,4)

B. Christ as brother to men, i.e., human (2,5-18)

II. Exhortation: Christians should be faithful and hopeful (3,1 - 6,20)

A. Christians should be faithful to Christ because Christ is faithful to God with a fidelity superior to that of Moses [paraenesis based on the divinity of Christ as explained in the first doctrinal subdivision] (3,1 - 4,13)

B. Christians should have hope in Christ because Christ is their brother and as such is a source of mercy [paraenesis based on the humanity of Christ as explained in the second doctrinal subdivision] (4,14 - 6,20)

It now remains to examine the remainder of the "epistle" ⁽²⁾ in the light of the criteria based on form and content, criteria which led to the above analysis. The previous article had singled out "announcements", the genres of exposition and paraenesis, and length as primary criteria of structure because they are intrinsically linked with content in the form of judgments, but "hook words", "characteristic words", and "inclusions" were assigned a subsidiary role ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ J. SWETNAM, "Form and Content in Hebrews 1 - 6", *Bib* 53 (1972) 368-385.

⁽²⁾ Cf. J. SWETNAM, "On the Literary Genre of the 'Epistle' to the Hebrews", *NT* 13 (1969) 261-269.

⁽³⁾ SWETNAM, "Hebrews 1 - 6", 374.

Above all it was insisted that content be explicitly included in any formulation of structure on formal grounds.

Jesus and Melchizedek

The exhortation based on Christ's humanity ends at 6,20 with an announcement of what is to follow: Jesus has entered into the interior of the veil as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Thus ch. 7 is announced. That ch. 7 is a separate division of the epistle is commonly agreed on, for its contents single it out as a unit. In the structure being advanced in the present paper ch. 7 presents Christ as one whose divinity and humanity have already figured as major themes in the epistle. Hence it is quite legitimate to see in the chapter allusions to both aspects of Christ⁽¹⁾.

The Chief Point

Ch. 7 ends with an announcement of what is to follow — Christ's self-sacrifice (v. 27) and fulfilment (v. 28). This announcement is repeated at the beginning of ch. 8 with the added emphasis of stating that this is the chief point of the whole epistle: Christians have such a high priest, a high priest who sat at the throne of the Majesty on high and who is cult minister of the sanctuary and true tent.

This is language charged with the allusions to Old Testament themes which are characteristic of the epistle. The author is discussing New Testament realities in Old Testament language. Just what these New Testament realities are, of course, is the subject of much debate. The present writer has attempted to give an explanation of various verses in cc. 8 and 9 which interprets them as referring to the eucharist⁽²⁾. This would be consonant with the eucharistic in-

⁽¹⁾ For example, 7,3 quite plausibly refers to the divinity of Christ given the interpretation of 1,5-2,4 presupposed here. And 7,14 just as plausibly presupposes his humanity, given the interpretation of 2,5-18 presupposed here.

⁽²⁾ J. SWETNAM, "The Greater and More Perfect Tent". A Contribution to the Discussion of Hebrews 9,11", *Bib* 47 (1966) 91-106; *IDEM*, "On the Imagery and Significance of Hebrews 9,9-10", *CBQ* 28 (1966) 155-173; *IDEM*, "Hebrews 9,2 and the Uses of Consistency", *CBQ* 32 (1970) 205-221. On the question of whether such interpretations are fanciful cf. "Hebrews 9,2", 213.

terpretation given of the first parts of the exposition and exhortation at 2,1-4 and 3,7-14⁽¹⁾. But a eucharistic interpretation is not essential to structure the section inasmuch as the surface imagery makes it clear that cult and sacrifice are the central concerns of the section and this surface imagery is sufficient for aiding the analysis from the standpoint of content.

After saying in ch. 7 who Christ *was*, the author goes on to tell in cc. 8, 9, and the first half of 10 what he *did*. Christ's being brought to fulfilment is discussed in ch. 9 and his sacrifice in ch. 10, while ch. 8, besides giving an elaborate statement of the points about to be made, prefaces Christ's fulfilment and sacrifice by situating them in the context of the Mosaic Law (vv. 3-5) and Jeremiah's new covenant (vv. 7-12). Whatever the basic meaning which the author is trying to convey by means of the elaborate imagery drawn from the Old Testament, it is clear that he is speaking of cult and sacrifice.

Exhortation Based on the Chief Point

The account of Christ's deeds stops at 10,18 with an announcement linking the end of the Old Testament sacrifices with the prophecy of Jeremiah on the new covenant. At 10,19 the author begins his exhortation based on the preceding exposition. Just as at 3,1 he made use of the word *ἀδελφοί* in direct address to the addressees together with a word (*ἔθεν*) which shows he is building on what has preceded, so at 10,19 he reverts to direct address (*ἀδελφοί*) and uses the word *οὖν* to show that he is building on what has preceded⁽²⁾. These words introduce a lengthy sentence which runs on for seven verses. What is particularly noteworthy is the presence of the word *ὁμολογῶ*. This word was previously used to help structure the two sections of paraenesis beginning at 3,1 and 4,14⁽³⁾. In those

⁽¹⁾ SWETNAM, "Hebrews 1 - 6", 381-382.

⁽²⁾ This is rather commonly accepted by those who have worked with the structure of the epistle. Cf. O. MICHEL, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* (Meyer; Göttingen 1966) 343.

In exhorting the addressees to "enter into the holy of holies" the author of Hebrews is certainly not calling on them to die, i.e., there is an aspect of Christ's entrance into the holy of holies which is distinct from physical death, even a physical death which is sacrificial.

⁽³⁾ SWETNAM, "Hebrews 1 - 6", 389-372 and 383-384.

two places the word was used with reference to the doctrinal parts which preceded, i.e., it was used with reference to the divinity and humanity of Christ. Here, at 10,23, it is used with reference to "steadfast hope" (ἐλπίς ἀκλόνητος). This is a shorthand way of referring to what precedes, in cc. 9 and 10,1-18, where Christ's cultic fulfilment and sacrifice are discussed. The relation between Christ's priesthood and sacrifice was discussed in a previous part, 4,14-6,20, where it was used as a basis for Christian hope⁽¹⁾. Here, at 10,23, the author is building on this previous discussion, reminding his addressees that their belief encompasses not only Christ as divine and human but also Christ as having sacrificed himself in a priestly way and thus established their basis for hope⁽²⁾.

But it is not hope which is developed in the exhortation comprised by the verses 10,19-39 — that has already been done in 4,14-6,20. Instead the author goes on to urge his addressees to "have consideration for each other in a rivalry of love and good works" (κατανοῶμεν ἀλλήλους εἰς προοξυσμὸν ἀγάπης καὶ καλῶν ἔργων). Having discussed faith and hope in his two previous paraenetic parts, the author now proceeds to discuss love. And he immediately specifies how he regards it by adding in v. 25 that this is done by not leaving the assembly (μὴ ἐγκαταλείποντες τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν). This is merely the negative way of saying that the addressees should "approach" (προσερχόμεθα) — v. 22. His exhortation to love is set concretely in the context of cult in response to Christ's priestly sacrifice, just as his exhortations previously to faith and hope had been set concretely in the context of Christ human and divine in the context of cult⁽³⁾.

(1) Ibid. 383-384.

(2) In Heb 2,5-18 Christ is presented as human by being presented as the seed of Abraham, i.e., the new Isaac (cf. 2,16). This might well be the key to the rather enigmatic use of Ps 8 at Heb 2,6-8. ("Ein schweres Rätsel gibt die offenbar von Anfang an messianisch gemeinte Verwendung von Ps 8 auf" [MICHNER, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 138]). For it seems that Ps 8,5-8 was at times understood in Jewish tradition as referring to Abraham and Isaac. (Cf. G. VERMES, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* [Studia Post-Biblica 4; Leiden 1961] 200-201). The whole question of the relevance of the Akedah to the Epistle to the Hebrews has not yet been adequately studied.

(3) Seen principally in the emphasis placed on the sacrifice of Jesus in 5,1-10 and the cultic references in 5,11-6,6.

The phrase "good works" (καλῶν ἔργων) in 10,24 is an important indication of what was in the back of the author's mind. For it is used in contrast to the "dead works" mentioned in 6,1 and 9,14⁽¹⁾. These "dead works" are the works of the Law which are of no avail to the Christian for worship⁽²⁾. The context supports this interpretation. First of all, the perseverance in charity and good works is specified as consisting in not deserting the gathering of Christians (10,25 — as was mentioned above), and this, of course, is the worshipping community⁽³⁾. Secondly, the section 10,26-31 deals with the negative aspects of the exhortation: if the addressees desert the gathering, they will be subject to a severe punishment. The Law of Moses figures in the argument in the context of worship. It is essential to understand the crux in 10,26 about the sin for which there is no sacrifice⁽⁴⁾. By supposition the addressees were previously Jews living under the Mosaic Law⁽⁵⁾. But to enter into the Holy of Holies as the Christians are being urged to do (cf. 10,19, which is thematic for the whole exhortation) is to violate the Mosaic Law in an important matter. So important, in fact, that the penalty is death⁽⁶⁾. By following Christ the Jew-become-Christian in effect

(1) It is worth noting that in 6,10 ἔργων and ἀγάπη are linked with reference to the addressees.

(2) Following a suggestion of C. SPICQ, *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, II (EB; Paris 1953) 147.

(3) "*L'épisyntagogue*... n'est pas un groupement ou une société quelconque, mais une réunion culturelle dans un centre, en un lieu déterminé, dans telle ou telle maison ou 'église'" (ibid. 319).

(4) This problem is also presented at 6,4-6, where the context is also about Christ and his sacrifice and the consequences for those who reject him after having rejected the Jewish faith.

(5) Otherwise the appeals to the Mosaic Law as foreshadowing the Christian dispensation lose most of their force. The question of the Jewish background of the addressees has been recently treated by G. W. BUCHANAN in *To the Hebrews* (AB 36; Garden City, New York 1972) 255-256.

(6) "Alors que dans l'ancienne Alliance, les prêtres seuls pouvaient avoir accès à Dieu, et encore avec mille précautions, désormais tous les participants du Christ' peuvent hardiment paraître devant Lui! Ce n'est rien moins qu'une révolution dans la conception fondamentale de la religion, l'une des plus grandes révélations de l'Épître" (SPICQ, *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, II, 94). The idea of "approaching" God is expressed by the word προσέρχεσθαι (cf. SPICQ, ibid.). That the idea of limited access to the temple was very much alive in New Testament times is attested to by Acts 21,28.

apostatizes from observance of the Mosaic Law. Before God this "apostasy" is justified by the author because of the power of Christ's blood, which has given the Christian the "right" (παρρησία) to enter into the Holy of Holies. But should the Jew-become-Christian apostatize from his new faith he has no sacrifice which can justify what he has done. By definition he is outside the saving effect of Christ's sacrifice, and by becoming a Christian he had put himself outside the saving effects, limited as they are, of the Mosaic Law sacrifice because he had performed an act for which the Mosaic Law offers no atonement. Thus the context of 10,24 supports the interpretation that the "dead works" are the works of the Law which the Christians are to replace by "noble works" (1).

10,32-38 give the positive aspects of the exhortation to charity and good works by showing that the right to entrance into the Holy of Holies in Christ's blood (i.e., perseverance in the worshipping community) leads to the promise (10,36) (2).

10,39 is an announcement verse for ch. 11, which deals with faith.

Thus the exhortation based on 7,1-10,18 urges the Christians to charity and good works on the basis of the right given in Christ's blood, i.e., on the basis of Christ's sacrifice. This sacrifice is the doctrinal basis for the paraenesis. And so the three exhortations of the epistle have to do with faith, with hope, and with charity (3).

Faith, Hope, and Charity in the Context of Salvation History

The structure of the epistle thus far advanced has faith, hope, and charity (the latter coupled with good works in the context of

(1) That apostasy was the sin which so exercised the author of Hebrews in 10,26-29 is well argued by R. WILLIAMSON, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums 4; Leiden 1970) 250-267 and especially 260-261.

(2) This division of the paraenesis into a negative (10,26-31) and a positive section (10,32-38) agrees with a pattern of "negative-positive" found also in the first two paraenetic sections: on faith (negative, 3,12-4,1; positive, 4,2-11) and on hope (negative, 5,11-6,8; positive, 6,9-20). Cf. SWETNAM, "Hebrews 1-6", 384.

(3) That the author of Hebrews was thinking explicitly in terms of faith, hope, and charity seems indicated by the phrasing of 10,22-24, where πίστις, ἐλπίς, and ἀγάπη (in that order) are brought together in a description of the Christian's state of soul in "approaching".

worship) as the principal scope of the exhortations in 3,1-4,13; 4,14-6,20, and 10,19-39 respectively. These exhortations are based on who Christ is (1,5-2,18; 7) and what Christ did (8,1-10,18). The remainder of the epistle is taken up with developing the themes of faith (11,1-12,2), hope (12,3-29), and charity and good works (13,1-21) in a mixture of exposition and exhortation (1). This is done in the context of the goal of salvation history, the promise now within reach of the Christians after generations of expectations.

Ch. 11 is an exposition on faith set in the context of an exhortation. It is introduced by the announcement verse of 10,39. It has as its scope the unification of salvation history in the consciousness of the addressees through the objectification of faith. Thus the tension between the former faith of the addressees and their present, Christian, faith is resolved. Faith is the "inner reality" (ὁπόστασις) of things which are hoped for and a "proof" (ἐλεγχος) of things not looked on. From the standpoint of eschatology (the goal to which all the past has been aimed and the object of hope for so many generations) all that has preceded the present addressees has been but prelude. All this past is known by faith, a faith which attests to the heroes of old. This faith is an objective reality, so objective that it can be called a "proof" (ἐλεγχος) of the things which have been and are hoped for by all those involved. The word "inner reality" (ὁπόστασις), used of the "inner reality" of God in 1,3 and of the "inner reality" of Christ in 3,14, seems to be used here in 11,1 in a deliberately evocative and paradoxical sense. It seems to refer to faith (and the things to which faith attests — the facts of salvation history) from the standpoint of the future unseen-but-hoped-for goal of God's providential designs and of God himself. This goal and God himself are "inner realities" known only by faith which is able to pierce the veil which separates these realities from the world of

(1) This is not to say that exposition and exhortation are mixed in even proportions throughout these three chapters (ch. 11 is clearly an exposition on faith). But where there is exposition (as in ch. 11) it is in direct function of paraenesis (cf. the announcement verse at 10,39 and the summary in 11,39-40). This is possible because of the nature of the argument: all three chapters are in the context of eschatology: by its very subject matter the exposition issues in exhortation.

man. But from the standpoint of these realities faith itself, paradoxically, is an "inner reality" (1).

The section on faith ends by reminding the addressees that the consummation to which they are called involves the consummation of all the faith-witnessed heroes of the past, and by giving the announcement of the following section through an exhortation to endurance based on the contemplation of Jesus (12,1-2).

The section on hope begins by resuming this exhortation to endurance through a call to summing-up based on Christ who has endured so much (12,3). This evokes the memory of Christ's sacrifice, which was so important for the consideration of hope in 4,14 - 6,20. But in the present section it is not the mercy of Christ which is used as the basis for the call to hope but the example of Christ. The goal, however, is the same, the definitive arrival at the "heavenly Jerusalem" (12,22), the possession of God's promise.

Ch. 13 of Hebrews has proved particularly difficult to fit into any kind of structure for the epistle (2). It is obviously composed of bits of advice. But do these bits of advice have any common denominator? The announcement at the end of ch. 12 indicates what this denominator is: "let us have grace through which we can worship in a way pleasing to God with fear and reverence" (12,28) (3). Ch. 13

(1) This brief discussion of faith as it is presented in ch. 11 of Hebrews is not, of course, intended to be a definitive statement on what is a classic problem. But some attempt at clarification seems called for in an essay on the structure of the epistle, given the fact that the word *ὑπόστασις* occurs three times in the epistle in such a way that the author is seen to be giving it particular weight. Note that in the structure being presented here *ὑπόστασις* occurs in the prologue and then in two sections devoted to faith (3,1 - 4,13 and 11,1 - 12,2).

(2) Buchanan (*To the Hebrews*, 267), for example, thinks that ch. 13 was an addition to the epistle originally prepared for a different group. But detailed studies of vocabulary seem to point to the basic homogeneity of ch. 13 with the rest of the epistle. Cf. SpicQ. *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, II, 415, for a defense of the relevance of ch. 13 to the rest of the epistle and for bibliographical references. And F. V. FULSON, "Yesterday". *A Study of Hebrews in the Light of Ch. 13* (Studies in Biblical Theology, 2nd series, 4; London 1967).

(3) Cf. Rom 12,1 - 13,14, where Paul indicates how Christians are to offer themselves in sacrifice to God by fulfilling a variety of duties. And everything is summed up by the law of charity (13,9-10).

gives the ways in which, concretely, the addressees are to "have grace" through which they can worship God (4). But it is only in the context of the exhortation of 10,19-39 that this linking of worship, good deeds, and charity assumes a unity. If one reads through 13,1-21 with the phrase "love and good works" of 10,24 in mind and if the cultic setting of that phrase is kept in mind, the apparently disparate observations of the author seem less arbitrarily grouped

(1) The phrase *χάρις ἐξ ἔω* is found also at 1 Tim 1,12 and 2 Tim 1,3. The latter text is noteworthy because it contains the same juxtaposition of *χάρις ἐξ ἔω* and *λατρεῖα* as in Heb 12,28. The phrase *χάρις ἐξ ἔω* seems to be distinguished from *εὐχαριστῶ* in that it tends to emphasize how gratitude should be shown. Cf. W. LOCK, *The Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh 1924) 14. *λατρεῖα* is found at Heb 9,14 where it indicates the contrast between the addressees' previous dedication to the Law and the new dedication to God. The connotation of *λατρεῖα* is cultic: the addressees in their Christian dedication take over the role of the priests in the Mosaic Law.

The relevance of Heb 12,28 for ch. 13 was pointed out years ago by H. Strathmann in his *TWNT* article on *λατρεῖα*: "Eine gottwohlgefällige, von Dankbarkeit zugleich und ernstem Verantwortungsbewusstsein getragene Lebensgestaltung — das ist das christliche τῷ Θεῷ λατρεῖν. Das Wort scheint zu dem folgenden mahnenden Abschnitt (Kp 13) überleiten zu sollen" (H. STRATHMANN, art. "λατρεῖα, λατρεῖν", *TWNT* IV, 64).

In the outline of the structure of Hebrews here being advanced, the terminology of the familiar triad "faith, hope, and charity" has been used because it seems closest to expressing the original meaning of the author of Hebrews. For "faith" this choice is obvious. For "hope", somewhat less so. 4,14 - 6,20 explicitly mentions *ἐλπίς*. But 12,3-29 is concerned with *ὑπομονή* and the goal of *ὑπομονή*. What, then, is the justification for giving this section the title "hope"? The justification comes from the way in which *ὑπομονή* and *ἐλπίς* were closely related in the primitive Church. Ti 2,2 even uses *ὑπομονή* in place of *ἐλπίς* in giving the standard triad. 1 Thes 1,3 links the two closely. Cf. F. HAUCK, art. "ὑπομένω κτλ.", *TWNT* IV, 591-592. But this close relationship does not exist in the contemporary Church. Hence to use the word "endurance" to characterize the section 12,3-29, while narrowly more accurate, is fundamentally a distortion because it does not convey to the modern mind the relevance to faith and charity which was felt when the early Christian heard it.

The same can be said of using "charity" to render *χάρις ἐξ ἔω*. This was seen as the fundamental Christian attitude toward God, a response to God's *χάρις* towards man, embracing all that he does in his cult and conduct. To describe this virtue as "giving thanks" to God is to deprive it of its relevance to faith and hope for the modern reader.

together. "Having grace" or "giving thanks" is a reply to God's gracious act in Christ (the exhortation at 10,19-39 was a response to what Christ had *done*). In fact, 13,1 opens with a call to "love for the brethren" and follows with a call for "love for strangers" and a reminder not to forget those in prison and those in affliction (13,2-3). It continues with a warning about purity in marriage (13,4) and against "love of money" because of trust in God (13,5-6). 13,7 seems to fit in with the cultic admonitions which follow (13,8-16). 13,17 seems to be a general exhortation to obedience toward leaders. The two-fold use of *καλῶς* in *καλῶν* and *καλῶς* harkens back to the *καλῶν ἐργῶν* of 10,24. 13,19 is a reminder that the author is practicing what he preached in 10,24-25. The verses 13,20-21 close the section on "giving thanks" by summing up what God has done in Christ and calling on Christians to reply by doing his will. This mention of doing his "will" is an allusion to the contrast between the Christian's conduct and the Jew's: it refers to the contrast between the demands of God in the Mosaic Law and the demands of God in Christ (1). The section closes with a solemn "Amen", indicating the end of the "word of exhortation".

The verses 13,22-25 constitute a personal greeting attached to the end of the "word of exhortation" and as such stand outside the basic structure of the work (2).

Summary

A summary of the structure of cc. 7 - 13 (in continuation of the one given at the beginning of the present article) (3) would read as follows:

III. Exposition: Christ as priest and his priestly act (7,1 - 10,18)

A. Who Christ is: priest according to the order of Melchizedek (7,1-28)

B. What Christ did: enter the sanctuary and sit at God's right hand (8,1 - 10,18)

(1) This is the contrast developed in 10,7-10 (cf. also 10,36).

(2) Cf. MICHELI, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 541.

(3) Cf. above, p. 333.

1. Attestation by the Law and the Prophets (8,1-13)
2. Jesus' entrance into the sanctuary and the new covenant (9,1-28)

3. Jesus' sacrifice and the new covenant (10,1-18)

IV. Exhortation: Christians should be charitable and perform good works (10,19-39)

As a response to Christ's priestly sacrifice Christians should be loving in deed in the context of the cultic community

V. Exposition-Exhortation: Faith, hope, and charity in the context of salvation history (11,1 - 13,21)

A. Faith: an objective reality as indicating the unseen (11,1 - 12,2)

B. Hope: endurance as a requisite for gaining possession of the unshakeable kingdom (12,3-29)

C. Charity: giving thanks in Christian cult to God as involving conduct and worship (13,1-21)

Vanhoye's Outline

The above outline coincides in part with the outline of A. Vanhoye (1), but it is conceived according to a quite different over-all view of the purpose of the sections. Vanhoye's major divisions are as follows: 7,1-28; 8,1 - 9,28; 10,1-18; 10,19-39; 11,1-40; 12,1-13; 12,14 - 13,19; 13,20-21; 13,22-25. These are situated in the context of the five principal divisions into which the epistle as a whole is divided. Vanhoye conceives the epistle as being basically concentric: 5,11 - 10,39 belong to the central section. 11,1 - 12,13 belong to the fourth principal part and correspond to the second principal part, 3,1 - 5,10. 12,14 - 13,18 constitute the fifth and final principal part and correspond to the first principal part, 1,5 - 2,18. However, a tabular view will aid in seeing how the coincidences in division fit into a radically different view of how the divisions are integrated among themselves:

(1) Cf. A. VANHOYE, *Épître aux Hébreux. Texte grec structuré* (Rome 1967).

Vanhoeye

- a. 1,1-4 Exordium
 I. 1,5-2,18 *Eschatology*: "A name so different from the name of the angels"
 1,5-14 Son of God
 2,1-4 Paraenesis
 2,5-18 Brother of men

Swetnam

- 1,1-4 Exordium
 I. 1,5-2,18 *Exposition*: Christ as divine and human
 A. 1,5-2,4 Christ as superior to the angels, i.e., divine
 B. 2,5-18 Christ as brother to men, i.e., as human

- II. 3,1-5,10 *Ecclesiology*
 A. 3,1-4,14 Jesus faithful
 B. 4,15-5,10 Jesus, compassionate high-priest

- II. 3,1-6,20 *Exhortation*: to faith and hope
 A. 3,1-4,13 To faith (based on divinity of Christ)
 B. 4,14-6,20 To hope (based on humanity of Christ)

- III. 5,11-10,39 *Sacrifice*
 -- 5,11-6,20 Preliminary exhortation

- A. 7,1-28 Jesus, high priest according to the order of Melchizedek
 B. 8,1-9,28 Come to fulfillment

- C. 10,1-18 Cause of an eternal salvation
 -- 10,19-39 Final exhortation

- III. 7,1-10,18 *Exposition*: who Jesus was and what he did

- A. 7,1-28 Who Jesus was (high priest according to the order of Melchizedek, human and divine)

- B. 8,1-10,18 What Jesus did: enter the Holy of Holies and sit at right hand of God

- IV. 10,19-39 *Exhortation*: response to what Christ did: love and good works

- IV. 11,1-12,13 *Ecclesiology*
 A. 11,1-40 The faith of the men of old
 B. 12,1-13 The endurance required

- V. 11,1-13,21 *Exposition-Exhortation*: faith, hope, and charity in salvation history

- V. 12,14-13,18 *Eschatology*: the peaceful fruit of justice
 A. 11,1-12,2 Faith as an objective reality pointing to the unseen
 B. 12,3-29 Endurance (hope) based on example of Jesus for obtaining unshakable kingdom
 z. 13,20-21 Peroration
 C. 13,1-21 Response to God's act in Christ: Christian life as an act of thanksgiving (love)

The concentric structure of Vanhoeye leads him to see correspondences between I and V and between II and IV according to the scheme Eschatology-Eschatology and Ecclesiology-Ecclesiology, with the central part being devoted to Sacrifice⁽¹⁾. Part I is about the heavenly glory of Christ and corresponds to Part V which is eschatological, based as it is on the theme of "the peaceful fruit of justice" (12,11). Part II concerns Jesus faithful and merciful, and these virtues, constituting as they do the essential virtues of the covenant, *'émet* and *hesed*, indicate that the author is thinking of ecclesiology; this part corresponds to the faith and endurance of Part IV which is also ecclesiology.

The following questions suggest themselves: can one give to 12,14-13,18 an eschatological coloring and to deny it to 11,1-40 which seems equally to be aimed at a future goal (cf. 11,40)? And is the parallel between "A name so different from the name of the angels" for Part I and "The peaceful fruit of justice" for Part V clear? The eschatological nature of Part V is even more difficult to see when the subdivisions are examined: how do the Christian attitudes listed in 13,1-6 fit into a distinctively eschatological scheme? And how are the dietary observances and authentic Christian fidelity of 13,7-19 distinctively eschatological? Further, how is it known that the author of Hebrews looked upon fidelity and mercy as the essential virtues of the covenant? Finally, the placing of the exhortation 5,11-6,20 *before* the central section is formally anomalous:

(1) Cf. A. VANHOEYE, *La structure littéraire de l'Épître aux Hébreux* (Studia Neotestamentica, Studia 1; Paris-Bruges 1963) 238-247.

exhortation normally follows exposition. This one consideration alone is enough to make Vanhoye's whole structure suspect, for if 5,11-6,20 is removed from the central section it destroys the concentric symmetry of Vanhoye's plan.

There is obviously much which is correct in Vanhoye's outline: 7,1-28 is clearly a distinct unit; 8,1 obviously begins a new division; 10,19 certainly begins an exhortation; 11,1-40 is the core of a clearly distinct unit. But there is the problem of the psychological complexity posed by the convergence of all the various criteria of inclusions, hook words, announcement of subjects, resumption of subjects, and characteristic words. It takes a most alert mind, for example, to note that the word *προχιδός* of 12,13 alludes to the word *ῥέ-χόμεν* of 12,1, or to see that the word *γάφρις* in 12,15 and 12,28 serves to indicate an inclusion but that the same word in 13,9 is not so used⁽¹⁾. Or that the word *ἐνεπρόμεθα* in 12,9 is to be linked with the word *ἐπρόση* in 12,13.

The Criteria for Structure

What is the supposition that underlies all the detailed analysis which goes into attempts to ascertain the structure of Hebrews or of any other writing? The supposition is that the convergence of independent factors into an intelligible pattern cannot be the result of chance but has to be the result of design. Such factors constituting such a pattern indicate the relation of the several parts of a writing to the whole and consequently influence the meaning of everything in the several parts and everything in the whole. The catch is to make sure that: 1) the factors really are factors, and can be understood as such by the addressees; 2) the factors really point to an intelligible pattern which can be understood as such by the addres-

(1) "Pour ma part, j'ai de la peine à admettre que l'épître aux Hébreux ait été écrite d'après un plan préconçu assez minutieux" (J. P. M. VAN DER PLOEG, commenting on the structure proposed by Vanhoye [*Bib* 53 (1972) 452]). Underlying an assertion so apparently gratuitous is a reader's instinct for the central weakness of Vanhoye's whole approach: its lack of concern for psychological plausibility. (Of course not all are of van der Ploeg's opinion. The book he was reviewing in *Biblica* [P. ANDRIESEN - A. IJENGER, *De brief aan de Hebreëen* (Roermond 1971)] is what occasioned his demurrer).

sees. An obvious example from Hebrews is the use of *πίστεις* in ch. 11. The eighteen uses of the dative, *πίσσει*, as the initial word in a sentence are obviously independent (e.g., they cannot be explained by dittography of some kind) and they obviously are factors (their mutual relevance is impossible to ignore); they can be understood by the reader or listener with facility; they constitute a pattern when understood with the content so that they help constitute a disquisition on faith. Would that all structural factors in the epistle were as clear. But the fact that the author can be so clear when he wants to raises some doubts when he is not. And by the same token the presence of such deliberate structuring factors should alert students of the epistle to be prepared for deliberate structuring elsewhere.

The present and the preceding article have attempted to isolate several independent factors and indicate that they point to an intelligible pattern.

The word *ὁμολογία* occurs three times in Hebrews: 3,1; 4,14; 10,23. By linking these three uses with the content of the *ὁμολογία* as well as the exhortations "*ᾠθεν, ἀδελφοὶ ἄγιοι*" of 3,1 and "*ἐχόντες οὖν ἀδελφοί*" of 10,19 the three basic sections of paraenesis in the epistle were set out. These sections always follow the relevant sections of exposition and result from them.

Announcements of a following section at the end of a section were singled out at: 1,4; 2,3a-4; 2,17-18; 4,13; 6,20; 7,29; 10,18; 10,39; 12,1-2; 12,28-29.

The basic genera were identified as exposition and exhortation and were found in 1,5-2,18 (exposition), 3,1-6,20 (exhortation), 7,1-10,18 (exposition), 10,19-39 (exhortation), and cc. 11-13 (exposition-exhortation).

Length was also a factor in determining the structure, particularly in the two subdivisions of 1,5-2,18 and 3,1-6,20.

The above factors were not considered in isolation from content. And as a result of the interplay between the above factors and the meaning of the texts involved the following basic considerations were viewed as being thematic: Christ's divinity and humanity, Christ's unique priesthood which combined both; Christ's sacrificial act; the relation of the Christian to Christ and his sacrificial act by faith, hope and endurance, and love and good works in the context of the cultic community.

The question, then, is, are all these elements really factors? Were they really selected by the author to indicate his thought pat-

tern? Do they really point to the ideas delimited here? Are they psychologically plausible? That is, would they be recognized by the people for whom the epistle was written? Would they suggest patterns for these people?

There is no scientifically "certain" response to these questions. Short of finding some document or documents which can be shown to contain the thinking of the author of Hebrews about the structure of his epistle there never will be. Or, perhaps more accurately, scientific "certitude" as this term is applied to literary interpretation is so mitigated that it can be positively misleading: any attempt to achieve a quasi-mathematical certitude by isolating alleged "objective" factors which can then be presumed reliable for determining meaning is to try to impose on words an alien methodology. All that one can do is to read and re-read the epistle with both form and content in mind. And the basic question is always the same: what combination of formal factors and content seems the most plausible? In other words, what structure helps the reader make the most sense out of the epistle? Until he comes across a more plausible one the present writer opts for the one given in this and the preceding article.

Discussions sur la structure de l'Épître aux Hébreux

Albert VANHOYE — Rome

Dans son livre sur le ch. 13 de l'épître aux Hébreux ⁽¹⁾, Jukka Thuren donne grande place aux problèmes de structure littéraire. Le chapitre d'introduction est en bonne partie dédié à une discussion concernant la structure de toute l'épître (pp. 25-49), discussion dont les conclusions doivent servir de base à la suite du travail. L'auteur accorde une attention particulière à la contribution de son « vénéral maître » R. Gyllenberg ⁽²⁾ et ensuite à mon ouvrage sur la question ⁽³⁾. La comparaison qu'il fait entre les deux positions aboutit selon lui à accorder la préférence à R. Gyllenberg.

Je voudrais ici répondre à J. Thuren et saisir en même temps l'occasion pour examiner d'autres positions qui diffèrent des miennes, celles, en particulier, de mon confrère J. Swetnam, exprimées dans *Biblica* ⁽⁴⁾.

I. Accueil reçu

Dans une première présentation de mon livre, faite très brièvement p. 22, J. T. commence par noter qu'il a été reçu avec grand enthousiasme, mais, aussitôt après, il jette le doute dans l'esprit des lecteurs en ajoutant qu'à sa connaissance, seul C. H. Giblin a accepté sans changement mes conclusions et que, si l'analyse des petites sec-

⁽¹⁾ Jukka THURÉN, *Das Lobopfer der Hebräer*. Studien zum Aufbau und Anliegen von Hebräerbrief 13 (Acta Academiae Aboensis, Ser. A, vol. 47 nr. 1; Åbo 1973). Cet ouvrage ne manque pas de mérites. J'en rendrai compte par ailleurs.

⁽²⁾ R. GYLLENBERG, « Die Komposition des Hebräerbriefes », *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 22-23 (1957-1958) 137-147.

⁽³⁾ A. VANHOYE, *La structure littéraire de l'épître aux Hébreux* (Paris-Bruges 1963).

⁽⁴⁾ J. SWETNAM, « Form and Content in Hebrews 1-6 », *Eib* 53 (1972) 368-385; « Form and Content in Hebrews 7-13 », dans le présent numéro. pp. 333-348.