

**A Socio-Rhetorical Appraisal of Jesus as Sacrifice, with Specific Reference
to *Hilasterion* in Romans 3:25-26**

By

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Abstract

This dissertation answers the following: “Why did Paul describe Jesus as ἱλαστήριον?” Throughout it, I have examined the questions of the “what” versus the “why”: “What is the meaning of ἱλαστήριον (*hilasteῖon*)” versus “why has the death of Christ been metaphorised as ἱλαστήριον.” Notwithstanding the uniformity among theologians that the meaning (the “what”) of the text should occupy centre space, the enquiries of both Bible translators and Pauline scholars have yielded different meanings as far as ἱλαστήριον is concerned. The question “why” shifts the project’s focus from the meaning of the text to the performativity, which entails asking different questions.

As a result, I have problematised “propitiation,” “expiation” and “mercy-seat” as interpretational models for ἱλαστήριον, because these theological models neglect the rhetorical situation which leads to a misunderstanding of ἱλαστήριον. Consequently, applying the three-pronged rhetorical approaches to my text has enabled me to move the discussion away from a purely textual, away from the harmonization of “ideas,” away from a traditional theological paradigm thinking only in terms of soteriology and the salvific to a paradigm where the rhetorical, to where the social-cultural and the religio-political contexts has been taken into consideration. *Dispositio* has acted as the foreground for impartiality that facilitated the accommodation of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic family which is ἱλαστήριον’s performativity. I have argued that *apostrophe* in service of *stasis* theory had numerous Jewish fundamentals redefined, without which the notion of ἱλαστήριον would not have made sense. I have demonstrated how patron versus client relationship emerged in the depiction of ἱλαστήριον as a gift from God, evidence of his righteousness, and how riposte operated in dislodging the non-Jews from their social position and relocating them within the nation of God.

The metaphorisation of Jesus’ death and his portrayal as ἱλαστήριον had a number of tasks. It normalised a situation, it brought about an alternative situation into existence, it endorsed social solidarity, it brought about a different genealogy into effect, it sanctioned the construction of a “new and superior race,” and ultimately it produced inclusivity of the non-Jews into the Jewish family since Jesus tremendously had high values then extreme value was assigned to the non-Jews. Thus, I have problematised decontextualised theologising, easy theologising (as “propitiation,” “expiation,” and “mercy-seat”), in order to demonstrate that a socio-rhetorical appraisal of ἱλαστήριον requires theologians to rethink the categories they operate with.

Key terms: ἱλαστήριον, socio-rhetorical criticism, expiation, propitiation, mercy-seat, Romans 3:25-26, performativity of ἱλαστήριον and Sacrifice.

Declaration

Student number **3444-187-5**

I declare that

“A Socio-Rhetorical Appraisal of Jesus as Sacrifice, With Specific Reference to *Hilasterion* in Romans 3:25-26”

is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

BENARD N OMBORI

05/05/2013

Preface

Writing a dissertation is a lonely exercise yet it cannot be accomplished without the support and contribution of other people. I would like to specially acknowledge and appreciate the following people without whom my life, studies and this current work would have been too difficult, if not impossible.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to our children: Addonay, Xarismy and Doxaima. May the good Lord always be with you!

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CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEMATISING THE INTERPRETATION OF ἸΛΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ BY BIBLICAL CRITICS

1.1 Introduction

This study is entitled: “*A Socio-Rhetorical Appraisal of Jesus as Sacrifice, with Specific Reference to ἰλαστήριον in Romans 3:25-26.*” In this chapter, I plan to explore contemporary Pauline scholarship on this subject. It is noted that the main concern of Pauline scholars is *what* Paul meant by Jesus being ἰλαστήριον (*hilasterion*). To determine the meaning of ἰλαστήριον, distracts from considering its performativity. To put it differently, instead of also posing the question *why*, or *how* Paul *could have* used this metaphor, the main concern still is to determine *what* the metaphor says. This is because their approaches partly did not require them to pay attention to the “*why*” question.

My objective in this chapter is to acquire an understanding of the exegetical difficulties and problems concerning Jesus as ἰλαστήριον, as well as gauge to what extent other scholars have dealt with ἰλαστήριον in the wider socio-cultural context of violence and its institutionalisation in antiquity. At the same time I will demonstrate how theological interpretation has constrained exactly posing the problem of violence as integral part for an understanding of the notion of ἰλαστήριον. This chapter then serves as an introduction to the objective of my dissertation, namely to explore the question “*why* Paul describes Jesus as ἰλαστήριον.”

I will commence with the interpretational problems concerning ἰλαστήριον before the formulation of my problem. I follow this procedure because the methodologies adopted in the interpretation of this section in the letter to the Romans form part of the problem. As methodologies they function as filters compelling certain questions and perceptions while excluding others that can perhaps help us to progress beyond the impasse they have created. I submit that socio-rhetorical criticism, albeit in modified fashion, could provide with different terminologies that allow posing different set of questions. I will conclude by outlining the scope of the study.

1.2 The Diversity of Translations and Interpretations Concerned With ἰλαστήριον

Romans 3:25-26 has for a very long time baffled New Testament critics. To begin with, Bible translators have used different translational equivalents for ἰλαστήριον: “*propitiationem*,”¹ “a reconciliation,”² “propitiation,”³ “atoning sacrifice,”⁴ “expiation,”⁵ “means by which people’s sins are forgiven,”⁶ “sacrifice for reconciliation,”⁷ “sacrifice of atonement,”⁸ means of “expiation,”⁹ “place of atonement”¹⁰ and “the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God’s anger against us.”¹¹

This “bafflement” as well is exhibited in the diversity of its interpretations among Pauline scholars. Here are some of the translational equivalents attempting to convey the meaning of ἰλαστήριον: “propitiation” (cf. Morris 1956, 1965, 1976 & 1988; Stott 1995:114; Moo 1996:235-238; Cottrell 2000:260; Nyquist 2000:170; Bussey 2001:32; Russell 2003:533; Witherington 2004:109; Stevenson 2008:89-90); “propitiatory sacrifice” (cf. Hodge 1994; Stowers 1994 & Hendriksen 1999); “expiation” (cf. Dodd 1977:93-94; Dunn 1988:170-171, 180; Morgan 1995:92; Johnson 1997:56-57; Ziesler 1997:112-113; Craig 2001:1092; Dunn 2003:214; Tobin 2004:138-139); “mercy-seat” (cf. Nygren 1980:156-158; Bailey 2000:155-158; Bell 2002:1-27; Jewett 2007:93-99; Hultgren 2011:157); and “atoning sacrifice” (Blazen 2000:285-286). Therefore, ἰλαστήριον has met with varying translations and interpretations and yet it remains a *crux interpretum* for scholars.

Robinson (1970:48) confidently asserts: “Romans 3:21-26 is the most concentrated and heavily theological summary of the Pauline gospel, and every word has to be wrestled with.” In wrestling with its words O’Neill (1975:70) realises that this text indeed is weighed down with inconceivable notions. Käsemann (1982:92) describes Romans 3:24-26 as the most complicated and incomprehensible passage. In regards to the interpretation of ἰλαστήριον, “a much-debated word” (Morgan

¹ Vulgate

² Geneva Bible

³ AV or KJV, ASV, NASB, NKJV, ESV

⁴ WEB

⁵ RSV

⁶ TEV

⁷ NJB

⁸ NIV and NRSV

⁹ NEB and NAB

¹⁰ NRSV

¹¹ NLT

1995:90; cf. Jewett 2007:93), Kittel and Gerhard (1985:320), Barclay (1987:56) and Morgan (1995:90) agreeably confess its complexity.

What one should recognise is that most interpretations are concerned with the question *what*, that is, with the discovery of its *meaning*. For example, regarding ἱλαστήριον to be infrequent word, Ziesler (1997:112) asserts that its meaning is exceedingly contentious. Moo (1996:231) also agrees: “What Paul means by designating Christ as *hilastērion* has been the subject of great debate.” In short, ἱλαστήριον in Romans is a subject that has received scrutiny from Pauline scholars. Yet, there is dissimilarity as to its meaning (cf. Cottrell 2000:260; Witherington 2004:108; Tobin 2004:134-135; Jewett 2007:88; Stevenson 2008:89-90; Hultgren 2011:150, 157; Kruse 2012:186).

1.3 Recent Studies on ἱλαστήριον

1.3.1 Introduction

What I have touched upon in the previous section will be elaborated in more detail in this section. The argument in this study is that interpreters of this passage have put more interest in “*what*,” that is, what the meaning of the text is and/or what the meaning of ἱλαστήριον is, than in “*why*” Paul describes Jesus as ἱλαστήριον. To an extent, this situation can be assigned to their approaches which do not require them to pay attention to a text’s performativity. For that reason, I wish to regard methodological issues as part of the problem and thus, argue that a socio-rhetorical analysis of Romans 3:25-26 that takes the principle of performativity into account will provide me with a more plausible reading than what has hitherto been proposed. In other words, the divergent interpretations, as demonstrated in this chapter, are the products of a diversity of paradigms requiring that different questions be asked concerning the text.

The debate focuses most sharply on whether ἱλαστήριον refers to “mercy seat,” “expiation” or “propitiation” (cf. Witherington 2004:108; Tobin 2004:134-135; Keck 2005:109; Stevenson 2008:89-90; Hultgren 2011:150, 157). Surprisingly, these scholars take ἱλαστήριον as neuter substantive. Apparently there are some overlaps between these three main interpretations; and this is due to the notion of sacrifice that is often attached to it. In what follows, I will present scholars’ pursuits of its meaning separately so as to see how they, from completely different angles, settled on either

perspective. Although Romans 3:25-26 is wider in scope, the focus is on all the aspects within it. Throughout this research, the plan is to pay more attention to ἱλαστήριον than to any other aspect of this passage, because of its notion of sacrifice. Then there is a focus on their arguments about δικαιοσύνη and πίστεως, because these two are closely affiliated to ἱλαστήριον. Amazingly these scholars also agree on the meaning of these terms although they actually propose different interpretation of ἱλαστήριον, and vice versa.

1.3.2 ἱλαστήριον as Neuter Substantive- “Mercy-Seat”

A very strong case has been made for taking ἱλαστήριον in Romans (3:25) as a reference to the “mercy-seat,” the cover over the Ark where Yahweh appeared (Lv 16:2), and on which sacrificial blood was poured.¹² Some scholars (Bailey 2000; Bell 2002; Hultgren 2011) find in Romans 3:25 an allusion to כַּפֹּדֵן (the “mercy seat”), where the supreme act of atonement took place in the Old Testament sacrificial cult.

Using a semantic approach in his article, Bailey (2000:155) works on the ground that past studies of ἱλαστήριον often consider theological issues rather than lexicography. He discourages interpreters of Romans 3:25 from basing their conclusions about ἱλαστήριον upon the immediate literary context. Bailey (2000:155) offers them an alternative: “[C]onsider first the more important linguistic evidence, namely, the concrete, non-metaphorical uses of the substantive ἱλαστήριον in other ancient sources.” Admittedly, however, he sees a possibility of ἱλαστήριον corresponding with the notions of propitiation or expiation. Bailey concedes that there is an overlap between mercy-seat, propitiation and expiation. Yet, from a lexicographical perspective words whose suffix is -τήριον seldom stands for abstract concepts (Bailey 2000:156).

Bailey (2000:15) refutes the view of ἱλαστήριον as a sacrificial victim, on grounds that such point of view is based on the unfamiliarity of the obtainable linguistic evidence. According to him, Paul’s linkage of Jesus to an animal victim elsewhere (Rm 8:3), does not ensure an inference that analogous victim language ought to be present in Romans 3:25.¹³

¹² See also Nygren 1980; Hawthorne, Martin and Reid 1998.

¹³ On grounds that in Romans 8:3, the phrase “περὶ ἁμαρτίας,” in the Septuagint is standard language for the Levitical “sin offering,” then in Romans 3:25 Jesus is said to be an ἱλαστήριον, who is also said to have shed his blood. It is commonly assumed that an ἱλαστήριον in the ancient world must have been something that could shed its blood, “sacrifice of atonement.” According to Bailey

Bailey (2000:156-157) further argues that by the middle of the second century there were only two main applications of ἱλαστήριον: either a reference to the golden “mercy seat” (Bell 2002:17-18)¹⁴ or to durable votive offerings to the pagan deities, generally ἀναθήματα. The latter, though non-Christian, was its usual appropriation in the first century as demonstrated in Jewish literature such as in 4 Maccabees 17:22 and Josephus (*Ant.* 16.182).¹⁵ Saying it differently, ἱλαστήρια in all its extra-biblical occurrences was glossed by “τὰ ἐκμειλίξασθαι δυνάμενα δῶρα” (“gifts capable of appeasing”). On two grounds Bailey refutes propitiation and opts for mercy-seat. In his own words, Bailey (2000:157) conclusively states:

Since this application to votive offerings was typical, it is a possible background to Rom 3:25. Yet no one has ever succeeded in showing how God is supposed to have presented humanity (or himself?) with a gift that people normally presented to the gods. Moreover, the mainstream use of ἱλαστήριον finds no parallel in ‘the law and the prophets’ to which Paul appeals (Rom 3:21). The general meaning ‘propitiatory gift’ therefore fails to fit the context of Rom 3:25. By contrast, a more specialised allusion to the biblical ‘mercy seat’ (which is not a gift to the gods) does fit Paul’s context, with plenty of support from lexicography....

Bailey’s viewpoint entails the following problems: First, he uses “context” in a way that suits his argument; that is, he opts for a lexicographical approach but then draws cultural and theological conclusions. A consideration of both lexicography and “context” leads Bailey to understand ἱλαστήριον here as “mercy seat.” The constrictions of the semantic interpretation, moreover, are found in its notion of *context*, as it is to be demonstrated later.

Second, one may ask Bailey whether the scarcity of the “available linguistic evidence” should not compel him to search for wider and deeper contexts. Besides his “immediate context” and “available linguistic evidence,” should not a “world” underlying the text with its discursive practices of sacrifices also be considered? It is observed that within constraints of semantic approach, Bailey has only searched for the meaning of ἱλαστήριον with “available linguistic evidence” but within the

(2000:156), such understanding could have been contextually appropriate had it not been for its false syllogism, which assumes that the meaning of ἱλαστήριον can be determined by the meaning of “blood.” It is also unsubstantiated by external evidence.

¹⁴ According to Bell (2002:17-18), mercy seat is the meaning found in the Septuagint, Heb 9:5, and six times in Philo.

¹⁵ According to Bailey, who refers to these sources, ἱλαστήριον in Josephus is a marble monument. But the most famous ἱλαστήριον in the ancient world was the Trojan Horse. This was called a θηλεκτήριον ἱλαστήριον or “charm” by Homer (*Od.* 8.509) but a ἱλαστήριον or “propitiatory gift” by Dio Chrysostom (*Or.* 11.121). The term ἱλαστήριον or its Rhodian variant ἱλατήριον was customarily inscribed on other gifts dedicated to the gods (*Inscr. Cos* 81) (Bailey 2000:156-157).

“context” of the text itself, without considering *why* Paul describes Jesus as ἱλαστήριον, and the wider context of its rhetorical situation.

Third, Bailey’s use of comparison is also questionable. In support of the mercy-seat, lexicography leads Bailey to compare Romans and the Septuagint, especially the Song of Moses in Exodus 15. While Bailey (2000:15) demonstrates no hesitancy in comparing words, it is unclear why he appears to have problems with the comparison of discursive elements of sacrifices.¹⁶

Fourth, Bailey’s theological conclusions exhibit his fear that ἱλαστήριον appears to be signifying “a gift” usually offered “to the gods.” Why would this be a problem in the type of society of the antiquity in which Paul and his audience lived? A community where not only irrefutable brutality was institutionalised, but human sacrifices were “common” practices described as the ultimate solution during a crisis? It was never peculiar (cf. Green 1975:202; Berthelot 2007:152; Weiler 2007:40)!

Fifth, Bailey’s semantic approach, like any method, demonstrates some constrictions. This method, which is a synchronic in nature, is the study of the meaning of linguistic signs and sign sequences; that is, of the relations between the form and content of signs in words, sentences and texts (Egger 1996:84). In other words, semantic analysis seeks to answer the questions: *What is a text trying to say?* Furthermore, *context* in principle plays a key role in the semantics of individual words. Semanticists maintain that words acquire meaning when used. They do not “possess” it. Context influences both the author’s choice and the interpreter’s interpretation of linguistic meaning (Read 1995:232). The constrictions of the semantic approach, however, are found in its notion of “context.”¹⁷

Given that semantic analysis of a text seeks to answer the questions *what* a text is trying to say (Bailey 2000:15f), alongside contextual restrictions, it is doubtful if such approach will indeed answer our *why*. Nonetheless, the notion of “context” will

¹⁶ According to Bailey (2000:157), the combination of righteousness and redemption in Exodus 15:13 (“ὠδήγησά τη δικαιοσύνη σου τὸν λαόν σου τοῦτον, ὃν ἐλυτρώσω”) closely parallels Romans 3:24 (δικαίω and ἀπολύτρωσι). Furthermore, a parallel is noted in Exodus (15:17) and Romans (3:25), in that the former promises an ideal sanctuary to be established by God himself while the latter fulfils the promise. Therefore, contrary to Moo (1996:236 [79n]), “[a]pplying the biblical sense of ἱλαστήριον to Jesus in this theologically pregnant way would not have been entirely unprecedented for Paul, since Philo thought of the mercy seat as σύμβολον τῆ ἰλεω τοῦ θεοῦ δυνάμεω, ‘a symbol of the gracious power of God’ (*Mos.* 2.96; cf. *Fug.* 100).”

¹⁷ In reference to constrictions in all methods, Egger (1996:10) emphasises: “For every text we must seek out the approach and method best suited to it.” Methods require that we follow specified procedures, required strategies, pose mandatory questions only. Consequently, Egger (1996:9) affirms that “[t]hrough the questions it poses every method calls out attention to certain aspects of the text.” As such all New Testament hermeneutical methods have various constraints.

be retained; but from another viewpoint namely that of the rhetorical context. Putting it in a different way, whereas semanticists seek the meaning of ἰλαστήριον in the immediate context of the text/word, the proposal is to look for its performativity within rhetorical context, as it emerges from its interaction in the rhetorical situation.

Bell (2002) gives his own translation of Romans 3:25-26 in which ἰλαστήριον equates “mercy seat.” Using a philological approach, Bell’s (2002:17-18) major concern is *what* ἰλαστήριον means. In answering why mercy seat generally has not been accepted as the appropriate reference in Romans 3:25, Bell (2002:18-19) raises three objections.¹⁸ On the argument that Paul is here employing a “mixed imagery,” Bell (2002:19-20) decisively asserts:

I conclude that none of these objections against understanding ἰλαστήριον as ‘mercy-seat’ stand. *Indeed the reference to the mercy seat in Rom 3:25 is entirely appropriate.* It is the mercy seat which, as opposed to the mercy seat in the Holy of the Holies, is ‘publicly set forth’ on Golgotha. Such an understanding is much better than frequently found translations of ‘propitiation’ (AV) or ‘expiation’ (RSV)...‘*Propitiation*’ can be refuted on *linguistic grounds* and the idea is not only lacking in levitical sacrifices but also contradicts Paul’s basic thinking on reconciliation. As regards expiation it must be stressed that, in view of Paul’s ontological view of sin, *expiation is inadequate* (all emphasis supplied).

From the foregoing, it is notable that: first, Bell uses ἰλαστήριον as a metaphor, and a metaphor is always ambiguous. Second, he provides no further explanations about the “linguistic grounds” that he refers to in the case of propitiation. Third, his ground of refuting expiation-Paul’s *ontological* view of sin- also lacks clarification. Furthermore, fourth, does a dogmatic perspective not determine a linguistic approach in his case? If yes, to what extent? For example, why is Jesus compared with a “lamb” or with a “son”, but not with a piece of furniture? In sum, interested in the “meaning” of ἰλαστήριον, Bell’s philological approach here never required him to pay attention to the rhetorical situation that invited the utterance and the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. It is premised that alternative possibilities, not the final answer, may arise when one asks *how* this possibly could have performed in the antiquity.

In a similar way, Hultgren (2011:152-153) first determines and discusses the pre-Pauline formula in Romans 3:21-26. The pre-Pauline incorporated traditions

¹⁸ First, the absence of the article; second, Jesus may not be identified with an “inanimate piece of the temple furniture.” And third, the comparison between Christ and the mercy seat simply does not fit; rather one would have to say that Christ’s blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat. Meaning that, it is not Christ but the cross which would be compared to the mercy seat (Bell 2002:17-18).

include: **ilasthriion**, **paresis** and **proginomai**. Then, premised that “mercy seat” is the obvious translation in the Old Testament and classical literature, Hultgren (2011:157) writes: “Of these three possibilities, ‘mercy seat’ is the most fitting, as at Hebrews 9:29... Paul makes a connection between the ‘mercy seat’ of the OT as a ‘type’ and the crucified Christ is the ‘antitype.’ The crucified is the **ilasthriion**, the ‘mercy seat’ that God has put forth publicly for atoning purpose.”

First, just as Bell, Hultgren uses ἱλαστήριον as a metaphor. That metaphoric language is ambiguous. Second, one could expect his further clarifications as why the other two possibilities of “propitiation” and “expiation” cannot fit. Third, as Bailey and Bell, Hultgren treats ἱλαστήριον in Romans in a way that it must have coherency, a direct link to the Old Testament and Hebrews 9:29. That is to say, there is an inclination that there must be an origin from which Paul operated. Fourth, Hultgren’s theological conclusion is: “God has put forth publicly for atoning purpose.” One is left questioning: was this the *only* possible performativity of ἱλαστήριον? Was “atoning purpose” the only enactment that ἱλαστήριον attained? What were the other functionalities of sacrifices, especially when a human being was brutally “sacrificed” in the Graco-Roman world? Which other accomplishments did the metaphorisation of Jesus’ death sanction and achieve?

Owing to its rhetorical approach, I now pay attention to Robert Jewett’s Roman Commentary (Jewett 2007). With reference to ἱλαστήριον, Jewett (2007:92) notes that the word ἱλαστήριον has been investigated and it may refer either to ‘mercy seat’, or to purification, propitiation, and expiation in a more general sense. Then he states: “In the context of the Day of Atonement that the reference to blood in 3:25 implies, the mercy seat was the center of the temple where God dwelled, and all of the temple activities aimed at celebrating God’s presence and restoring relationship with the invisible, transcendent Deity that had been broken by sin.” After quoting and discussing Leviticus 16:15-22, Jewett (2007:93ff) argues that humanity stood “in need of reconciliation with God.” According to him, this situation necessitated the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον: “The situation resolved by the death of Christ was the massive human assault on the righteousness of God...” After arguing that Jesus’ death on the cross is “reversal of the honor-shame system,” Jewett (2007:96) concludes: “A discriminatory form of forgiveness was symbolized by the Jewish temple, where women and Gentiles were placed in the separate courts that were more distant from God than the court for Jewish males. In the new system with Christ as the mercy seat,

traditional distinctions in honor are abrogated by divine impartiality. All groups without exception have access to this atonement.”

In connection with the preceding paragraph, is the “assault on the righteousness of God” not theological? The metaphor of Jesus’ death (sacrifice) is inserted into a theological argument, while the performativity of a “violent human death,” the violence behind the notion of the sacrifices, elements of “honour-shame” of a society that discriminatorily treated women, the non-Jews and the Jews and their social life are completely left out of consideration. Where are accomplishments of Jesus’ death in view of the politics of relationship between the non-Jews and the Jews? Have all “traditional distinctions” between the non-Jews and the Jews disappeared? Why could he not amalgamate the “discriminatory” relationship between the non-Jews and the Jews, the elements of honour and shame, and sacrificial violence while interpreting ἱλαστήριον? His assertion, however, opens a window to explore ἱλαστήριον in the context of sacrifices and its performativity in the context of honour and shame of a society that discriminatorily treated others, women, the non-Jews and Jewish males. This implies that a rhetorical approach as such, does not necessarily avoid the pitfalls of theological constraint. There is a predominance of a theological interpretative framework yielding to methodological constraints, restricting Robert Jewett to the meaning of ἱλαστήριον. This necessitates a methodological modification that necessitates the prominence of how ancient social values have constituted the audience.

1.3.3 ἱλαστήριον as Neuter Substantive- “Expiation”

This section presents scholars who maintain that, taken as a neuter substantive, ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 has a technical sense of “expiation.” The major proponents of “expiation” viewpoint include: Dodd (1961 & 1977), Morgan (1995), Ziesler (1997), Johnson (1997), Craig (2001) and Tobin (2004) and it is also rubber-stamped by the RSV.¹⁹

Exponents of “expiation” perspective, led by Dodd (1961), base their conclusions on: firstly, comparisons of the ἱλασκ-class with other translations of the Hebrew root כפר in the Septuagint, as well as that of other Hebrew words which are

¹⁹ See also Dodd 1977:93-94; Dunn 1988:170-171, 180; Blazen 2000:285; and Dunn 2003:214. Expiation means calling off the guilt experienced (Dederen and Reid 2000:178). It emphasises the elimination of sin (Bowen 1994:51).

rendered by the *λασκη* class. Supporters of this interpretation contend that when the Septuagint's translators used the verb *ἱλασκεσθαι* and its derivatives to render *כפר* they did not depict the word to the classical sense of propitiation but rather expiation (Dodd 1977:93-94; Ziesler 1997:111-112). Secondly, they view propitiation as misleading because of its usage outside biblical contexts (cf. Dodd 1961:55ff; Dodd 1977:93-94; Ziesler 1997:112; Johnson 1997:57). Thirdly, they argue that in its biblical use it is human sin, rather than God, who is the object of *ἱλαστήριον* as in the Septuagint (Gaebelien 1994:421; Ziesler 1997:113). In other words, the idea conveyed by *ἱλαστήριον* and its cognates is the "covering" or forgiving of sins. Meaning that, *ἱλαστήριον* is directed towards sinners (and the removal of sin and guilt), the tendency generally is towards dealing with sin rather than dealing with God. For example, Ziesler disregards propitiation view not only for having God rather than human sin as the object of *ἱλαστήριον*, but also very often for "failing to make clear exactly how the action works" (1997:113). Thus, they approximate *ἱλαστήριον* to be "expiation" as the most appropriate translation.²⁰

Primarily concerned with *what* *ἱλαστήριον* means, Ziesler in particular gives a literary approach to this text. He opens by noting its infrequency and its controversy. Then he briefly discusses its three interpretations: propitiation, mercy-seat and expiation. In favour of the latter, he argues that biblically and customarily in the Jewish tradition, it was expiation and not propitiation that was fundamental (Ziesler 1997:112). In refuting the propitiation view, Ziesler claims that any reference to wrath is either distantly placed (1:18; 2:5) to be reasonably at stake in 3:25; or it is incidentally alluded to and thus unconnected with *ἱλαστήριον*. As a result, "[t]he whole section is concerned with how God deals with sin, and that is where emphasis should lie in the interpreting *ἱλαστήριον*. In short, RVS is probably right to translate

²⁰ For example, Dodd emphatically notes that God is certainly not the object of the verb *ἐκίλασκεσθαι* and that linguistically, it is not God who is appeased nor his wrath assuaged. On the contrary, it is sin that is atoned for. So, "[t]he meaning conveyed is that of expiation, not that of propitiation. Most translators and commentators are wrong" (Dodd 1977:93-94).

In support of "expiate" meaning for *ἐκίλασκεσθαι*, Dodd appeals to Plato's and Menander's inscription. In line with this shift, then, Romans 3:25 describes Jesus' death not as averting God's wrath but as delivering from the guilt of sin (Dodd 1961:94; Hawthorne, Martin & Reid 1998). As such, on "contextual" grounds, since Dodd (1961) other scholars (cf. Dunn 1988:170-171, 180; Johnson 1997:56; Ziesler 1997:112; Blazen 2000:285; Dunn 2003:214) call "expiation" a "better" translation of Romans' *ἱλαστήριον*. Their basis being: first, the problematic issue is not wrath, but sin that brings about wrath. Second, expiation clearly fits the Pauline understanding of Christ's death as God's own gracious initiative in love toward the ungodly as well as God's judgment against sin. Third, the concept of pacifying of a wrathful God is inconsistent with Paul's understanding of Jesus' death. Fourth, the context of Romans 3:25 does not necessitate propitiation. And fifth, the usage of the *ἱλασκη* word group in the Septuagint suggests a meaning with expiation connotations.

it as ‘expiation’” (Ziesler 1997:113). Additionally, when asked how the cross expiates our sins, his clear answer is: “it enables us to die to sin, to the power which hitherto has held us prisoners” (Ziesler 1997:114).²¹

First, it can be seen that in following a literary approach which gradually becomes theological along the way,²² Ziesler works inconsistently uses diachronic and sometimes synchronic arguments to make his case. Second, within the framework of his methodological constraints he also searches for the meaning of ἰλαστήριον. Third, Ziesler’s direct linking of ἰλαστήριον with “how God deals with sin” raises the following questions: to what extent do theological assumptions determine this association. And should the value system that was written on the bodies of the audience not in some way or the other also come into play? Should the audience not be taken into consideration? Fourth, Ziesler’s refutation of the “propitiation” on the ground that any reference to wrath is distantly placed (1:18; 2:5) is debatable. Should “textual distance” really be a criterion? If so, at what distance should ἰλαστήριον be in order to appropriately fit propitiation? Consequently Ziesler, as well as Dodd, create an exegetical need for paying attention to the rhetoricity of this passage as a possibility for a more plausible interpretation that attempts to move towards my objective.

Next is Johnson’s (1997) literary and theological commentary that does not follow the word-by-word, phrase-by-phrase, nor verse-by-verse method. Rather, his main concern is: “...to understand large thought units and their relationship to an author’s thought as a whole” (Johnson 1997:ix). He works on the assumption that ἰλαστήριον may have been unambiguous to Paul’s readers due to the shared cultural context. Johnson (1997:56) starts analysing Romans 3:25 with a question: “What is the problem with this term ἰλαστήριον?” The hypothesis of such approach is that such large units of thought would require some kind of coherency which is presupposed here. Should I assume such a coherency?

Additionally, Johnson (1997:56-57) interprets the martyrdom of the seven Maccabean sons and their mother (4 Mac 17:22) as well as ἰλαστήριον in Romans

²¹ However, in relation to propitiation that he refutes, I note the following: first, that in the non-biblical Greek ἰλαστήριον denotes a votive offering intended to arouse the gods; in which case “propitiation” is the most suitable interpretation. The biblical context is taken to mean that Christ’s sacrifice on the cross averts God’s wrath and thus enables sinners’ justification. Second, the fact that God himself provides propitiation, it means that humanity can in no way appease him by presentations/performances. Third, consequently, none can dogmatically dismiss the propitiation notion here (Ziesler 1997:112-133).

²² In forgoing quotations, Ziesler’s arguments, in my view, are theological: ἰλαστήριον enables humanity to die to sin, the section that contains ἰλαστήριον is all about how God deals with sin, and that ἰλαστήριον is directed towards sinners (and the removal of sin and guilt) rather than towards God.

3:25 in terms of expiation. He then proceeds vigorously to oppose Stowers' (1994:206-213) argument that Romans 3:25 should not be understood in sacrificial terms.²³ He conclusively states: "Whatever further nuances we may discover in these phrases, we can state confidently that Paul presents the death of Jesus as the central act of liberation/ redemption/ salvation by which expiation/ appeasement/ at-one-ment between God and humans is accomplished and God's righteousness is displayed. The death of the Messiah is God's paradoxical 'gift' to humans" (Johnson 1997: 58).

Johnson's reading of ἱλαστήριον is unsatisfactory. Because, first, if his major concern is "both *how* an author communicates and *what* the religious point of view is" (Johnson 1997:ix) then one expects him to integrate the audience and their socio-religious value-system into his argument, to pose at least a communicative situation. Second, his vigorous argument with Stowers indicates that the problem of sacrifice forms part of the configuration of aspects that form the concern of this passage, although he has not pursued it any further. However, the implication is that he has pointed into a direction that can be explored. Third, he presupposes to access "author's thought as a whole." But, is this practically possible? Was the author's thought immersed and permeated by the practices of the author's days, and even of the world of his audience? Should he not have integrated the audience and their "shared cultural context" into the interpretation process? The moment the integration of the audience and their social situation acquires more prominence in our interpretation, the question *why* appears on the horizon, whereas *what* appears to recede. For that reason, paying attention to a text's performativity and its operation within a rhetorical situation steeped in discourses of violence and sacrifice becomes a necessary phase in the interpretational process.

Morgan (1995) combines historical and theological approaches in analysing Romans. His work too portrays some source, form and redaction criticism (Morgan 1995:88-93). Morgan (1995:11) writes:

A historical approach to this work offers one way of beginning to discover *what it is all about*. We know a lot about the author and his situation, and should throw light on his epistle. Anyone who thinks Paul has something of value to say, and who wants to hear it, will take historical research

²³ According to him, the phrase ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι certainly indicates that Jesus' death is the defining act of redemption. Here are his three conveying lines of evidence that supports the proposal that Paul's language here has sacrificial overtones: first, the way ἱλαστήριον has been used, both in the ritual description of Torah and in the Martyr's death (4 Macc 22: 17). Second, that Paul elsewhere speaks of Jesus' death in sacrificial terms (1 Cor 5:17). Third, Paul in Romans 8:32 alludes to Genesis 22:16, in which God never spared Jesus but handed him over (Johnson 1997:58).

seriously....Our aim to understand the epistle will lead us, however tentatively, in the direction of *theological interpretation*. Taking this ancient text as it stands requires in addition to the basic linguistic, historical, and literary skills, a frame of reference to understand *what Paul was getting at* [italics are supplied].

In determining genre of Romans, or what kind of a text it is, Morgan (1995:10-11) calls it a religious letter.²⁴ Then, he desires to understand first what Paul intended his audience to understand. He recognises that these elements had to do with what he calls “religion,” Paul’s religion and that of his audience (Morgan 1995:14). He terms Romans 3:24-26 “a dense and difficult text” with ambiguous phrases (Morgan 1995:9, 10, 31, 90, 129). When Morgan describes ἱλαστήριον he terms it “a much-debated word” that has no equivalence within Pauline writings (1995:90). He only acknowledges, with no explanation, that ἱλαστήριον may be translated to mean “propitiation” and “expiation” (Morgan 1995:90). According to him, the cross is where blood is sprinkled, not on Jesus himself, ἱλαστήριον cannot be “mercy-seat” then “expiation” is regarded as its probable meaning (Morgan 1995:92).

With his focus on what ἱλαστήριον means, Morgan (1995:91-92) significantly notes that: “The controversy over whether v25 means that an angry God is propitiated-placated, as some evangelicals think- or that sins are expiated- covered- dealt with- as in Heb 2:17 and (probably) 1 Jn 2:2 where similar words are used, cannot be settled on lexical grounds.” First, in agreement with Morgan that Romans is a situational epistle the proposal is to pay attention to specific circumstances, particularly sacrificial notions among his audience. Second, also in agreement with him the historical issues and the intended audience are significantly important while interpreting Romans. However, one wonders why he did not integrate any of them into the interpretation of ἱλαστήριον. That is to say, if lexicography will not help, then one ought to consider the text’s rhetoricity as a possibility for a more plausible interpretation that attempts to move from *what* ἱλαστήριον means towards *why* Paul describes Jesus as ἱλαστήριον.

I would like to pay particular attention to Tobin’s (2004) work since he prompts us to consider both the notion of the rhetorical situation and the sacrificial discourses that constituted this situation. Tobin (2004:135) identifies and then

²⁴ Morgan (1995:10-11) argues: “[P]lainly it [Romans] was written and received as a letter, and letters- even official letters- are more rooted in a particular context than most literature. Historical questions are important here because Romans was written to and from a specific situation before it was Christian scripture. It has not ceased to be a letter even though the original recipients and the author are long dead and it has been given a new context and new functions.”

italicises the traditional creedal formula: **ilasthriion**, **paresis** and **proginomai**. Then Tobin (2004:137-139) traces the roots of sacrificing human beings as a “means of expiation”, and discovers that it was in the Greco-Roman, outside Judaism. In that society human beings were willing to die nobly for the city, for friends, for the community, for the law or for truth. With this he has introduced what was widely known as the “noble death.” Relating to **ilasthriion**, Tobin (2004:135 [17n]) writes:

‘Expiation’ or ‘means of expiation’ are probably the best translations for **ilasthriion**. Paul’s Roman Christian audience probably would have heard echoes of the descriptions of the ritual on the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16. But such echoes should not lead us to translate **ilasthriion** as ‘mercy seat’ or to try to force the interpretation of Jesus’ death in this passage into the straightjacket of ritual of the day of atonement. The language is metaphorical.

An element worth noting is that Tobin (2004:140-141) acknowledges that there existed politics between the Jews and the non-Jews. Seemingly, his theological conclusion demonstrates the same politics: “Righteousness is through faith and apart from the law, and this righteousness is for both Jews and the Gentiles on the same basis” (Tobin 2004:142). This demonstrates that although he uses a rhetorical approach, his theological assumptions still force him into theological conclusions. Most probably Tobin is more aware of how theologians enforce a theological interpretation.

Tobin’s rhetorical approach to Romans is relevant. He points into a significant direction that needs further investigation: sacrifices particularly of human beings, Paul’s Roman Christian audience, and politics between the Jews and the non-Jews. If human beings, in the Greco-Roman society, were willing to die nobly for the city, friends, community or law what accomplishments did such enact? What could be the performativity of Jesus’ “sacrifice,” especially in the light of politics between the Jews and the non-Jews?

Other authors do not provide an explanation but simply assume that *ἰλαστήριον* refer to “expiation.”²⁵ Nevertheless, in addition to the several objections

²⁵ On the one hand, Craig (2001:1083) uses a literary critical approach. Without further explanations, he just presupposes that *ἰλαστήριον* in Romans 3:25a means “expiation” (Craig 2001:1092). Craig does not elaborate at all on how he gets to “expiation” meaning. On the other hand, interested in the dialogues in Romans, all that Changwon (2004:96) writes about this text is: “This paragraph [Rm 3:21-26] begins with ‘But now’...Paul’s argument shifts from the past situation (in the law) to the present and eschatological situation (in Christ).” Changwon leaves out all issues concerning this passage. This creates room to explore this passage, practically with new set of questions.

that have been voiced that render expiation viewpoint wanting,²⁶ one could maintain that these scholars are more concerned with *what* ἱλαστήριον means. The reason for this is that their methods did not necessitate them to pay attention to the ἱλαστήριον's performativity. Their arguments about ἱλαστήριον in relation to its use in unbiblical context as well as its traditional creedal formula is built on the premise that the Bible is a unity, must speak in a uniform language and must be coherent. Thus, one asks: is this viewpoint not based on theological presuppositions? How can this make sense in any other paradigm? The forgoing scholars also treat a text in anticipation of continuity, coherency and non-ambiguity. They treat ἱλαστήριον in Romans in a way that it must have a direct link to the Old Testament. This means that there is an inclination that there must be an origin from which Paul operated. It is in this situation that texts from other spheres are wrested from their contexts and are used in connection with ἱλαστήριον. Writing it differently, "textual context" becomes the framework for understanding it. Therefore, in the attempt to avoid ambiguity, theological presuppositions play a big role. The argument is that ἱλαστήριον being a metaphor, should we not expect ambiguity? In the case of a metaphor, is ambiguity necessarily a problem? Should interpreters compel coherency? According to me, Tobin has given a significant direction to follow. Since little attention has been paid to the text's rhetoricity, the plan is to construct a rhetorical situation that will call for attentiveness to the underlying *ethos* of violence that gave rise to heartless sacrificial practices of the antiquity. Given this, then there is a justified course for a fresh search of the problem: *Why* did Paul describe Jesus as ἱλαστήριον?

²⁶ Firstly, such a study is not based on ἱλαστήριον itself, but on the use of the verb ἱλασκεσθαί and its cognates in the Septuagint. As such, there is an over-emphasis upon verb-based notions, whether the propitiating of God or the expiating of sin, without considering its tangible corresponding term, namely mercy seat and Greek votive offerings (Bailey 2000:156-157). Secondly, ἱλασκεσθαί renders other Hebrew words other than כַּפַּר and its derivatives (cf. Hawthorne, Martin & Reid 1998). Thirdly, if its subscribers maintain that ἱλαστήριον also refers to the locality where or the way by which sins are handled (Ziesler 1997:133); then they do encounter some "methodological tightening" (cf. Bell 2002:29). Fourthly, Dodd's (1977:86-87) argument that there has to be extraordinary usage of the verb ἐκίλασκεσθαί is unpersuasive; since the same verb, thrice in Septuagint, is used in the sense of placating God (Zch 7:2; 8:22; MI 1:9). Fifthly, if the verb in Septuagint is infrequently used with God as its object, it is equally true that the same verb certainly not followed by an accusative of sin in the Old Testament (Morris 1971:231). Finally, if ἱλαστήριον means only expiation, the question that must be answered is: why must sin be expiated? What if there was no expiation? It is self evident that if people died in their sins, they have the divine displeasure to face thereafter (Morris 1976:183). Whereas it is true that in Jewish writings the tendency in general is towards dealing with sin, rather than God; but one wonders if any scholar can absolutely discard *all* notions of propitiation from Romans 3:25.

1.3.4 Ἰλαστήριον as Neuter Substantive- “Propitiation”

The virtual elimination of propitiation from the Septuagint’s ἰλαστήριον by Dodd and his followers has generally confirmed to be unpersuasive. Their critics (cf. Morris 1965, 1976 & 1988; Hill 1976; Stott 1995; Moo 1996; Cottrell 2000) using different methods to determine the mean of ἰλασκ- take it as neuter substantive and have comprehended ἰλαστήριον here to denote “propitiation.” According to these scholars, “propitiation” has God, not sins or sinners, as its object. Thus, ἰλαστήριον is directed towards God (and appeasing his wrath).²⁷

Both Stott (1995:9) and Cottrell (2000:260) employ a literary approach amalgamated with attentiveness to intertextuality. Stott (1995:112-113) constructs a context that has three key words: ἀπολυτρώσεω^ς (redemption), ἰλαστήριον (propitiation) and ἔνδειξις (demonstration).²⁸ Moo (1996) uses a literary-philological approach, and works on this subject while premised that in v25 the focus has shifted from human reception of God’s justifying work to God’s initiative in providing it (Moo 1996:230). Cottrell (2000:260) contends that there exists a divergence as to what ἰλαστήριον means. Consequently, scholars have argumentatively deliberated on the meaning of ἰλαστήριον (Moo 1996:231). Thus, their focus is on the meaning of ἰλαστήριον.

Both Moo (1996:232) and Cottrell (2000:260) note that ἰλαστήριον is used often in reference to mercy-seat. On statistical grounds, other scholars have figuratively seen this meaning in Romans 3:25.²⁹ They argue that such meaning is the one found in 21 out of its 27 Septuagint occurrences, in its only other New Testament occurrence (Heb 9:5), as well as in all six Philo’s uses. Moreover, it gives ἰλαστήριον a meaning that is derived from its “customary” biblical usage, and creates an analogy between a central Old Testament ritual and Christ’s death that is both theologically sound and hermeneutically striking. However, Stott (1995:114) and Moo (1996:233) refute it by raising four arguments against it; and then, they oppose

²⁷ See also Nyquist (2000:170), Bussey (2001:32) and Russell (2003:533) in addition to its translation in KJV, ASV, NASB, NKJV and ESV.

²⁸ Commenting on them Stott (1995:113) contends that the three references are in connection with what happened lastingly on the cross through Jesus, and not what is happening now as the gospel is delivered. *His blood* is an obvious reference to his sacrificial death. His point of argument is: “Associated with the cross, therefore, there is redemption of sinners, a propitiation of God’s wrath and a demonstration of his justice” (Stott 1995:113).

²⁹ Cottrell particularly cites Nygren (1980:156-168) and Bruce (1989:105-107). For example, “Luther and Calvin both believed that ‘mercy-seat’ was the right translation, and others have followed them” (Stott 1995:114).

“expiation” perspective (Stott 1995:114). According to Cottrell (2000:260) and Moo (1996:232-235), the mercy-seat understanding offers no doctrinal difficulty; except that it does not fully depict the connotation of ἰλαστήριον, *propitiation* in accordance with its usage in non-biblical Greek.³⁰

In addition to linguistic evidence and on the contextual grounds, the adherents of propitiation also use arguments that are based on the wider context in which ἰλαστήριον was used. For example, they maintain that there is an overarching theme of God’s wrath (Rm 1:18-2:5, 3:5) which inevitably calls for propitiation (cf. Stott 1995:114-115; Moo 1996:235; Cottrell 2000:261). Immediately they (cf. Moo 1996:235-236; Cottrell 2000:260-261) proceed to demonstrate the dissimilarity between propitiation in Christianity and in non-Christian circles, by the *need*, the *author and the nature* (Stott 1995:115). They argue that in Christianity propitiation does not reduce God to the level of pagan deities whose fickle wrath is placated and whose minds are changed by the propitiatory offering. They significantly note that it is God’s own initiative, in love, which provided the sacrifice that satisfied his wrath (Cottrell 2000:261). And so, according to them, any interpretation of ἰλαστήριον that eliminates propitiation from the purpose of the cross has missed its point and must be re-evaluated.

In short, the three possible translations of ἰλαστήριον that they note demonstrate the ambiguity of the term and the perplexity of the Pauline scholars to provide with a reasonable reading. Their argument that proves propitiation and wrath

³⁰ To refute the mercy-seat interpretation, on the one hand, Stott (1995:114) raises four arguments: Firstly, the absence of the definite article. Secondly, its strangeness since Romans, unlike Hebrews, is not in the sphere of Levitical imagery. Thirdly, it is a perplexing and inconsistent metaphor, for it would represent Jesus as being simultaneously the victim whose blood was shed and the place where the sprinkling took place. And fourthly, Paul would barely compare Christ with “an inanimate piece of temple furniture.” On the other hand, depending on Meyer (1983), Moo (1996:233) raises the following objections: First, the imagery would have been foreign to the Gentile Christian Church in Rome and Paul would scarcely have used incomprehensible descriptions to them. Second, in the Septuagint ἰλαστήριον was used for other things besides the mercy seat, like in secular Greek with reference to the memorials and placatory sacrifices. Third, its first occurrence in the Septuagint is adjectival (Ex 25:16) and so specifies the function of the cover over the ark; and thereafter it has an article when *the* “mercy-seat” is denoted. And fourth, the incompatibility of equating Jesus to the place of atonement/mercy seat.

Those who opt for “expiation” meaning do so on the grounds that the idea conveyed by ἰλαστήριον and its cognates is the “covering” or of forgiving of sins, not appeasement. “But Dodd is almost certainly wrong on this point. The OT frequently connects the “covering” or forgiving, of sin with the removal of God’s wrath. It is the precisely the basic connotation of “propitiate” that led the LXX translator to use the ἰλασκ- word for the Hebrew words denoting the covering of sins” (Moo 1996:235). Garnet (1974:161-162) particularly concludes that כַּסֵּפֶת relates particularly to the removal of the guilt of punishment due sin, and that it inevitably involves altering of God’s attitude toward sinners, and hence propitiation.

do not reduce God to the level of pagan deities is purely theological. They moreover use context differently. For them it is the vague background in which they find instances of the use of ἰλαστήριον. Then they actually “decontextualise” those instances by attempting to harmonise them and aligning with what they find in the Romans letter instead of taking the direct addressees of the letter into account where many of those instances will probably not be applicable. Accordingly, it necessitates an exploration of this text with alternative set of questions, rather than simply asking what ἰλαστήριον means. Since little attention has been paid to the text’s performativity, notions of a rhetorical situation will advance this alternative set of terminologies as I pursue a rhetorical exigency that invited the utterance and portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον.

Another full scale monograph on the epistle to the Romans that is relevant is Campbell’s (1992). Campbell has moved the discussion into the ambit of rhetoric itself. Whereas others are only interested in the “meaning” and they have de-contextualised in order to infuse here with meaning. Campbell at least has moved towards the diatribal, that is, he is moving towards the possibility of a shared rhetorical genre, which I will also later pay attention to.

On the argument that Quintilian is the “best” *source* for Pauline investigation, his rhetorical stylistic analysis shows that Romans 3:21-26 is set off from the surrounding context by a distinct style, “dialtribic style” (Campbell 1992:79-83). He regards Romans 3:21-26 as a diatribal passage that has complex sentences. It also contains extended periodic syntax with a succession of thoroughly molded clauses and phrases (Campbell 1992:81).³¹

In an attempt to accurately relate Romans to ancient rhetorical theory on style, Campbell (1992:87-95) overlooks the fact that such discrepancy needed a detailed explanation.³² He impinges upon the difficult question of the syntactical structure of vv22b-24a. When it comes to v25, he notes a lot of syntactical and lexical problems. He contends that διὰ (τῆ) πίστεω̃ ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι is a “troublesome phrase...which is awkward in that, it separates two phrases that seem to belong

³¹ Campbell (1992:78) states: “The best source for rhetorical theory at this time is Quintilian...the *Institutes of Oratory*.” One may ask what Campbell means when he makes Quintilian the best source. Most probably, he means that the diatribal style *also* used by Paul, was a style used by Quintilian and can therefore be seen as a kind of heuristic framework within which we can interpret Paul.

³² Without explanations, he only states: “Rom 3:21-26 seems to combine features from both these styles. It is not really necessary for our purposes here to state which precise style it belongs to” (Campbell 1992: 82).

together: ὃν προέθετο ὁ **θεοῖ** **ilasthriou**” (Campbell 1992:29-30; cf. :64). Additionally, the first phrase, προέθετο, is another lexical problem as well as αἷμα whose meanings are disputable (Campbell 1992:30-1).

Campbell (1992:29) observes two debatable interpretations: Is ἰλαστήριον a metaphor from Jewish culture?” Or “Does the metaphor ἰλαστήριον derive from Jewish culture? Or, is it a more general allusion to propitiatory sacrifices familiar to pagans? Then, he also notes that statistics, including Greek Church Fathers and reformation commentators and/or scholars, naturally favour the understanding of ἰλαστήριον as “mercy seat” (Campbell 1992:108-109, 130). After that, in sentence he notes that ἰλαστήριον’s generally Greek usage is propitiation (Campbell 1992:130). Nevertheless, he insists that Hellenistic Jews knew of pagan propitiatory rites and objects that could be called ἰλαστήρια, propitiations. On the grounds that the Jews had no other lawful propitiatory, except the *Kprt* (Campbell 1992:112), Campbell (1992:131-132) proceeds to discuss it in terms of “*Yom Kippur*.” He constructs a Levitical imagery that runs through Romans.³³ Conclusively, Campbell (1992:132, 133) writes:

A depiction of Christ’s death in 3:25a in terms of *Yom Kippur*, therefore, correlates nicely with the tendency of depicting him in terms of cultic function and imagery elsewhere in the letter...Paul’s use of ἰλαστήριον in Rom 3:25a is neither an explicit reference to the *Kprt*, nor a vague reference to propitiation in general, but a metaphorical description of Christ’s death as the supreme, divinely-ordained sacrifice for sin, in analogy to the great Jewish festival of atonement, *Yom Kippur*.

In brief, the following are observable: First, unlike with δικαιοσύνη, Campbell does not consider into details the intertextuality of ἰλαστήριον. He just depicts it as part of Levitical imagery without any explanations. Second, there is no explanation of how he gets to his conclusion, and the ground upon which he disputes the “propitiation” and “expiation.” Third, he recognises the main objections to his argument, on which he then comments nothing. Campbell (1992:133) evades it by contending that: “[T]he recipients of Romans include at least a significant proportion of Jewish Christians. Such allusions would have been quite comprehensible to this

³³ Campbell (1992:102-132) notes that Romans often uses specifically sacrificial and priestly motifs, along with broader cultic allusions. In particular, Christ is depicted in priestly and cultural terms: in Romans 5:2 he obtains προσαγωγήν (“access”) for the believer into God’s presence (Eph 2:18, 3:2; Heb 4:16; 1 Pt 3:18); his death is described as περὶ ἁμαρτίας (Rm 8:3), which the standard Septuagint renders as “sin-offering” (Lv 5:5-6, 11; 16:3, 5, 9; Nm 6:16; 7:10, 2 Chr 29:23-24; Neh 10:33; Ezk 42:13; 43:19). Christ further fulfils the priestly function of interceding for his people at the right hand of God (8:32) (Ps 110).

group.” Then one wonders what of non-Jewish Christians? Surely, in the light of the numerous references to the non-Jews in the letter to the Romans, a “significant proportion of Jewish Christians” does not validate their exclusion from the possibility to understand a rather complex and ambiguous metaphor? Campbell dodges the “main” objection (of non-Jewish audience), by focusing on the Jewish Christians. Should he not have also focused on non-Jewish and the socio-cultural view-points of those communities about sacrifices? Additionally, Campbell significantly indicates that the problem of sacrifice forms part of the configuration of aspects of this passage, of which he has not investigated further. This is partly because his approach, rhetorical stylistic analysis, did not require him to pay attention to the text’s functionality in details. For example, he maintains that Christ’s death can be regarded as a “divinely-ordained sacrifice for sin.” Is this the only accomplishments that sacrifices could achieve? Is this not a theological conclusion? And is the *stylistic* option not only a guise again for searching for “what did ἱλαστήριον mean” instead of what was this metaphor supposed to *do*? With a different set of questions and terminologies, one anticipates to use rhetorical criticism’s notion of rhetorical situation, so as to explore a rhetorical exigency that demanded such torturous sacrificial utterance.

Some scholars (Stowers 1994) regard ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25a as a neuter adjective, which yields to a translation like propitiatory “sacrifice” or “agent.” Building upon his earlier interpretations (1982; 1984), Stowers attempts to set Romans within its own cultural context (1994: vii). He primarily aims at reading Romans with the “ancient rhetorical technique of speech-in-character” (Stowers 1994:16). He considers this text’s context more in terms of *sacrifice* than as the *means* which God has provided for himself. To achieve his objective, Stowers stresses four perspectives (1994:16-17). On three grounds, refuting “mercy-seat,” Stowers (1994:210) avows: “I can see no reason why even Jewish readers steeped in the Septuagint would see a reference to the mercy seat in 3:25. The context does not fit. By referring to Jesus’ death through ‘blood,’ Paul underlines the violent nature of his death, the readers knowing that Jesus died by crucifixion.”³⁴

³⁴ Other scholars who regard ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25a as a neuter adjective are Bruce (1985); Murray (1991); Hodge (1994) and Hendriksen (1999).

Stowers (1994:210) has four tactics and strategies of rereading Romans. He attempts to, first, read it as it was read in different places and different periods. Second, read it in view of rhetorical conventions and generic conceptions accessible to Paul’s readers then. Third, discover cultural codes and interrelated texts reachable to Paul’s readers that aided its comprehension. And fourth, show how the audience and the author are textual strategies in Romans. He is totally persuaded that the way one is rhetorically familiar with them is the decisive contributing factor to its comprehension.

Stowers (1994:206-108) has vigorously opposed the view of Jesus' death as a sacrifice that ἱλαστήριον indicates.³⁵ He believes that such reading fits neither the Jewish institutions nor Paul's. Depending on earlier sources, Stowers (1994:210) sees no peculiar meaning of ἱλαστήριον other than the "usual." Stowers (1994:212) also notes a close parallel to the language of Jesus' death in Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees. To him both have no sacrificial connotations (cf. Stowers 1994:213). Moreover, sacrificial notions are not the structures that give concerns to Paul's enlightenment of Jesus' death. He insists that it is only in Romans 3:25 that Paul speaks of atonement (as "appeasement") that has nothing to do with sacrifice (Stowers 1994:212). Stowers (1994:212) decisively argues: "Even considering the objections, one might still argue that some readers from Paul's time might have seen a vague allusion to propitiatory sacrifice in 3:25. If we were to grant this possibility, it would signify only that Jesus' faithful death had averted God's anger toward the Gentiles."

Besides the fact that ἱλαστήριον as a neuter adjective is wanting,³⁶ Stowers, seemingly, is so much concerned with his *major burden* of proving that Romans is best read with the ancient rhetorical technique of "speech-in-character." It is expected of him to use his fourth tactic and strategy of integrating the audience and the author

The three grounds upon which Stowers refutes "mercy-seat" are: first, such analysis calls for Paul and his readers to have a kind of typological clarification of the Hebrew Scriptures based on the premise of Christianity superseding Judaism; of which Paul shows no signs of such supersessionism. Second, the mercy seat reading incorrectly imagines that the sprinkling of blood on the כִּפָּתִיָּה signified the atonement of personal and moral sin rather than purification. The sacrifices on the Day of Atonement permitted a complete purification of the temple, not an atonement or forgiveness of the people's sin (Lv 16:20). The כִּפָּתִיָּה, an item of cultic furniture that was missing in the second temple, was never regarded as a symbol of God dealing with sin. Third, its proponents cannot clarify how readers would have recognised a reference to the כִּפָּתִיָּה in Romans 3 (Stowers 1994:209-210).

³⁵ Stowers (1994:2:13) argument goes: "If the key to Paul's thought about Christ rests in the idea of his death as a sacrifice of vicarious atonement for sin, then why does the only plausibly arguable evidence for that conception depend on the meaning of one word in Paul's last extant letter? The sacrificial interpretation simply proves insufficient to do the interpretive work that exegetes want to do and therefore is not able to prove the most historically plausible reading of 3:21-26." But one is left wondering whether this is the only plausible evidence for taking the violent death of Jesus Christ as sacrifice!

³⁶ Its subscribers, firstly, argue that "propitiatory sacrifice" is the *etymology* of the word which stems from the word meaning "to appease." Hence, as an adjective, it designates to propitiation. Secondly, "propitiatory sacrifice" suggests the use of *analogous* terms referring to the sacrificial services (Hodge 1994:88). And thirdly, the whole *context* favours the propitiatory sacrifice since the apostle immediately speaks about the blood of this sacrifice (διὰ (τῆς) πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι). And since his purpose is to show how the free justification of a sinner can be reconciled with the justice of God; then "[t]he essential idea of such a sacrifice is that it satisfies justice. It terminates on God. Its primary intention is not to produce any subjective change in the offerer but to appease God. Such is the meaning of the word, from which we have no right to depart" (Hodge 1994:89).

First objection is that of non-existence of a clear endorsement from antiquity that Θῦμα was inappropriately used in this possibility. Second, there remains uncertainty in regards to the supplying of Θῦμα into out text (Fryer 1987:102). So, its key weakness is that it forces ἱλαστήριον to yearn for a substantive (like "death," "sacrifice"/ Θῦμα or "ἐπίθεμα") to modify (Robeck 1974:34). We then wonder what kept Paul from supplying the necessary substantive!

(Stowers 1994:210) in order to exemplify how audience and author are vital contributing factors when reading ἱλαστήριον. Moreover, one is left wondering why Stowers detaches ἱλαστήριον from sacrifice. However, Stowers points into a remarkable course that needs further explications: cultural context, sacrifices, violence involved in sacrificing, the audience that can be integrated into the process of interpreting ἱλαστήριον. What could be the accomplishments such sacrifices enacted in the antiquity, particularly in relation to the non-Jews whom he mentions? As such, the intention is to put forward a different set of questions to this text using the notion of rhetorical situation, as a probe into the problem at hand. If audience and author are decisive factors in determining the reading of a text, then by asking how ἱλαστήριον possibly could have performed among non-Judean audience of in the antiquity will give me alternative possibilities of interpretation.

Another publication that has to be paid attention to owing to its rhetorical point of departure is *Paul's Letter to the Romans: a Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* by Witherington (2004). Witherington (2004:101) is premised that the phrase “but now” refer definitely to an era of salvation. An era where God’s righteousness is made clear to “all who have the saving faith.” In agreement with Stevenson (2008:89-90),³⁷ Witherington (2004:108) argues that God is the offer and receiver of ἱλαστήριον and its “normal” connotation in the Greek literature is “propitiation of wrath.”³⁸

Concerning ἱλαστήριον, Witherington (2004:109 [43n]) states: “[T]he sense ‘mercy seat’ for *hilasteῖon* is of course technically possible (see Lev. 16.2), but Paul is not just conjuring up OT imagery; he is discussing the atoning sacrifice of Jesus and

³⁷ According to Stevenson (2008:89-90), although it can describe mercy seat, ἱλαστήριον in Romans refers to propitiation- the offering of a sacrifice that appeases the wrath of an angry God. He writes: “In the ancient world, when one thought that he had committed some offence against one of the duties, he would go and offer a sacrifice of appeasement.” This raises questions: Was this the only performativity of the sacrifice in the ancient world? Was “appeasement” the only enactment that ἱλαστήριον attained? What were the other functionalities of sacrifices, especially when a human being was brutally ‘sacrificed’? Which other accomplishments did the metaphorisation of Jesus’ death sanction and achieve? Is there a possibility that sacrificing Jesus was meant to draw the non-Jews near to God, as sacrifices did in the antiquity? If Jesus’ death is taken as the “mode of initiation” (Weiler 2007:49-51), could it have inaugurated the membership of non-Jews with full rights into Jewish community? Did it integrate those regarded as ‘outsiders’ to be “insiders?” Most properly, as the flow of the blood, during their circumcision, welcomed the Jews into that lineage, so now the flow of Jesus’ sacrificial blood having been presented as **ilasthriion** denotes and signifies the admission of the non-Jews into that very covenantal heritage. It terminated another ritual.

³⁸ Witherington (2004:108) write: “Propitiation of wrath is the normal meaning in the Greek literature. In view of Paul’s Roman audience it may be helpful to compare a Greek inscription found at Cos which reads: the people, for the Emperor Caesar, son of God, Augustus, for salvation to the gods [offer this] propitiatory sacrifice (*hilasteῖon*). The words refer, then, not merely to cleansing of effects of sin (i.e. guilt) but to the propitiation of the wrath of a deity.” Additionally, he asserts: “Actually, however, God’s is not only the offerer but also the recipient of the sacrifices, for it is his own wrath which is averted” (Witherington 2004:108).

explaining what it accomplishes.” What accomplishment did such a sacrifice have? Touching on accomplishments, Witherington (2004:110) writes: “Christ’s death both vindicates and displays God’s righteous judgment on sin and demonstrates God’s desire to set right sinful humankind.” Is this not theological? Seemingly, his intent is theological. The metaphor of sacrifice is inserted into a theological argument, while the effect of a “violent human death,” a God sacrificing his son, the violence behind the notion of the sacrificial and that relationship to the Roman audience is completely left out of consideration. How then can he call this a *socio*-rhetorical interpretation? How can we call it a *socio*-rhetorical analysis when the values of the Roman audience so steeped in violence are not evoked as framework for the interpretation of ἰλαστήριον? Where are accomplishments of Jesus’ death “in view of Paul’s Roman audience?” One could expect Witherington to interpret this passage in the light of social life of the Jews and the non-Jews. Why could he not amalgamate the Roman audience while interpreting ἰλαστήριον? His assertion, however, opens a window to explore Romans 3:25-26 in the context of sacrifices and their functionalities in the antiquity.³⁹

1.3.5 Recent Studies on δικαιοσύνη and πίστις

Before drawing some conclusions, the attention is now paid to other parts of the text, especially δικαιοσύνη and πίστις. In regards to the former, the “bafflement” is between taking δικαιοσύνη to designate God’s *character of justice (justitia distributiva)*, or God’s *saving covenant faithfulness* (fulfilment of His salvific promises). On the one hand, “mercy-seat” subscribers (Bell 2002; Bailey 2000:157; Jewett 2007:97), “expiation” assenter (Ziesler 1997), as well as the supporter of “sacrifice of atonement” (Campbell 1992:138-176) understands δικαιοσύνη in Romans (3:25-26) to be referring to God’s saving faithfulness, same sense as in 1:17 and 3:21. On the other hand, “expiation” endorser (Craig 2001:1092) and

³⁹ His conclusions are theological in nature rather than “social”: “The crucifixion of Jesus publicly displays God’s purpose for humanity” (Witherington 2004:108). Further he contends: “Probably we should translate the word (ἰλαστήριον) here as “means of propitiation” since it refers to Christ’s blood. This is strange language indeed unless Paul believed Christ was some sort of atoning and appeasing sacrifice” (Witherington 2004:109; cf. Wright 2002). Hence, Jesus’ death on the cross, Paul seeming thinks, was God’s only way of remaining both holy and loving (cf. Witherington 2004:113). Even accomplishments and benefits of ἰλαστήριον are theological: “Christ’s death is a sufficient atonement for the sins of all human beings but it is effective only for those who appropriate its benefits through faith, as v22 makes evident” (Witherington 2004:108).

“propitiation” supporters (Moo 1996; Stott 1995 & Cottrell 2000) opt for the *justitia distributiva* view of δικαιοσύνη.⁴⁰

As far as the meaning of πίστις is concerned, the perplexity is between objective genitive (*faith in Christ*) and subjective genitive (*the faith of Jesus*). To put it differently, is Jesus here the *object* or the *subject* of faith? On the one hand, the “mercy-seat” supporters (Bell 2002; Bailey 2000:157; Jewett 2007:98), “expiation” endorsers (Craig 2001 and Ziesler 1997), as well as “propitiation” endorsers (Moo 1996; Stott 1995 and Cottrell 2000) argue for objective genitive.⁴¹ This understanding poses a question: is it biblical that a *sinner’s faith* is the means by which *God* presented Christ as ἱλαστήριον? Ultimately, if so, God’s sovereignty which is his absolute arbitrariness is called into question (cf. Cottrell 2000:260). On the other hand, “expiation” subscriber (Johnson 1997), “sacrifice of atonement” supporter (Campbell

⁴⁰ For example, concerning δικαιοσύνη, Bell asserts that: “...when Paul speaks of establishing of God’s righteousness (εἶ ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ) he is referring to God’s salvation, not his justice...” (Bell 2002:21-22).

Ziesler (1997:115) declares: “God’s righteousness has here its usual Pauline saving connotations, and so does not mean his strict justice of the “eye for an eye” sort, but his action to restore and maintain the divine-human relationship.”

Campbell (1992:138-176) analyses δικαιοσύνη in salvific terms against a Jewish back-group, a cultural background (:147). Campbell (1992:165) affirms: “In sum, Paul seems to be using δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in what was probably a standard Jewish sense to denote the salvation of God...fundamentally, however, the phrase denotes God’s powerful will to save- a purpose that fulfils his promises to Israel and is therefore characterizable as righteous.”

Other scholars (Godet 1989:154; Stott 1995:115-116; Moo 1996:238-240 & Cottrell 2000:262-263) who argue for “propitiation” interpret δικαιοσύνη in terms of *justitia distributiva* on two basic grounds: first, that δικαιοσύνη αὐτοῦ is so dependent on the meaning of other key words in the very clause. And second, it is God’s character that is called into question because of his endurance and suspension of the real punishment of sins. By justifying the wicked (Rm 4:5) God did what He habitually forbade others, thus surprisingly it was “unscriptural” (cf. Dt 25:1; Pr 17:15; Ex 23:7-9; Pr 17:15; Is 5:23). As a result, it is on basis of Christ’s *cross* alone that God is justified to justly justify the unjust (Stott 1995: 12f; Cottrell 2000:265). Meaning that, God has redeemed (sinners), propitiated (his wrath) and demonstrated his justice (Stott 1995:115-116). Thus, they see no salvific promises in the immediate context.

Yet, others seemingly are silent about δικαιοσύνη (Stowers 1994; Morgan 1995 and Johnson 1997) and about πίστις (Morgan 1995).

⁴¹ In support of objective genitive of πίστις, Bell (2002:20-22) takes ἱλαστήριον with διὰ πίστεως: to argue that the mercy seat is accessible and perceptible through faith in Christ. Thus, ἱλαστήριον is perceived only by faith, and only through faith it turn out to be a “salvation event.” Ziesler (1997:115) and Craig (2001:1092) contend that it is human response of faith that is being referred to here, as RSV rightly implies. “It is essential to note that the faith of which Paul speaks in vv 26-31 (and in Romans generally) is specifically “*faith in Christ*”....In other words, it is *one’s response* to Jesus that ultimately is at issue” [italics supplied] (Craig 2001:1092). As a consequence of holding that Jesus’ death is the foundation of our forgiveness (Cottrell 2000:261-262; Moo 1996:241), they argue for objective genitive: “No, grace is non-contributory, and faith is the opposite of self-regarding. The value of faith is not to be found in itself, *but entirely and exclusively in its object, namely Jesus Christ and Him crucified*...Faith is the eye that looks to him, the hand that receives his free gift, the mouth that drinks the living water” (italics supplied) Stott (1995:117).

1992), as well as “propitiatory sacrifice” sponsor (Stowers 1994) interpret πίστις here in terms of subjective genitive.⁴²

In summation, from completely different angles using dissimilar approaches, although scholars’ understanding of what ἰλαστήριον means differ, they actually agree on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη and πίστις. For example, Bell (2002); Bailey (2000) and Jewett (2007:97) who subscribe to “mercy-seat” and are opposed to Ziesler’s (1997) “expiation” do agree on δικαιοσύνη as a reference to God’s salvific faithfulness, against the *justitia distributiva* view of δικαιοσύνη that “propitiation” supporters (Moo 1996; Stott 1995 and Cottrell 2000) have advocated for. Yet, in regards to the meaning of πίστις, these very scholars do opt for objective genitive. Moreover, there are those who agree on the meaning of ἰλαστήριον but actually disagree on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη and/or πίστις. For example, whereas Johnson (1997), Ziesler (1997) and Craig (2001) are proponents of “expiation,” Ziesler regards δικαιοσύνη here to be referring to God’s saving faithfulness while Craig understands it as *justitia distributiva*. Yet, these very two scholars argue for objective genitive of πίστις, against Johnson’s (1997) view of subjective genitive.

As a result I am left asking: how was δικαιοσύνη or justice in antiquity linked with violent sacrifice? Were there any connection between sacrifice, aggression, πίστις, δικαιοσύνη and the righteous man who was under compulsion to exert righteousness? If these observations are legitimate, then there is a justified course for a fresh search of the text’s performativity in details. That is to say that, I suggest propounding different set of questions to Romans 3:25-26 using rhetorical criticism’s notion of rhetorical situation, as I look into my problem.

⁴² For example, Johnson, a Roman Catholic (1997: xi), works with an ideology that “faith of Christ” was the key to Paul’s argument in Romans. According to him, the phrase διὰ πίστεως is more *unlikely* if translated *objectively*. Thus, its translation in RSV (“*him who has faith in Jesus*”) “represents a *desperate guess*”. Accordingly, its normal rendering could be “*the one who shares the faith of Jesus*” (Johnson 1997:59-60). Such a reading situates faith of Jesus integral to God’s gift to humanity and also to Paul’s theological argument (Johnson 1997:60; Keck 1989:443-460). Campbell (1992) proposes to put down the traditional view in favour of the subjective genitive. As he himself notes, however, “the subjective rendering of πίστις and its genitive constructions does not eliminate all the syntactical problems in passage. Several difficulties still remain that obstruct a clear understanding of the text...” (Campbell 1992:68-69, 138-176).

Romans 3 :25f, according to Stowers (1994:224), does not deal with Christians’ subjectivity of faith, but rather how God has accomplished his justice through Jesus’ faithfulness even unto death. Consistent with to Paul’s context and cultural codes, a sinner obtains salvation by sharing in Jesus’ own faithfulness. On the foundation of Christ’s faithfulness alone, God has upheld His merciful justice, undeserved leniency toward the idolatrous Gentiles, and thus He has placated his anger toward them (Stowers 1994:224, 225). Moreover, Stowers (1989:667) elsewhere has conclusively shown that πίστεως Ἰησοῦ in 3:22, 25 and 26 means Jesus’ faith/fullness, not faith in Christ.

1.3.6 Conclusions on Recent Studies on ἰλαστήριον

In conclusion, the general meaning of ἰλαστήριον is clear enough, but its particular use in Romans 3:25 is variously understood with uncertainty. In other words, what Paul means by designating Jesus as ἰλαστήριον is indeed a subject of great debate (Moo 1996:231), yet without unanimity as to its meaning (Cottrell 2000:260). This has caused much perplexity and prompting several scholars to resort to different translations and interpretations. It is far from clear what some of the keywords *mean*, and yet less clear what the total *meaning* of this passage comes to. I have pointed out that Romans' ἰλαστήριον is a *crux interpretum* for Pauline scholars and that it has plunged them for decades into inconclusive arguments as documented in the foregoing commentaries, monographs as well as in the journal articles. The following conclusions confirm this claim.

Firstly, there are interpretational problems surrounding ἰλαστήριον. As a result, there are divergent interpretations of ἰλαστήριον, as well as that of δικαιοσύνη and πίστις. The debate focuses most sharply on whether ἰλαστήριον refers to “mercy seat,” “expiation” (*sinner-ward*) or “propitiation” (*God-ward*), and the justifications thereof (Jewett 2007:93). Additionally, I have also argued that there are those who agree on the meaning of ἰλαστήριον but actually disagree on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη and/or πίστις. I have argued that there are some overlaps between these three main interpretations, due to the notion of sacrifice that is often attached to ἰλαστήριον. The three possible translations of ἰλαστήριον demonstrate the ambiguity of the term and the perplexity of New Testament scholars to provide with a plausible interpretation. Given this, it necessitates an approach which has an alternative set of questions and terminologies.

Secondly, the forgoing scholars also interpret Romans 3:25-26 in anticipation of coherency and non-ambiguity. In particular, they treat ἰλαστήριον in a way that it must have a direct relationship to the Old Testament or another authoritative text elsewhere. Meaning that, according to them, there must have been an origin from which Paul must have operated. It is in this context that texts from other spheres are wrested from their own contexts and are used in connection with ἰλαστήριον. Thus, in the attempt to avoid ambiguity, the theological presuppositions play a big role while interpreting this passage. However, I have argued that ἰλαστήριον is a metaphor, infused with ambiguity.

Thirdly, within methodological constraints, interpreters of this text are more interested in “*what*” ἱλαστήριον means than in the “*why*” question. To put it differently, operating from a hermeneutics which posited meaning *in* the text, asking the question “*what*” and searching for meaning in a text-developmental sense, scholars have not brought the clarity that is expected. As a result, it is noted that their works mostly concentrate on the problematic words or phrases of the text (Campbell 1992:29-31). Possibly their approaches never required them to pay attention to the rhetorical situation that invited the utterance and the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον. Consequently, this necessitates the *why* question, rather than simply what ἱλαστήριον means. Whereas their search for the meaning of ἱλαστήριον is in the word and/or in the relationships between words and sentences, alternatively the intention is to look for its meaning as it emerges from its interaction in the rhetorical situation. So, the objective is the functionality of ἱλαστήριον in the antiquity. If divergent interpretations here are the products of a diversity of paradigms then it requires that different questions be asked concerning this passage. As such, I maintain that alternative possibilities may arise when one asks: How ἱλαστήριον possibly could have performed then? As a result, at the heart of this research project is the *why* question.

Fourthly, Stowers (1994), Morgan (1995), Johnson (1997), Hultgren (2011) in addition to Witherington's (2004) *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, Tobin's (2004) book on *Paul's Rhetoric* and Jewett (2007) have pointed into significant directions that need further study: sacrifices particularly of human beings, violence involved in sacrificing, Paul's Roman Christian audience, politics between the Jews and the non-Jews, and integration of the audience into the process of interpreting ἱλαστήριον. Yet, remarkably none of these authors has dealt with the torturous sacrificial nature of the first century or the performativity of sacrificial rituals into details. For example, Wells (2003:70) not only connects Romans 3:25 to sacrifices but also assigns readers homework of stressing the origin of sacrifices. Moreover, Klaus (2003:133) argues that Paul was familiar with “others modes of sacrifice.” Should he not have explained these modes and possibly their performativity? Nevertheless, alongside with those others, Klaus brings out elements that need further attention: sacrifices and Roman audience.⁴³

⁴³ Klaus (2003:133) writes: “The alternative interpretation is that *hilasteĩon* in Rom. 3:25 is an allusion to the *kapporet* or ‘mercy seat’ of Lev. 16 and, hence, to the feast of the atonement- suffers

Therefore, the reasons for the preceding arguments are that partly interpreters' approaches did not require them to pay attention to a text's performativity. It is explicitly noted that their theological point of departures and framework obscured the violence that constitutes a term such as ἱλαστήριον, it obscured the manner in which first century Roman, and the early Christian audience of Rome, were steeped into a culture of violence, so embodied their violent culture that this type of metaphor would not have been found abhorrent or shocking. Since a theological interpretation excluding consideration of the performativity principle, obscures the violence lying behind this passage, obscures how violence is associated with God's righteousness, it simultaneously also protects contemporary biblical critics, from making the link between God's righteousness and violence a specific task of exegesis. This applies from critics using semantics to critics using rhetorics as analytical discourses within theological paradigms. The strange paradox emerges, that a theological point of departure, excluding a rhetoric taking performativity into account, prevents exactly what a contemporary theological interpretation should pose as problem, namely the association of God and violence.

Since little attention has been paid to the passage's rhetoricity that takes performativity into account, then the Rhetorical Criticism's notion of a rhetorical situation will advance the alternative set of terminologies as a possibility for a more plausible interpretation. It will facilitate me in bringing about an alternative interpretation. Putting it differently, a Socio-Rhetorical Criticism not constrained by theological control will move me into the social values, customs and norms of the audience for whom this passage was written and that this move allows the sacrificial connotations of ἱλαστήριον to emerge. The focus then could be: how does one account for the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον in a society that had institutionalised violence? What could be the enactments of ἱλαστήριον in the context of sacrificial brutality of the antiquity? Which accomplishments did the metaphorisation of Jesus' death achieve? Why was Jesus (not an animal or any person) interpreted as a sacrifice? What were the functionalities of sacrifices, especially when a human being was "sacrificed," in the wider Graco-Roman world? In the politics of relations between the Jews and the non-Jews, did the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον sanction anything? What could be the functionality of ἱλαστήριον in the politics of inclusiveness of the

from the weakness that it is doubtful whether readers of Romans had sufficient inside knowledge about rituals from *first* temple times to be able to understand this allusion."

non-Jews among Abrahamic family? What values did ἰλαστήριον have within ethnicity and status of the non-Jews in sight of the Jews? Which elements did Paul extrapolate which were common to his audience to signify ἰλαστήριον? Could elaborations of sacrificial rituals, particularly of a human sacrifice, help one to socio-rhetorically understand the performativity of ἰλαστήριον? In brief, these observations energise this dissertation. There is clearly sufficient room for a new study which approaches the text socio-rhetorically.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

The statement of the problem is: “*Why* did Paul describe Jesus as ἰλαστήριον?” Or which rhetorical situation invited the utterance and the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον? Various Pauline interpreters have exposed the text (ἰλαστήριον in particular) to analytical scrutiny.⁴⁴ The argument is that the difficulty concerning the text’s interpretation often arises in connection with ἰλαστήριον. These interpretations, with the objective to contribute to the meaning of a lexeme such as ἰλαστήριον, usually operate from two main assumptions: Firstly, that the meaning of the text *resides* in a *word*, ἰλαστήριον; and secondly, that ἰλαστήριον possesses some kind of *core* meaning/s, even without pondering its *aptum* within a specific rhetorical situation. It is in this context that this problem has plunged Pauline scholarship into divergent inconclusive arguments. Partly because their approaches did not require them to pay attention to the “*why*” question, their main issue is *what* Paul meant by Jesus being ἰλαστήριον, as argued above.

In my view both the search for the “meaning in a word” and the premise of a “core” meaning restricted inquiries to the text and the surface level of the text, whereas the question “why” allows for an exploration of those underlying values that constituted the text. Consequently then, an interpretation within the context of the rhetorical situation could help a long way on responding to the question of “*why*” Paul used this term here. That is to say, the proposal is to pose a different set of questions to Romans 3:25-26 using another approach as I investigate my problem. I am premised

⁴⁴ See Campbell 1992:108-133; Stowers 1994:206-213; Stott 1995:113-118; Morgan 1995:90-93; Moores 1995:60; Moo 1996:230-243; Johnson 1997:56-62; Ziesler 1997:112-116; Hendriksen 1999:131-134; Cottrell 2000:260-265; Bailey 2000:155-158; Craig 2001:1092; Bell 2002:1-27; Fee & Stuart 2002:231; Dunn 2003:212; Russell 2003:533; Wells 2003:70; Klaus 2003:133; Witherington 2004:108; Tobin 2004:134-135; Raymond 2006:391; Stevenson 2008:89-90; and Hultgren 2011:150, 157.

that alternative possibilities may arise when I ask how ἱλαστήριον possibly could have performed in the context of politics of relations between the Jews and the non-Jews of the antiquity. Since the objective is the text's performativity, then I propose to search for the "meaning" of ἱλαστήριον as it emerges from its interaction in the rhetorical situation. Putting it differently, the primary query as one investigates what it means is "what situation invited the utterance" (Anderson 1998:28) that eventually resulted into the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον? Thus, this research will have the *why* as its focus and will seek to give it clarification. Additionally, this issue is more complicated by the fact that its usage in Romans is limited, unusual and enigmatic. It also lacks significant parallel in the New Testament since it does not have an article (Morgan 1995:90; Bruce 1997:179).⁴⁵

Reconstructing rhetorical situation of sacrificial practices in the antiquity, thus, serves as a starting point in understanding the whole exegetical difficulty of the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25-26. Additionally, the problem at hand could be dealt with more appropriately in terms of its wider sacrificial context of violence; that is, the wider context of antiquity in its socio-rhetorical context of which the sacrificial value-systems constitute a part. In other words, this study arose out of dissatisfaction with the widely accepted meanings of ἱλαστήριον in contemporary Pauline scholarship, which in the process of interpretation exhibits a lack of constructing a significant rhetorical situation.

This dissertation intends to read the text within the wider framework of Rhetorical Criticism. Both Robbins' (1996a, 1996b) socio-rhetorical criticism and Schüssler-Fiorenza's (1999) rhetorical model of analysis of a rhetorical situation will spearhead this rhetorical critical enquiry. The premise is that a socio-rhetorical interpretation can help in bringing alternative interpretation on to the table, along with a better clarification, as far as the use of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3 is concerned.

Therefore, putting it in a question form, the statement of the problem may be restated as: socio-rhetorically *why* did Paul describe Jesus as ἱλαστήριον? That is, what was the "rhetorical situation" (rhetorical exigency) to which the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον (Rm 3:25-26) can be construed as a fitting response?

⁴⁵ In the New Testament ἱλαστήριον occurs twice (Rm 3:25; Heb 9:5; Williams 1999:247; Russell 2003:533).

1.5 Development of the Study

The topic- “A *Socio-Rhetorical Appraisal of Jesus as Sacrifice, with Specific Reference to ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25-26*”- is built up in the following five chapters.

In this chapter I have now indicated that the current interpretations of ἱλαστήριον within the passage Romans 3:25-27 can indeed be seen as problematic owing to theological constraints. I have formulated the statement of the problem. I have also touched on what I regard as a more appropriate critical framework of interpretation, namely a socio-rhetorical approach in which the principle of performativity is taken seriously. I have argued that a rhetorical approach as such, does not necessarily avoid the pitfalls of theological constraint, which implies a methodological modification that necessitates the prominence of how ancient social values have constituted the audience. Lastly it contains an outline of this study.

Since I have argued that the predominance of a theological interpretative framework yielded methodological constraints, whether that be from semantics or rhetorics, restricting to the meaning of ἱλαστήριον, more attention than usual should be paid to the methodological. For that reason, both chapters two and three are concerned with theoretical and methodological concerns. Whereas chapter two provides with the broader framework, selectively using insights from traditional rhetorical criticism, Robbins and Schüssler-Fiorenza, chapter three serves to locate Romans 1-4 within the categories of the classical *dispositio*. It is within this chapter that the *apostrophic* nature of Romans 1-4 will also be dealt with as part of the *probatio*. Against this background then, Robbins’ proposal of social and cultural phenomena as part of the tapestry of the text will again be reconsidered. In order to explain *why* Paul describes Jesus as ἱλαστήριον, the purpose for which such a portrayal was necessary and the effect such utterance was expected to have, it is at this point that an examination of the profitability and applicability of Robbins’ third step of social and cultural phenomena is explored.

Since I have posed as problem how theological constraints resist socio-cultural considerations at work in the rhetoric deployed in the Romans letter, in particular with reference to ἱλαστήριον, chapter four deals with the practices of sacrifice and the underlying culture of violence which rendered it acceptable practice. For that reason, this chapter concerns four aspects: the theoretical observations of sacrifices in antiquity which provides a framework for understanding the sacrificial rituals of the

Judean and of the Graeco-Roman societies; the sacrificial violence in the antiquity with the aim of establishing the context of brutality within which Paul referred to Jesus as ἱλαστήριον; the performativity of sacrificial rituals in the antiquity which will form the immediate background of the portrayal of Jesus as sacrifice and its performativity; and the sacrifices in early Christianity and Pauline with the purpose of knowing different sacrificial metaphors used by the ancients to explain the sacrificial notion. This will culminate in a consideration of Romans 3:25-27 in an attempt to determine what element Paul extrapolated to differently signify ἱλαστήριον and the function Jesus' death had.

In chapter five the findings of the enquiry will be recapitulated. Without going into any detail, I will briefly refer to the effects of a critical socio-rhetorical for contemporary “theological” interpretations.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 Introduction

In the pursuit of the statement of the problem, the intention is to read Romans 3:25-26 from a rhetorical perspective. In this chapter, attention is paid to theoretical issues, specifically pertaining to the models that Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, Schüssler Fiorenza (1999) and Robbins (1996a, 1996b) have proposed.⁴⁶ This sets the theoretical scene for their more specific appropriation in subsequent chapters, meaning that, these approaches provide key terminologies that spearhead rhetorical critical enquiry into a “rhetorical situation” that invited the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. From Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, I will utilise the rhetorical unit in outlining Paul’s *dispositio*, *apostrophe* and the notion of *rhetorical situation*, which is not synonymous with *Sitz im Leben*. This will not only help me to pursue the text’s persuasiveness and performativity, but also the *aptum* that takes into account the rhetorical situation and the value-system constituting that rhetorical situation. In particular, I argue that Robbins’ texture of social and cultural aspects and Schüssler Fiorenza’s “mimetic axis of representation” can significantly disclose ἰλαστήριον’s performativity.

By integrating these three-pronged rhetorical models, I will design a “terministic screen”⁴⁷ that allows one to ask particular questions in relation to the problematisation posed in chapter one: “Why did Paul describe Jesus as ἰλαστήριον?” This “terministic screen” enables one to pose definite questions to the text, such as, what could be the

⁴⁶ I am aware of Robbins’ new publication. I have taken note of it. I did not integrate material from this publication, because I commenced my analysis in 2006, way before its publication. And since my methodology already consists of a three-pronged rhetorical approach, this would have made the analysis too complex at this stage.

⁴⁷ I will use this term coined by Burke (1966:44-62), although I do not use it in the same manner. Pertaining to the notion of “terministic screen,” Burke (1966:45) has a famous statement: “Even if any given terminology is a *reflection* of reality, but its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a *deflection* of reality.” Therefore, even if a terminology claims or aspires to reflect reality, it does not and cannot, because it constrains and restricts to what the terminology can disclose or point to. As such any terminology, ἰλαστήριον inclusive, any terministic screen simultaneously obscures as it at the same time demarcates and defines reality. As a result, he wrote: “Many of the ‘observations’ are but implications of the particular terminology in terms of which the observations are made” (:46). This means we only perceive what a particular terminology allows us to see. In the previous chapter, I have already indicated that a theological terminology compelled particular questions that configure around the notions of “mercy seat,” “propitiation,” and/or “expiation.” My argument is that when socio-rhetoric is taken into account, the terminology I would deploy would allow alternative set of questions to be asked concerning ἰλαστήριον, which would in turn allow alternative views to emerge.

enactments of ἱλαστήριον in the context of sacrificial brutality of the antiquity, especially in the context of politics of relations between the Jews and the non-Jews? How does one account for the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον in a society that had institutionalised violence? Why was Jesus, and not an animal, interpreted as a sacrifice? What were the functionalities of sacrifices, especially when a human being was “sacrificed,” in the wider Graeco-Roman world? Alternative possibilities may arise when this “terministic screen” allows such questions to be asked.⁴⁸

Rhetorical criticism, interested in why a text could have been persuasive, and therefore attempting to explain the persuasive strategies constituted by the values of the socio-cultural world they derive from, requires that the sacrificial dimension portrayed by Romans 3:25, in particular as displayed by the use of ἱλαστήριον, be shifted into focus. This is why I require a “terministic screen,” designed by an integration of the three-pronged rhetorical models, which allows me to explain the persuasive strategies and permits a socio-rhetorical explanation as to *why* Paul describes Jesus as ἱλαστήριον. Ultimately, in a preliminary way, I will rhetorically consider the performativity of sacrificial rituals in the antiquity and the portrayal of Jesus as sacrifice in the context of brutality and the performativity that ἱλαστήριον in Romans evoked.

2.2 Traditional Rhetorical Criticism

The focus here is Traditional Rhetorical Criticism as practiced by New Testament critics, particularly Kennedy (1984; 1997). Then afterwards I will proceed to Robbins’ and Schüssler Fiorenza’s rhetorical models that go beyond the Traditional Rhetorical Criticism itself. The key word in all the three-pronged approaches is “rhetoric,” which serves as a starting point.

It is not easy to define “rhetoric” (Black 1995:259; Wendland 2002:169). Porter and Olbricht (1993:21) emphatically state: “Rhetoric is not a single thing and neither can it be defined simply.”⁴⁹ Besides the problematics concerning the definition of rhetoric,

⁴⁸ It has been pointed that “terministic screen” is representative function of symbols and language (Burke 1966:45-46). The three terms of *reflection*, *selection* and *deflection* of reality captures the basic points about the function of language (Burke 1966:45). The implication is that language reflects, selects and deflects as a way of determining the symbol systems that permits coping with any world (Stob 2008:139-140). Putting it differently, terministic screens “emphasize the way that terms push us into various channels and fields, which continually shape and reshape our vision and expression. Terministic screens are thus always *screening*-progressively unfolding, moving, and interesting. They are active, dynamic, and progressive, a result of their movement in experience” (Stob 2008:146; cf. Burke 1966:50).

⁴⁹ In this study, I will not provide a solution to the definitional problems of rhetoric or rhetorical criticism, because my problem is not how rhetoric should be defined. Moreover, several scholars have already struggled with that definitional problem without conclusive solution. Illustratively, accordingly to

rhetorical criticism has divergent classifications and various rhetoricians have followed different approaches.⁵⁰ Despite all the differences of opinion, there is a considerable agreement among rhetoricians that rhetoric refers to “persuasion.” It is an “art of persuasion” or a “persuasive speech.”⁵¹

Persuasion concerns with the dynamic interaction between author (*orator*), text (*address*), and reader (*audience*) within a specific rhetorical situation (cf. Bitzer, 1968:1-

Porter and Olbricht (1993:21-23), for some rhetorical critics, “rhetoric” means the categories used by the ancients. For others, it means rhetorical categories developed in subsequent times and places. Still others, according to Foss, Foss and Trapp (1985:1), view it as “empty words,” Yet to others (Bray 1996:486) it is simply a style/form of oral speech or/and written text. Based on the latter, Mack (1990:16) contends: “rhetoric refers to the rules of the language games agreed upon as acceptable within a given society.” While Robbins (1996a:1) maintains that the term “‘rhetorical’ refers to the way language in a text is a means of communication among people.” The wide scope of rhetoric can, additionally, be seen in Wardy’s attempt to respond to the question “what rhetoric is.” Here is Wardy’s (1996:1) answer, as quoted by Vorster (2009:508 n7):

Rhetoric...is the capacity to persuade others; or a practical realisation of this ability; or at least, an attempt at persuasion, successful or not. Furthermore, this capacity might to one degree or another, be either *natural* or *acquired*. Again, rhetorical exercises *might* or *might not* be confined to language; if visual or architectural ‘rhetoric’ is a metaphorical extension of ‘rhetoric,’ what does this metaphor preserve, and what does it discard, of the core meaning, ‘rhetorical language’...finally, rhetoric is for some a *distinctive mode of communication*, whether admirable or deplorable; for others, as soon as *one person addresses another*, rhetoric is present [Vorster’s italics].

⁵⁰ There are different classifications of rhetoric, such as classical or traditional, or Graeco-Roman, and that these can again be distinguished from modern or new, and that one can even speak of implicit or explicit. There is primary and secondary (often called decorative) rhetoric (Kennedy 1980:4-5; Combrink 1996:104-105). The former is concerned with orality, primarily an act of persuasion, and used in civic life, while the latter is concerned with literacy. In view of other scholars, Aristotle’s classifications of ancient rhetoric are threefold, each with different basic objective: forensic (intended to defend or criticise some past action), deliberative (designed to urge, persuade or discussed the audience about some possible future action), and epideictic (intended to praise or blame, offer a present or ongoing action or quality or as a reflection on past action) (cf. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1971:21; Kennedy 1984:36; Jewett 1986:383; Snyman 1988:219; Malina & Neyrey 1996:64; Anderson 1998:97; Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:112; Gorman 2004:84).

Rhetorical criticism has divergent classifications. For example, Kennedy’s mode of rhetorical criticism is quite simple, but it has proved challenging to outline (Kennedy 1984:33-38). Subsequent scholars (Stamps 1997:224-225; Anderson 1998:28; Richardson 2006:110) have sought to summarise it in five steps, but the divisions seems to differ with each attempt. Contrast this with Black II (1984:254-255), Wuellner (1987:455-458), Snyman (1988:218), and Watson (1992:699).

⁵¹ In agreement, several scholars (Kennedy 1984:13; Stamps 1995:129; Combrink 1996:104-105; Malina 1996a:82; Lemmer 1996:166; Kennedy 1997:3; Court 1997:76; Viviers 1997:138; Vickers 1998:12f; Amador 1999a:14-15; Sally 2000:1010; Porters & Stamps 2002; Wendland 2002:170; Jost & Olmsted 2004; Gorman 2004:83; Mitchell 2006:615; Vorster 2009:508) have conclusively attached persuasion, power and authority to ῥητορικη. In particular, Kennedy (1972:3) states: “Rhetoric, defined in the strictest sense, *is the art of persuasion*....That basic meaning may be extended, however, to include the art of all who aim at some kind of attitude change on the part of their audience or reader...” (italics supplied). In almost same wording, Lemmer (1996:166) defines rhetoric as: “The effective use of language or the citing of reasons to persuade or to influence, to move hearers or readers from one set of convictions or persuasions to another.” On the same grounds, according to Kennedy (1997:7), if a name were to be given for “rhetoric before rhetoric” the best would probably have been *πειθώ*, that is, *persuasion*. Wendland (2002:170) too holds that rhetoric in simple terms is the “*art and technique*” of persuasiveness. In a similar phrasing, Gorman (2004:83) asserts: “[R]hetoric is the art of effective and persuasive communication.” Meaning that, to them rhetoric is the art and technique of effective communication that induces or enhances an audience’s adherence to certain values and hierarchies (Stamps 1995:129; Amador 1997a:53). If this definition is acceptable, then it obviously implies that rhetoric is a communicational style that facilitates and enables persuasion (Amador 1999a:14-15). In Classen’s (2000:45) wording rhetoric is: “...the deliberate, calculated use of language for the sake of communicating various kinds of information in the manner intended by the speaker.”

14; Wuellner, 1987:448-463; Vorster 1990:121; Gitay 1993:136; Viviers 1997:138). That is to say, rhetoric has been understood to be the way in which human beings symbolically and linguistically interacted with each other. It is along this line of thought that Burke (1966:44) had viewed the use of “language as a symbolic” means through which collaboration is induced among people who naturally responds to “symbols.” The implication herein is that language and rhetoric maybe considered inseparable, because it is through former that persuasion is realised. Putting it differently, every linguistic utterance maybe regarded as rhetoric (Vorster 2009:506-7). Meaning that, persuasion works through the force of relevant factual evidences and valid proof, addressing people as they are, and adapting what is to be said to their views, beliefs and values (Botha 1997:176). As a result, my argument is that for rhetoric to operate under the principle of the performativity a critic needs a “universe,” a world of values that makes sense to the participants within their rhetorical situation.⁵²

Although rhetoric may signify different levels of persuasion, from coercion to the suggestion of identification, my argument is that the performance of some degree of persuasion cannot be denied. If we concede to the persuasiveness, though in varying degrees, as constituting the rhetorical, then rhetoric functions under the principle of the performative. In addition, if that be the case, then it means that rhetoric always requires an “addressee,” and it always requires some kind of value system to which it can refer its addressee. Actually, value system gives power or authority to the rhetorical utterance. The aim here being *why* Jesus is described as sacrifice, the element of persuasion is valuable, because it discloses ἰλαστήριον’s performativity and the inducements that the author wished to achieve within cultural and social values and in the politics of relations between the Jews and the non-Jews.

It is of paramount importance for me to specify that I do *not* claim a well-versed rhetorical education for Paul (Anderson 1998:107), and that I as a critic, I do *not* intend to analyse the letter in terms of Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, but I will use *some* of its categories to assist in posing questions to the text. It is within this frame that I would also be able to refer to Kennedy (1984) since he has adapted this model into a workable

⁵² There is rhetoric of actuality and rhetoric of possibility. One may distinguish the two this way: “The rhetoric of actuality assumes a rational universe, a universe whose structure and causes [one] needs to know and understand. As such, he attempts to instruct...by presenting the wants and explaining the ways of the world” (Poulakos 1984:223). By contrast, however, the rhetoric of possibility assumes an incomplete universe, a universe that humans must bring closer to completion: “As such, it attempts to persuade by extending to that part of the world is not” (Poulakos 1984:223). Moreover, it favours figurative language that affects immediately and directly. Often it introduces prepositions that defy proof and verification so that its listeners envision an absent reality that can be verified only after it has been made actual (Botha 1997:176; Poulakos 1984:223-224).

paradigm. Although different phases have been identified,⁵³ I will use Kennedy's notion of the *rhetorical unit* to assist me in outlining Paul's *dispositio*, and in providing me with the outline in which *apostrophe* has been used. I will also use the notion of *rhetorical situation*, but not as a synonym of *Sitz im Leben*. This will not only help me to pursue the text's persuasiveness and performativity, but also the *aptum* that takes into account the rhetorical situation and the value-system constituting that rhetorical situation. By doing this, I will be foregrounding for ἰλαστήριον's performativity and plausible explanation for ἰλαστήριον.

I have already exposed that biblical rhetorical critics are caught up in the power of the text. Their main concern being the structure of the text, the meaning of words and combinations of words (the *what*), and they have even used classical rhetoric to that extent, paying very little attention to the way in which classical rhetoric has been embedded within a rhetorical situation consisting of orator (author), message, and audience (readers). I have also argued that even less attention has been paid to the value-systems at play in the invention of argumentation, value-systems that are not conveniently made legible for the audience (since they were already immersed in it), but not at all for the critics who have been formed from completely different systems of value. In addition, the biblical rhetorical critics have easily and directly equated the elements in the text and the real first century world.

Illustratively, when Paul mentions the Jew, then that constitutes what "Jew" or "Jewishness" signified in the first century, whereas this need not be the case at all— that is, the problem of preferentiality are still perpetuated by biblical scholars. The socio-cultural values that have constituted "Jewishness" or "Jew," that have bodied forth a particular identity, are not sufficiently taken into consideration. Furthermore, there is no doubt that there was never, and particularly within the Diaspora, not a *homogenised*

⁵³ The five basic steps of "classical" rhetorical criticism are:(1) the determination of the *rhetorical unit* to be studied, which must have a beginning, middle, and an end; when defining it must not be too large (Kennedy 1984:33; Stamps 1997:224-225; Mitchell 2006:622). (2) The determination of the *rhetorical situation /Sitz im Leben* of a unit being studied. In other words, an interpreter examines the rhetorical categories like "the persons, events, objects, and relations involved" in order to understand what is said and why (Kennedy 1984:34-35; Aune 2004:422-425; Mitchell 2006:622). (3) The determination of the rhetoric species (*judicial, deliberative* or *epideictic*) and of the overriding *rhetorical problem* (Kennedy 1984:36; Mitchell 2006:622). (4) The determination of the *arrangement of material*, that is, division into parts and their working together toward some unified purpose. This step involves analysing the invention (i.e. argument by *ethos, pathos, and logos*) arrangement, and style (Kennedy 1984:14-15; Mitchell 2006:622). (5) The reviewing of the *success of the argumentation in meeting its (historical) goal*. That is to evaluate the rhetorical exigence/effectiveness of the rhetorical response; what are the implications for the audience (Stamps 1997:224-225; Anderson 1998:28; Mitchell 2006:622). In sum, there is a variety, even confusion, of definitions of rhetoric as demonstrated above, alongside different possible classifications. Nevertheless, there is considerable agreement that rhetoric refers to persuasion that induces an audience's adherence to definite values.

“Jew” or “Jewishness.” This is a stereotypical product of later generations, which has too often been infused with a strong taint of polemics. Consequently, in utilising the Traditional Rhetorical Criticism I will consider: the audience, the interaction between the audience and the author, the value-systems (cultural and social values) that made them into the bodies they were and the politics of relations between the Jews and the non-Jews, the stereotypical viewpoints they had of each other and the strategies they (in this case Paul) deployed in persuading others.

In line with the foregoing, and most importantly too, is the use of *aptum* from traditional rhetoric and the coupling it with Robbins’ common social and cultural topics. The term *aptum* designates rhetoric’s concern for the relationships that exist between the speaker, the speech, and the audience, that is, the author, text and reader. These relationships can be stated as follows: the relationship between speaker/ author and speech context/ text, the relationship between speaker/ author and reader, and the relationship between speech content/ text and audience/ reader (Stamps 1995:154-155). Lausberg (1998:118) states: “*Aptum*...is the fitting together of all parts which make up the speech or are connected to it in some way: the parties’ *utilitas*...the participants in the speech (orator, speech, topic, audience...) the *res et verba*..., the *verba* with the speaker and the audience, the five preparatory phases...in relation to one another and to the audience.” Moreover, according to Lausberg (1998:118-119, 460-461, 1057-1060), the Greek *πρέπον*, which can be related to the Latin *aptus*, is typically divided into internal and external. Whereby the former is concerned with those textual features inside the text that should be fitting together, the *verba*, the syntax, clarity, perspicuity, and not superfluous. The external *πρέπον* is concerned with the social and the cultural aspects, the *res*, the appropriateness of the issue in and for the society.⁵⁴ This further explains why I wish to use the Traditional Rhetorical Criticism. What Lausberg articulates here concerning the *aptum* will aid me to account for the rhetorical situation and the value-systems that constituted that rhetorical situation. By doing this, I will be foregrounding

⁵⁴ Pertaining to the inner *πρέπον*, it relates to those components of the speech, which should be in harmony with each other. Illustratively, they are: 1) on the one hand *causa*; on the other hand, the *inventio*...of one’s own thoughts (*res*): the *status* to be recognized in the *intellectio* has to be developed by finding the opposite thoughts. 2) *inventio* and *elocutio*: the *res* (ideas) found in the *inventio* should receive the fitting linguistic garb (*verba*). 3) *Dispositio*, on the one hand, *inventio* (*res*) and *elocutio* (*verba*) on the other: The *dispositio* as a commitment to order especially has been assigned to the *πρέπον*. 4) *pronuntiatio* on the one hand, *inventio* and *elocutio* on the other: the phonetic and gestural execution of the speech...should be in accordance with the ideas (*res*) expressed and with their linguistic formulation (*verba*). In addition 5), the four parts of the speech (*exordium*, *narratio*, *argumentatio*, *peroratio*) that should be conformed to each other (Lausberg 1998:460-461). With reference to the external, *πρέπον* is a matter of making the speech fit into these social circumstances: the speaker himself or herself, the audience, the time of the speech and the place of the speech (:463, 1057).

for ἰλαστήριον's performativity and text's persuasiveness towards an explanation of why Jesus is depicted as ἰλαστήριον. It is in this context that the notion of *aptum* is relevant for explaining "Why Paul describes Jesus as ἰλαστήριον."

I will be *inter alia* using traditional rhetoric and I will be using the categories associated with the *dispositio* phase in order to demarcate the sections of Romans 1-4. Approaching it from the perspective of the *aptum*, I will be able to cohere my work by showing that by enquiring of the *dispositio* in terms of the different sections must be done with the purpose of understanding why ἰλαστήριον occupies the specific textual location. *Amplificatio*, in its manifestation forms of *incremento*, *comparatione*, *ratiocinatio*, *congerie* (Lausberg 1998:118) is one of the ways in which the *aptum* is put into the form of argumentation. Yet, *amplificatio* is the form in which the *aptum* is put into argument presupposes a communicative or a rhetorical situation. There must be an addressee, which necessitates analysis of performativity. Nevertheless, conditional to a rhetorical situation where a letter to the Romans is being written are the categories of the encoded author and the implied audience. Although still textual categories they introduce to the multi-dimensionality of a text and serve to evoke the *repertoire* of values from which the letter emerges. For that reason, Traditional Rhetorical Criticism has to be modified also by a more sophisticated grasp on what the communicative situation entailed. This will culminate in the utilisation of Robbins' and Schüssler Fiorenza's rhetorical models that go beyond the Traditional Rhetorical Criticism itself. Since the aim is to construct a rhetorical situation that invited the utterance and the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον then the historically based rhetorical criticism is of value in this analysis.

Additionally, an element of *apostrophe*, a traditional rhetorical technique with which the author destroys the argument of the other, is fundamental to this pursuit. The term *apostrophe* literally means "turning back or away" (Korhonen 2008:3). It is a rhetorical figure in which an orator abruptly makes a direct appeal to someone else (Kennedy 1984:27, 42; Kneale 1999:11, 17-20; Korhonen 2008:3). For this reason, *apostrophe* is a rhetorical strategy, characterised by the stimulation of dialogue, which functions to manipulate the "real" constraints of a rhetorical situation by inviting the audience into a set of "hypothetical" constraints and promises of the speaker's desire (Elliott 2008:124). To a certain extent, Paul uses *apostrophe* in the sense of *comparatione*, that is, to compare the Jews and the non-Jews and to portray the inconsistencies of the "Jews" who do not believe. Illustratively, note how Paul allows the *apostrophe*, especially the point that a Jew and a non-Jew require God's righteous justification, into Romans 3:25-27 when he insists that:

There is no distinction

All have sinned

All lack the glory of God

All have received a gift of redemption

This via the mechanism of sacrificial reconciliation

(ἰλαστήριον, a ritual act effecting alternative situation, which primarily brought the non-Jews into the fold. It enacted the inclusiveness of the non-Jews among the Abrahamic family, as I will demonstrate afterwards).

This is because (God):

He passed over former sins (the Jews accused the non-Jews, cf. Rm 1:18ff)

He demonstrates now righteousness

The forgoing raises a question: Why did the encoded Paul frame the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον within *apostrophic* context and elaborated it within paradigmatic strategy? In the light of relativising the Jews' ethnic privileges, rituals or purification, circumcision, politics of race and the subsequent creation of a new and different genealogy that accommodates the non-Jews in the family of Abraham, what were the performativity of ἰλαστήριον in such a circumstance?

However, the inadequacy of Traditional Rhetorical Criticism in regards to the pursuit of *why* Paul describes Jesus as ἰλαστήριον is largely found in its claim of text-centeredness. Rhetorical criticism is, especially traditional, conclusively argues to be a text-centred approach (Kennedy 1984:4; Wuellner 1991:178; Robbins 1997:27; Wendland 2002:170). It emphasises on *what* (text says) and *how* (text's potential to persuade). Putting it differently, it restrains the resources of rhetorical criticism by focusing its energies and resources on the text itself to interpret its potential to persuade during a time of hearing or reading (Robbins 1997:27). This aspect of text-centeredness reveals *how* the text's rhetorical power upon the original receivers was brought in and used by the author (Wendland 2002:170). The implication here is that the interpreter does not programmatically investigate socio-cultural context and time before or/and after reading. Rather, she or he analyses the persuasive nature of the text during the time of reading and re-enacts the categories of authority and tradition in either a positive or negative manner, which is a form of "restrained rhetoric" (Wuellner 1987:453). If these assertions are anything to abide by, then such approach, as it is, limits the efforts to explain *why* Paul describes Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. In other words, it is doubtful whether it

fully helps in seeking a significant rhetorical situation that invited the utterance and portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον in a murderous sacrificial context.⁵⁵

In addition, this constraint of one-sidedness is implied in the fact that the method is not centred on audience-reader. Robbins (1997:26) contends: “Rhetorical interpreters have focused primarily on the speech-text rather than the speaker-author or the audience-reader...” As a result, it is doubtful whether it really accounts for cultural context. Amador (1999b:195-222) wishes that rhetorical interpreters take the modern reader to be the object of the text’s persuasion, which means that they operate anachronistically and ethnocentric. If this wish is taken seriously, then there is need to move beyond Traditional Rhetorical Criticism to a more accountable reader-response rhetoric (Wendland 2002:178-179), where the constituting role of the audience (readers) should be integrated into the analysis. In the case of ἱλαστήριον it would prompt the question how an act of such brutality, as the sacrifice of Jesus, could have been rendered sensible to the Roman audience. In order to answer this question, the analysis has to go beyond the text or even “below” the text in order to have a glimpse on the socio-cultural forces that initiated and shaped the text, social forces that also shaped the bodies of Paul’s audience.⁵⁶

Consequently, the problematisation, a process by which a rhetorical situation is called into existence, implies also the construction of these “persons” (Vorster 2009:543f). It may be argued that a “rhetorical exigence” is not fixed but rather

⁵⁵ Traditionally rhetorical criticism is text-centred. Wuellner (1991:178) categorically points out that: “Traditionally rhetorical criticism as method is almost exclusively concerned with the textual constraints *while reading*” (Robbins 1997:27). “As method, rhetorical criticism comes into focus primarily on *one* issue: the text’s potential to persuade, to engage the imagination and will, or the text’s symbolic inducement” (Wuellner 1991:178). This is an indication that interpreters who use the traditional method of rhetorical criticism limit the resources of rhetorical theory and practice to the analysis of a text and its ability to persuade. That is, many details in the treatises help in judging how rhetorical theorists generally viewed various specific uses of language, *than what /why the author wrote* the way s/he did. For example, Stowers (1994:16) openly asserts: “A major burden of my argument will be to show that Romans is best read with this ancient rhetorical technique of speech-in-character.” The emphasis is put on “...*how* the ancients may have applied their own theories to a given writing (e.g. the letters of Paul). When the question is put in this way, we do not need to assume that the writer (Paul, in this case) had any knowledge of the theory concerned. Our conclusions, then, tell us more about *how* ancient critics might have viewed Paul’s literary abilities, than about *what Paul himself may have thought*” [all italics supplied] (Anderson 1998:107; cf. Hughes 1997:336).

⁵⁶ In order to amend Kennedy’s method, Mack (1990:25) sees an important place for the study of classical rhetoric, that is, to provide the cultural context for a rhetorical study of the New Testament. Mack’s historically conditioned application of ancient rhetorical theory would indeed be a valid and significant contribution of biblical interpretation. However, Mack and Kennedy, with their followers, ought to answer satisfactory these questions: Does ancient rhetoric supply us with specific forms, patterns of argumentation, and proofs that show up in the New Testament? Does it, therefore, help us to understand its rhetoric in its own historical setting (Anderson 1998:32)?

As much as different cultures construct persons in different ways, but within a rhetorical situation, different persons have different functions. Some persons-like orator, author or speaker-function as “agents” or “decision-makers” with the power to actively intervene and change the situation -thus producers of the problematization. Others have no interest and thus are simply spectators (Vorster 2009:544).

constantly created. Meaning that, there is need for a sociologically oriented approach that can provide insights into a value-system where sacrificial violence was the order of the day. Its text-centeredness is crucial, but doubtful whether it fully considers cultural context to explain *why* Paul describes Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. My argument is that the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον in Romans is to be located and interpreted within a wider socio-cultural context of sacrificial violence. If it is true that the notion of ἰλαστήριον can only make sense in a world committed to institutionalised violence of which Jesus was a sacrificial victim, then a critic ought to penetrate to a layer of the text that is not sufficiently or adequately explained by labelling ancient rhetorical categories that focuses on the text itself. For that reason, the plan is to expose those underlying socio-cultural mechanisms of the passage that brings about its performativity. If these contentions are appropriate then Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, which largely dominates Pauline letters (Porter 1997:19), though text-centred remains an inadequate method. In other words, the constraint of this approach raises a necessity of designing a “terministic screen,” which provides the categories to critically construct the rhetorical situation to which the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον can be construed as a “fitting response.”⁵⁷ I plan to design a “terministic screen” that programmatically re-values and re-invents rhetorical criticism into a new *modus operandi*.⁵⁸ As a result, using a “terministic screen” that goes beyond the Traditional Rhetorical Criticism is advantageous in pursuit of ἰλαστήριον’s performativity and its enactments in the politics of relations between the Jews and the non-Jews.

⁵⁷ On the basis that the situation controls the rhetorical response in the same sense that the question controls the answer, rhetorical discourse is generated by a specific condition or situation inviting a response. In a rhetorical situation, a person is or feels called to a response that has the possibility to affect the situation. In specific, as argued, a rhetorical situation is a situation in which one is motivated to a response that has the possibility for changing the situation. Such a response depends on the argumentative possibilities of the speaker as well as the possible expectations of her audience. Not only the exigence, but also these two types of constraints, which affect the audience decision or action and which are imposed on the author, constitutes a rhetorical situation. Therefore, the key question is not simply whether the speaker’s/author’s understanding of the audience is adequate, but whether his/her rhetoric meets the expectations of the audience. What is the overriding rhetorical problem the speaker/ writer has to overcome in order to win the audience over to her point of view (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:109)?

⁵⁸ A way forward that has been suggested is that rhetorical criticism needs to move beyond the traditional interplay of method and theory into mode of interpretive analytics, if it has to meet the tasks that lie before it. This requires three steps: first, one must acquire substantive facility with the skills, knowledge and insights in the range of ancient literature. Second, one must absorb the lesson [especially from Bizzel & Herzberg (1990) and Conley (1990)] that the tradition of Graeco-Roman rhetoric adapts, reforms, and revisions itself in the new social and cultural contexts that confront humans time to time. Third, one must apply the knowledge, insights, and skill of the rhetorical tradition as an interpretive analytics both to “primary” texts and to texts we identify as “commentary” and “criticism” (Robbins 1997:25).

2.3 Socio-Rhetorical Criticism

2.3.1 Introductory Remarks

Robbins' rhetorical model is called "socio-rhetorical" for two reasons. Firstly, it takes into account not only anthropological and sociological realities as hyphenated prefix "*socio-*" indicates (Robbins 1996a:1), but also historical, ideological, and intertextual factors in the process of interpretation (Robbins 1995:288-289; Robbins 1996b:237). Socio-rhetorical interpretation brings the ever growing insights of social-scientific approach (that is, the study of social class, social systems, personal and community status; see Elliott 1987, 1993; Malina 1993) into the practice of intricate detailed exegesis of texts (Robbins 1996a:1; Hansen 2007:219). Meaning that, this method is sociologically sensitive but not social-scientifically restricted (Hansen 2007:219). Secondly, it acknowledges the nature of biblical text as a purpose-driven and/or persuasive communication. The rhetorical nature of the biblical text necessitates a model that helps the reader to see the intended goal of persuasion critically (Gowler 1994:5; Robbins 1994a:221; Floss 2006:594).⁵⁹

The intention here is to outline briefly Robbins' interpretative tools, the five "*textures*": inner, intertexture, social and cultural, ideological and sacred textures (Robbins 1996a:3-4; 1997:31-32; Hansen 2007:219; Jonker and Lawrie 2005:59-61; Watson 2010:35; Bernard 2007:97-102). My argument is that where Robbins pays attention to inner texture, I have preferred Traditional Rhetorical Criticism as paradigm owing to its greater sophistication. Since this study is not applying all these textures in the analysis, more attention is paid to social and cultural texture with their sub-sections. This is because this texture enables one to enter upon the audience's social values, customs and norms, in anticipation that they also allow the sacrificial connotations of ἱλαστήριον to come into view. Then there follows investigations of Robbins' model as an interdisciplinary approach before proceeding to its restrictions in analysing Romans 3:25-26.⁶⁰

2.3.2 Social and Cultural Texture

Robbins describes socio-rhetorical analysis as a form of exegesis that focuses on the *culture* in which action took place as well as on the intended message the author had for the audience (Bayes 2010:115). Social and cultural texture is one of the five textures

⁵⁹ The term *socio* presupposes interaction among people and groups: it focuses on the intermingling of individuals, how individuals are unified into groups, and how the boundaries between groups are established and identified (Gowler 1994:4-5; Robbins 1994a:220-221).

⁶⁰ Robbins formerly had four textures; sacred texture was missing (Robbins 1992:xxiii; xxix; Robbins 1995:280; Robbins 1996b:3, 27-43, 238-240; Bloomquist 1997:202).

analyzed using Robbins' (1996a; 1996b) social-rhetorical interpretation model. It is concerned with the capacities of the text to support social reforms, withdrawal or opposition and to evoke cultural perceptions of dominance, sub-ordinance, difference or exclusion (Robbins 1996a:3; Jonker and Lawrie 2005:60).

The analyst here examines three social and cultural phenomena (Robbins 1996a:71-89). These include, firstly, specific social topics, which take account of the investigation of how the text views and responds to the world. Secondly, common social and cultural topics that “exhibit the overall perception in the text of the context in which people live in the world.” And thirdly, final cultural categories that expose “the manner in which people present” themselves and their views by separating people in terms of dominant culture, subculture, counterculture, contraculture and liminal culture. Putting it in another way, this texture emerges from insight into how the text views the world (specific social topics), how it shares cultural attitudes and norms (common social and cultural topics) and how it reveals the dominant cultural system (final cultural categories). The social and cultural texture of a text refers to the social and cultural nature of a text as a text. It concerns the nature of the text as a part of a society and culture (Bayes 2010:115; Jonker and Lawrie 2005:60). It draws upon sociological modes for “situating and explicating” the specific text under scrutiny (Tite 2004:46).⁶¹

In this analysis, however, not every aspect of the social and cultural texture is useful. For example, firstly, specific social topics and final cultural categories are not valuable in the pursuit of ἰλαστήριον's performativity. Reason being that it is doubtful if specific social responses can aid in understanding the social rhetoric of Romans' (3:25-

⁶¹ *Dominant culture* is a system of attitudes, values, dispositions and norms supported by social structures vested with power to impose its goal on people in a significantly broad territorial region. *Subcultures* imitate the attitudes, values, dispositions and norms of dominant culture and claim to enact them better than members of dominant status (Robbins 1996a:86; Robbins 1996b:168). *Counterculture*, also known as *alternative culture*, arises from a dominant culture and/or subculture and rejects one or more *explicit* and *central* values of the culture from which it arises (Roberts 1978:114; Robbins 1996a:87; Robbins 1996b:169). Quoting Roberts (1978:121), Robbins (1996b:169) explains the nature of counterculture as: “The value conflict of a counterculture with the dominant society “must be one which is central, uncompromising, and wrenching to the fabric of the culture. The concept of counterculture also implies a differentiation *between* the two cultures which is more distinct than the areas of *overlap*” [Roberts's italics]. *Contraculture* or *oppositional culture rhetoric* is “short-lived, counter-dependent cultural deviance” (Roberts 1978:124). Contracultures are short-living groups which “do not involve more than one generation” and which are characterised by their reactions against dominant, sub-or countercultures (Robbins 1996b:170; Robbins 1996a:87). Meaning that a contraculture has a short life-span reaching no further than one generation (cf. Roberts 1978:113. Moreover, in contraculture, the members have “more negative than positive ideas in common” (Robbins 1996b:170; citing Roberts 1978:124). In Robbins' (1996b:170) own words we read: “A contraculture is primarily a reaction-formation response to a dominant culture, subculture or counterculture. One can predict the behavior and values in it if one knows the values of the society, subsociety or countersociety to which it is reacting, since the values are simply inverted.” Moreover, *liminal culture* is at the outer edge of identity. It exists only in the language. In some instances, it appears as people or groups experience transition from one cultural identity to another (Robbins 1996a:88; Robbins 1996b:170).

26) problematics. Illustratively, the seven types of specific social responses do overlap to a level that their applicability becomes dubious (Hansen 2007:219; Bayes 2010:117; Bloomquist 1999:187). It is not easy to plainly distinguish *utopian* from *reformist* response. The same can be said regarding *conversionist* and *revolutionist*, *revolutionist* and *reformist* or even between *revolutionist* and *utopian* responses. For instance, relating to *utopian* and *reformist* responses, both advocate for a change of “social structures.” Essentially the two aims at establishing “new social organisation,” contrary to Robbins’ (1996a:74) assertion that it is only *utopian* that generates it. Further, in trying to differentiate them, he insists that *utopian* is “more radical than reformist response” (:74). This gives me a task of determining the “radicalness.” However, with what machinery am I going to clearly measure the “radicalism” evoked here? Which are determining factors regarding to where and when *utopian* and/or *reformist* start or end? Similarly, one can hardly distinguish *conversionist* from *revolutionist* response. They stimulate the issue of degree of dominance. With regard to their commonality, how and with what gauge does one unmistakably differentiate the domination? This is because, if the “world’s orders” are changed by supernatural power through people as brokers, will it not also change people? What mechanisms will one use to detect which is which, particularly when the changed world orders (*revolutionist*) results into the change of people (*conversionist*) or to the recreation of the world (*utopian*)?⁶²

Secondly, in connection with the foregoing and because of the overlapping, one encounters the reflections of several of these responses in one text. Robbins (1996b:150) asserts: “It would be *rare* for discourse in a text...to contain *only one kind of social response* to the world” (italics supplied). Consequently, as a way forward, he advocates for the dictation of the “dominant” response/s. However, this complicates the situation because it stimulates the problem of degree of dominance. With regard to their commonality, one is left asking: How and with what gauge does one unmistakably

⁶² Common social and cultural topics entail honour, guilt and rights cultures; dyadic and individualist personalities; dyadic and legal contracts and agreements; riposte; agriculturally based, industrial and technological economic exchange systems; persons, labourers, craftspeople and entrepreneurs; limited, insufficient and overabundant goods; and purity codes (Robbins 1996a:75-86; 1996b:159-166). Additionally, Robbins (1996a:72f; 1996b:147-149) using Wilson’s (1973:22-27) seven types of sects examines specific social responses (topics): *conversionist*, *revolutionist*, *introversionist*, *gnostic-manipulationist*, *thaumaturgical*, *reformist*, and *utopian*. In a summary, the *conversionist* targets to change the people for a better world. The *revolutionist* maintains that it is God who will overturn the world’s orders. The *introversionist* advocates for abandoning and escaping the evil world as per God’s call. The *gnostic-manipulationist* seeks only a “transformed method” or “improved techniques” of copying with evil to produce a better world. The *thaumaturgical* response focuses on immediate relief for the individuals by “special dispensations.” The *reformist* argues that the change of “social structures” that sanction behaviours will bring about a changed world. Moreover, *utopian* response radically seeks to reconstruct the “social world” with completely different social structures.

differentiate the domination? Thus, it is doubtful if they indeed can aid me in understanding the social rhetoric of Romans' (3:25-26) problematics. Moreover, scarcely do these responses reveal a need of some kind of ritual to remedy the evil world. As a result, these categories are not to be used.

Turning to the applicability and appropriateness in analysing Romans 1-4, the common social and cultural topics are relevant. This is because they act as the mutual framework from where Paul and the audience derive. It is very unlikely that Paul would have been versed in the specifics of Rome, but it is very likely that he and the Roman audience shared values that were emerging in the growing and developing Empire. The purpose of social and cultural topics is to grasp what kind of social and cultural world the text evokes (Bayes 2010:118). It further takes the analyst into the sociological and anthropological theories: "The issue here is not simply the intertexture of a text but its social and cultural nature *as* a text. What kind of a social and cultural person would anyone be who lives in the "world" of a particular text?" (Robbins 1996a:71; cf. Jonker and Lawrie 2005:60; Bloomquist 1999:186; Watson 2010:36). Individuals living in an area know common social and cultural topics either "consciously or instinctively" by learning the common social and cultural values, patterns or codes (Bayes 2010:117; Bloomquist 1999:186). Meaning that, such topics deal with the socio-cultural setting in which the texts, their authors, and their hearers are embodied (Bloomquist 1997:202). This is because a text is part of society and culture acquired by sharing social and cultural attitudes, norms and modes of interaction that are known by everyone in a society (Bayes 2010:115). As a result, such topics deepen the interpreter's thoughtfulness of the range of customary practice, central values, modes of relations and exchange, perceptions about purity and taboo the passage embodies (Jonker and Lawrie 2005:60).

From a social and cultural perspective, the following socio-cultural phenomena are explicitly dealt with while analysing Romans 1-4: patron-client relationship, honour-shame, and riposte. Descriptively, touching on patron-client relationship within Romans 1-4, the group-oriented persons of the ancient times were entrenched in such relations. Patronage relationship was notably essential in their political, social, legal, religious and economic aspects of lives (Saller 1982:203). In the first century, unlike in the 21st century, an individual's social prominence and supremacy were indicated by the range of his/her clientele (DeSilva 2000:767). Principally, the patron gave his/her client safety and all types of gifts, including "grace" of Romans 3. The client explicitly paid tribute to the patron (Saller 1982:203-205).

These common social and cultural topics display the general view of the context in which the “persons” of the text lived and interacted. Pertaining to my text, insights from these topics will help me to answer questions like: do the components of patron-client relationship enlighten the issues pertaining to the politics of race, the Jews versus the non-Jews and the inclusiveness of the non-Jews within the Jews’ family? How does patronage relationship help in accounting for the politics of relations between the encoded Paul, the non-Jewish implied audience and the Jews? Does their relationship solidify as Abraham is portrayed to be the ancestral grandfather of both the circumcised and the un-circumcised? How do the ascribed or acquired honourableness or/and shamefulness of the non-Judean society significantly shed light in comprehending the interactive situation once it is included in the Jewish family? Which applicability do these topics have to the pursuit of the performativity of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον? Will they provide a critic with the ethno-geographical context within which the performativity of ἰλαστήριον ought to have modified the Jews’ ethnic privileges to accommodate the non-Jews in the family of Abraham? If these topics aid me in asking and answering these questions, then, they could have enlightened the interactive social context within which such a portrayal was necessary and the effect such utterance was expected to have.

Common social and cultural topics, in particular, compel one to recognise cultural difference (Robbins 1996a:71-2; Robbins 1996b:36, 145-175, 238; Robbins 1997:31).⁶³ It consequently differentiates ancient from modern societies. For example, violence was not in all circumstances seen as a vice in antiquity. As a matter of fact, in some cases it formed part of their entertainment and in many cases were used to enforce social hierarchies. In turn, this may account for the type of “institutionalised” violence that celebrated Jesus as a sacrificial victim. For example, unlike in the 21st century, in the first century there was institutionalisation of violence. The key to the sacrificial mechanism then lied in the murderous violence imposed on the victim. The brutal destruction of life characterising sacrifices, indicated a high level of legitimate violence to which they were accustomed. As a result, one has to explore the portrayal of Jesus as sacrifice in its socio-rhetorical context of which the sacrificial value-systems constitute a part. That is to say, sacrifice was institutionalised violence. It was not only accepted practice as part of the factuality, it was normative practice, an act one could, was required to and had to do. Then, one is enabled to inquire if this was the context of brutality within

⁶³ Ethnocentrism arises from an absence of attentiveness to the “foreign, strange” society and culture in which people produced New Testament texts. While the anachronism arises from an absence of attentiveness to the “pre-industrial” social and cultural environment, in which people lived during the first-century CE (Robbins 1995:278).

which Paul referred to Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. If so, what necessitated it? What performativity did such a torturous sacrifice effect?

If the forgoing arguments are anything to go by then this component is instrumental in constructing social and cultural “persons” in a “world” of brutal sacrificing by reflecting the world in which they lived. In other words, if Socio-Rhetorical Criticism places a text in its social and cultural realm then by that it would aid in the pursuit of knowing *why* Paul described Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. So the text’s social and cultural world, and specifically of recipients, constitutes part of its “rhetorical situation” which is the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. Robbins’ “terministic filters” spearheads this rhetorical critical enquiry. It provides the key terminologies (like patron-client relationship, social hierarchies, gifts, and honour-shame) in discovering the rhetorical situation, an exigency or a problem that invited the utterance and the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. Without these common social and cultural topics, this text would have made no sense. To put it in another way, I have now argued that social tendencies, topics partially constitute the rhetorical situation. I am now approaching rhetorical situation again from the perspective of the critic. This rhetorical situation is not conveniently given legibility by the text- the critic is left only with the tip of the iceberg, and actually, only a copy of the tip of the iceberg. For that reason, critics have to construct tools, screens, filters to assist us in providing plausible explanations for what we think we perceive.

2.3.3 Socio-Rhetorical Criticism as an Interdisciplinary Model

As argued thus far, the majority of New Testament interpretations concerning ἰλαστήριον stay within theological paradigms, thereby restricting the questions to “propitiation,” “expiation,” and “mercy seat.” Robbins ventures outside this paradigm to avail himself (albeit sometimes dubiously and uncritically) of a wide array of questions and categories deriving from other disciplines enabling the posing of alternative questions. This will allow for an alternative set of questions to be asked concerning ἰλαστήριον, which would in turn allow alternative views to emerge.

Robbins’ (1996a, 1996b) Socio-Rhetorical Criticism is regarded as an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary model that places literary and socio-scientific disciplines in dialogue with one another (Gowler 1994:2; Robbins 1995:277; Van Eck 2001:599-608). In Robbins’ (1994:164) words, this method is: “an exegetically-oriented approach that gathers current practices of interpretation together in an interdisciplinary paradigm.” This approach holistically connects different methodologies making it

multidisciplinary and *inter-disciplinary* model (Robbins 1996b:237; Watson 2002:133-134). Such elements of interdisciplinary, not being rigid, allows integration. Moreover, the fact that it can integrate from a variety of other disciplinary perspectives, would be an advantage for it allows one to pursue sociological and anthropological issues (Robbins 1996b:16-17; Hansen 2007:219).⁶⁴

In regards to the value of such interdisciplinary aspects to the problem, it is worthwhile to emphasise that Robbins' third social and cultural texture is fruitful. It aids in constructing the Mediterranean (social, cultural, historical, and ideological) world in which the portrayal of Jesus as sacrifice can be understood as a fitting response that in turn helps to eliminate the danger of unexamined ethnocentrism and anachronism (Robbins 1995:278). Furthermore, a rhetorical situation is necessary for such a portrayal to lead one in Paul's direction to a rhetorical exigence that must have invited *ἱλαστήριον*. This means that, the rhetorical exigence fruitfully helps one to explain *why* Paul describes Jesus so, having constructed the context of sacrificial brutality of the antiquity. As an interactional approach (Hansen 2007:219), such an interactionist approach generates a host of questions enabling one *to look for* and *to explain* aspects and dimensions hitherto unexplored concerning sacrifices in the Mediterranean world. It provides us with the terminologies to enquire the persuasive mechanisms that may have rendered *ἱλαστήριον* as part of sacrificial discourse and institutionalised violence completely comprehensible. That is because the notion of *ἱλαστήριον* can only make sense in a world committed to violence, even to the extent of institutionalised violence of which Jesus was a "sacrificial" victim.

⁶⁴ In his article, Van Eck demonstrates that this method is an interdisciplinary approach. He concludes: "The socio-rhetorical interpretation of biblical texts can therefore be seen as a combination of a literary critical reading (narratological) and a socio-scientific reading of the text, concentrating on the text's situation and strategy, as well as on the intended communication of the text as social force and social product" (Van Eck 2001:608). Robbins (1996a:1-2) argues: "One of the most notable contributions of Socio-Rhetorical Criticism is to bring literary criticism (Petersen 1978; Powell 1990) social-scientific criticism, rhetorical criticism (Watson and Hauser 1994), postmodern criticism (Moore 1992, 1994; Adam 1995), and theological criticism (Schneiders 1991) together into an integrated approach to interpretation" (Robbins 1996b:32).

Consequently, Socio-Rhetorical Criticism allows some integration. Bassler (1987:341) views it as: "a methodology that permits a satisfying integration of the Jewish background of Mark's Gospel with its Greco-Roman background, while retaining a sensitivity to the literature dimensions of the text as well as an interest in its reader." The *accommodative and flexibility* nature of Robbins' method, I do argue that, will accommodate Schüssler Fiorenza's proposal of a rhetorical critical analysis of the "rhetorical situation." Additionally, the textures of texts in Socio-Rhetorical Criticism are partly developed and hence not static. Therefore, "as the method of Socio-Rhetorical Criticism develops, other textures may be added (e.g. psychological)" (Watson 2002:130). This demonstrates that Socio-Rhetorical Criticism is indeed a flexible analysis (Robbins 1998:102-103; Newby 1998:94-98), which can allow some integration.

2.3.4 Constraints of Robbins' Model

Like any method (Egger 1996:9), socio-rhetorical approach is also besieged by setbacks. It is important to ask what Robbins implies by the terms “*comprehensiveness*” and “integration,” and whether the end product succeeds in reading a text in its period or construing it in its pastness and cultural otherness. The “comprehensiveness” of Robbins’ approach is something that counts against using it, in my view. That is to say, “comprehensiveness” becomes almost impossible. The comprehensiveness makes it extremely clumsy and complex to work with his analytical model. It is in this context that, according to Bayes (2010:116), Robbins states that it is not possible to be exhaustive in one’s socio-rhetorical analysis. For that reason, there is a contraction on the social and cultural texture. There is also an impracticality to deploy the entire procedure he advocates, compels one to firstly take note of the questions the categories he proposes and secondly to appropriate then those categories applicable to the problem to be enquired. That is why I intend to use him in certain aspects but not in others.

Furthermore, there is a “flatness” in Robbins’ model that induces one to treat a text as something which is “flat,” static and stable. Despite its claims, to the contrary, this approach actually treats a text as a one-dimensional, flat surface (Craffert 1996:52). Yet the categories he proposes stimulate to the formulation of further sets of questions, of which those pertaining to the conditions that produced the text and have constituted it could serve as one example. The social and cultural texture, subsequently, remains but one dimension of a text’s features that focuses on the text’s pastness and cultural otherness. For that reason attention has been paid to the common social and cultural topics as particularly found in social and cultural texture. This aids a critic to access some type of conditions that produced the text.

Moreover, Robbins’ Socio-Rhetorical Criticism is not conducted as a cross-cultural enterprise. He does not really compare cultures but uses categories and implements them only within early Christianity. Ultimately, cultural aspects are included or consulted elsewhere in the process of interpretation (Gowler 1994:4, 20; Robbins 1992b:313-14; Botha 1994:206-17). Thus, it is indeed doubtful whether Robbins’ approach alone can fully help in answering question: “*Why* did Paul describe Jesus as ἰλαστήριον?” Craffert’s (1996:53) argument is:

Analyzing the *textures* of a document in a consecutive manner does not guarantee that the document will be analyzed in a cross-cultural manner. In fact, it prevents the literary, rhetorical, and ideological features from becoming construed in terms of a first-century Mediterranean matrix. Socio-Rhetorical Criticism concerned with these ‘textures’ of a Second Testament document, to be meaningful and not

simply an exercise in triviality, must begin with a first-century social system (see Malina 1996a:29).

It is argued that without common social and cultural topics the notion of ἱλαστήριον would have made no sense. Even Robbins (1992b:305) admittedly wrote: “If a reader does not seek social information from Mediterranean antiquity to interpret these items, he or she will interpret the data with information from the social and cultural systems in which the interpreter himself or herself lives.” While it is true that there is need for the “social information” from antiquity to explain ἱλαστήριον’s performativity, but is it possible to begin at a first century social system without the use of the 21st century categories? How can critics access social information from Mediterranean antiquity without data from their social and cultural system? Putting it differently, as interpreters, do they not construct a matrix that derives from their own vocabularies to make some sense of what happened in the first century?⁶⁵

Nevertheless, as far as I am concerned, one often constructs a matrix that derives from his/her own vocabularies of the social and cultural systems to make some sense of what happened in the first century. However, one needs not to infuse the first century with 21st century categories as if the categories that he/she uses to analyse with were present in antiquity. For example, the question of *violence* as the scene against which critics have to look at ἱλαστήριον is from the perspective of their non-tolerance of it. On that ground, one can describe the violence in antiquity as “*institutionalised*.” Yet, that may not be the manner in which the first century people reflected upon it. Yet, using modern sociological categories, it is an “*institutionalised*” violence. When the text

⁶⁵Robbins emphasises that the reader creates meaning in dependence upon a socio-ideological location (Robbins 1994a:222). It is argued that a document cannot be read on its own terms, but must be read in terms of a socio-ideological situation outside itself (Robbins 1992:98; Gowler 1994a:2). This is supported by the rather widespread view that critics always prefer some readings over others because they occupy different socio-ideological locations (Robbins 1992b:314). Often the impression is created in this debate that the acceptance of “multiple interpretations of a text” is the alternative to “one best interpretation” (Robbins 1991:17; Robbins 1997:24-25; cf. Gowler 1994:5). The rhetoric is clear, a wide spectrum of readings is not only possible but inevitable because readers from different social locations are actively involved in creating meaning. Applied to the sociology of Second Testament interpretation, it urges us to accept multiple meanings and to merge or at least supplement approaches (Robbins 1992b:314). But construing a first-century document, according to Craffert (1996:52), in its otherness demands that the reader’s social location be bracketed as far as possible while a first-century Mediterranean matrix is used in construing the document. Creating meaning then depends on the constructed first-century (socio-ideological/cultural/historical) matrix and not on the reader’s constructed (or learned) socio-ideological location (Malina 1996a:3-6, 8-9). Crossan (1994:153) quite correctly asks whether values and preferences (social and ideological location) dictate validly the choice of subject and interest or invalidly the choice of result and conclusion. It should furthermore be considered whether disagreements in interpretation and the plurality of readings really are the result of social location or of historical complexity (Levich 1985:51). It should be admitted that non-historical readings that do not treat documents in their temporal pastness and cultural alienness are obviously tied to the social location of the reader. Craffert (1996:52), however, suggests that the preference for a particular type of reading is indeed a matter of values (one’s socio-ideological location), but that is not necessarily the case for a particular reading of a text.

elevates an act of violence, such as sacrifice, then one starts to question it because it troubles. Ultimately then she/he starts to construct a matrix, which derives from her/his own vocabularies to make some sense of what torturous sacrificial violence meant in the first century.

2.4 Schüssler Fiorenza's "Rhetorical Situation"

There is need to trace how Schüssler Fiorenza has formulated a rhetorical approach that accounts for the *rhetorical situation* of a text. I have preferred Schüssler Fiorenza's rhetorical situation because her version differs from Kennedy's and others'. The main distinguishing criterion is that Schüssler Fiorenza constructs a version of the rhetorical situation that is indeed guided by the principle of performativity. As a result, her view of rhetorical situation is not only a situation of persuasion situated in the past but is subject to a continuous reiteration. A contemporary rhetorical situation in which Romans 3:25-26 is utilised differs dramatically from a rhetorical situation in which it was first implemented. It would have performed in a completely different manner and that is something that has to be borne in mind when the theological ramifications of ἱλαστήριον in a contemporary situation are considered. Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:123-128) finds it helpful to present graphically the interpretive model of rhetorical analysis which has been articulated and developed. Its survey and its claims of suitability in relation to the objective are to be explored too.

Schüssler Fiorenza's (1999:123) rhetorical model of oral communication "understands language as a practice and event" and hence is concerned with a linguistic performativity of a text. Concerning a written text her argument is: "the text is not just shaped by the author but is also affected by the response of the reader" (:123). This brings about the reciprocal link between text and its recipients. Schüssler Fiorenza explicitly foregrounds the role of the reader in the constitution of the text making it inevitable that the values that have formed them be identified and disclosed. It further implies that both authors and readers are shaped by the socio-cultural repertoire of their environment, producing knowledge that makes sense in accordance with the socio-cultural conditions of their times. When Paul wrote, for example, the intended Roman recipients to an extent also shaped and formed what he wrote because he visualised them as "implied audience," and as they received the text, they would have "re-constructed" its meaning. Then, as interpretation begins, the *attention* shifts to its contemporary interpretation. The author's "intention" disappears with the disappearance of the author.

Once an interpreter receives a text that passage commences a life of its own, a life relative to the interpreter's sociality and culturality, new spaces in which it is being used. It is worth noting that both interpreters and readers are not passive recipients, but they also shape the text in and through the act of interpreting, a meaning-making act. This means that, *they shape the text as the text shapes them*. The implication here is that the Bible is taken to be a historical text whose *Wirkungsgeschichte* (the history of its interpretation and the history of its effects) ought to be accounted for (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:123).

On that basis, Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:124) modifies Hernadi's (1976:370) model that demonstrates how language cannot be understood divorced from the "social worlds," it originates from it. Putting it differently, she modifies Hernadi's model by introducing and then placing the (social) world onto the map as the source of all linguistic and other events. She also understands language as circulating between all four poles of communication: author, text, reader, and world. This aims at avoiding: "the impression that the literary work is suspended in a timeless net of relationships between author, reader, language, and what language is about" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:124).⁶⁶

Further, she re-modifies this axis of representation (see Figure 1) in order to differentiate between the actual rhetorical situation and its inscription or textualization, as well as between the actual ideological situation or symbolic universe and the inscribed one. That is to say, in her own words: "...in order to be able to distinguish between literary-rhetorical and historical-rhetorical levels of communication, a purely literary model does not suffice. Both axes of the rhetorical model of analysis, the communicative-horizontal as well as the representational-vertical one, are shaped by the "world" as reservoir of signs, as fields of action, as networks of power, and as constructions of symbolic universes" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:125). This implies that rhetorical-textual transactions encompass both the subject and its "world." Language and "world" shapes

⁶⁶ The model Hernadi (1976:369ff) developed in terms of literary criticism is indebted to Roman Jakobson. According to Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:124), however, Hernadi (1976:370) himself points to a major problem with his model of literary criticism: "Despite its obvious virtues of clarity and poise, such a map has at least one grave deficiency. It creates the impression that the literary work is suspended in a timeless net of relationships between author, reader, language, and what language is about. Written texts can indeed outlast the situation in which they were produced but the other four seemingly sturdy entities are subject to historical change."

On the grounds that "communication does not take place in a vacuum but within a "world" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:124), she resorts to a representation of "world" or "contextual situation" whose major concern is what a text can say. This leads her to labour to "differentiate between the historical and symbolic worlds of interpreters, authors, recipients, and readers of a biblical text and their textualized inscriptions" (:124).

each other. So, language cannot be understood divorced from the “social worlds” where it originated from.

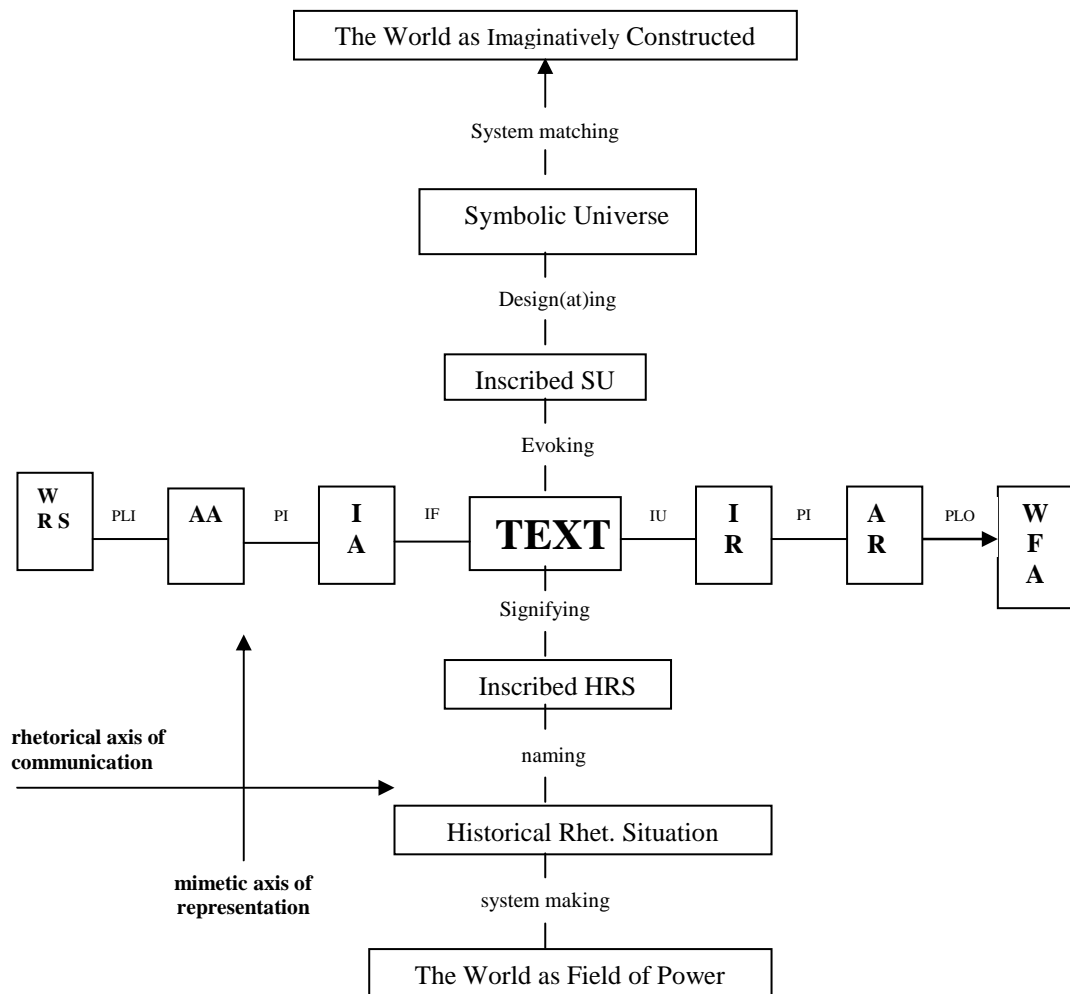


Figure 1: Expanded Rhetorical Compass (Schüssler 1999:127)

LEGEND: *S*= actual historical situation; *IS* = inscription or textualization of historical situation; *U* = actual ideological situation or symbolic universe; *IU* = inscribed ideological situation or symbolic universe; *WRS*= The World as Reservoir of signs; *AA*= Actual Author; *IA*= Implied Author; *IR*= Implied Reader; *AR*= Actual Reader; *WFA*= The World as Field of Action; *PLI*=Pre- locutionary input; *PI*=Perlocutionary intention; *IF*= illocutionary force; *IU*= illocutionary uptake; *PI*= Perlocutionary impact; *PLO*= Post- locutionary outcome.

I have scanned and then presented (Figure 1) this schematic representation and its explanation from Schüssler Fiorenza. This is because her notion of rhetorical situation encompasses performativity and her incorporation of the “the world” will be beneficial to this study. With the intention of accounting for the rhetorical situation, Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:126, 128) re-modifies the model to map a rhetorical model in which “the world” occupies a crucial place. Her argument is that although Hernadi’s linguistic- and literary-based model adequately expresses rhetorical literary relations, in her view: “it does not sufficiently take into account the rhetorical situation and its ‘world’ dimension, which occasions the rhetorical speech act in the first place” (:126). On the ground that, it is not the “word” but “the world” as “field of power” that primarily generates the

significations, ideologies, and symbolic universes of the axis of representation.” She applies both the biblical and contemporary level of interpretation in order to account fully for the rhetorical situation.⁶⁷

In the first chapter, I indicated that I would move beyond the fixation of biblical critics on the text itself and engage the socio-cultural world with its powers and forces in understanding ἰλαστήριον. I have indicated that the embeddedness of the audience, but also Paul, in this socio-cultural world can provide with an alternative reading of ἰλαστήριον. It is for this reason that Schüssler Fiorenza’s notion of rhetorical situation and that of “the world” will be beneficial to this study.

A rhetorical situation is defined 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” (Bitzer 1968:6). As Bitzer (1968:6-8; cf. Kirby 1988:197; Watson 1988b:105) understands it, a rhetorical situation has three basic components: an *exigency*, a “problem” which elicits and shapes the communication, an *audience* to be addressed and the *constraints* influencing the speaker and his/her audience. Each of these aspects influences “*what is said and why.*” For example, according to Bitzer (1968:6), an exigence is, “...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.” That is it is simply “the problem needing a solution” (Watson 1988c:58), or “need” (Vorster 1990:118) that invites a fitting utterance as a response.⁶⁸

It is notable that Schüssler Fiorenza’s notion of rhetorical situation compels a critic to read between the lines of the text, compels one to move beyond the text, forces him or her to enquire the conditions (“the world”) that produced the text. Accordingly, those conditions are socio-cultural in nature, in this case cultural and socio-political. In this case, the constituents of the rhetorical situation are an author and an audience. Moreover, part of the rhetorical situation is also the construction of the implied audience, and the encoded author, and the problematisation displayed or to be conveyed to the

⁶⁷ Whereas Hernadi points to the “word” (*langue* and *parole*) as providing a reservoir of signs and language for the act of communication, she maintains instead that it is “the world” as “field of power” that primarily generates the significations, ideologies, and symbolic universes of the axis of representation (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:126).

⁶⁸ A rhetorical exigence is “an obstacle” (Bitzer 1968:6), while a rhetorical audience consists of “those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change” (Bitzer 1968:8). Rhetorical constraints have the power to direct the decision and action needed to modify the exigence. Such constraints are either inherent in the situation or are created by the rhetor and include beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, motives, and once the rhetor provides deliberation, his own ethos and proofs (Bitzer 1968:8; Watson 1989b:106).

implied audience. As argued so far, these constructions, these representations are thoroughly steeped in the layered social coding of first century. It has been produced by a society that thought in terms of social hierarchies, not only between people, but also between nations and these social hierarchies have been naturalised, have been theologised creating very fixed and rigid identities by means of which “insiders” and “outsiders” can be detected and kept within particular social categories. Unlike Robbins, Schüssler Fiorenza quite forcefully moves biblical critics out of the safety of linking only textual features with each other. To put it differently, whereas Robbins in a more superficial manner moves critics within internal *aptum*, Schüssler Fiorenza’s notion of rhetorical situation compels them to move beyond a restriction of internal *aptum* towards a consideration also of the external *aptum*. Because, according to her, language cannot be perceived divorced completely from the “social worlds,” where it originated from. Moreover, most importantly for my dissertation is the “social world,” which contained sedimented social values that had bodied both the implied audience and the encoded Paul. As a result, the rhetorical situation is a category that provides me with the questions to enquire this. These values have been used in an exchange between Paul and his audience.

Yet rhetorical situation does not stop there. Another aspect that is useful in determining rhetorical situation is the different notion of its *status*, basic issue. For the foregoing to happen, Paul had to make a particular selection of particular values, some weighing more than others did and the encoded Paul had to implement these values via argumentation into a certain arrangement, an order that would make sense to his audience. It is in this sense that categories such as provided by *stasis* theory can assist, and although they cannot provide me with absolute certainty, they do provide with questions that need to ask in regards to ἰλαστήριον.

Four main forms of *stasis* theory have been distinguished: “Is the subject under discussion factual, or is it a matter of definition, or quality, or jurisdiction?” (Snyman 1988:219; cf. Lanham 1969:62-63). The names of these four are *status coniecturae*, *status definitionis*, *status qualitatis*, and *status translationis* respectively (Vorster 1990:119). The forms of *stasis*, such as the *status qualitatis*, aides in discovering how Romans 3:25-26 must have brought about the inclusiveness of the non-Jews into Abrahamic family. How did the author use components of *status qualitatis* to persuade addressees to dispel the ethno-geographical distinctions between the Jews and the non-Jews? Meaning that, using *stasis* theory profitably, one can know how the author laboured to win audience’s attention, receptivity and goodwill as well as to dismiss any likelihood of discriminatory treatment of the non-Jews based on their ethnic origin.

Significantly, in relation to *why* Jesus is described as sacrifice and portrayed as ἱλαστήριον, these apparatus enlighten critics on its performativity and inducements that the author wished to achieve in a context of the ethno-geographical distinctions between the Jews and the non-Jews.⁶⁹

If the preceding arguments are anything to go by, then the construction of the rhetorical situation may aid a socio-rhetorical pursuit of *why* Paul describes Jesus as sacrifice. That is to say, if one examines the rhetorical categories like “the persons, events, objects, and relations involved,” then one may understand *what* is said and *why* (cf. Anderson 1998:28; Aune 2004:422-425; Mitchell 2006:622) as far as sacrificial cruelty is concerned. All these are done in the context that the three basic components (*exigence*, *audience* and *constraints*) of rhetorical situation influence “*what is said and why*” (Bitzer 1968:6). In addition, if it is correct that rhetorical situation is not “discovered” but rather “created” (Vorster 1994:140), then the “terministic screen” is likely to do more justice while pursuing the question of *why* Paul describes Jesus as ἱλαστήριον in their context of sacrificial brutality. I am premised that such can aid me in the construction of a rhetorical situation where Paul problematised the exclusivity of the Jewish nation, which was based on their superiority owing to their allegiance to the law. My argument is that, Paul disputed this exclusivity by *inter alia* using Jesus as ἱλαστήριον as proof that God’s impartial righteousness pertains to both the Jews and the non-Jews. Putting it differently, through the notions of *stasis* theory something has been done in an attempt to set things right, a son has been sacrificed to effectuate the creation of a new nation, the sacrificial act known and accepted by his audience functioning as proof.

⁶⁹ Depending on the type of question that the author asks, according to Vorster (1990:119), there are four types of status situations: “The first type concerns a factual question in which the *krites* has to decide whether the deed was in fact committed or, if the issue concerns the future, whether the deed has still to be committed....This type of *status* is called the *status coniecturae*. The other types of *status* situations are all relative to the *status coniecturae*. Suppose a person has committed a deed, but uncertainty exists as to the precise definition or naming of that deed, a *status definitionis* or *finitionis* arises....A third type of *status* situation arises when it has been established that the subject has committed the deed and the nomenclature has been established, but doubt exists whether that deed was not justified, or the need exists to indicate that a certain line of action will be the correct to follow. In this situation the quality of the deed is the focus and is consequently called *status qualitatis*. The questions which have to be decided in this case are then an *iure (recte) fecerit* or *quale sit*. A final *status* situation which has to be considered is the *status translationis*. This happens when the whole process is questioned and could therefore pertain to various aspects of the situation (Lausberg 1960:64-85; Corbett 1965:35).”

2.5 An Integrated Rhetorical Approach and its Suitability in the Portrayal of Jesus as Sacrifice: Preliminary Applications

Without going into any detail, hereafter is a summary of the inputs derived from three-pronged rhetorical models, with an indication of what I will argue and demonstrate in subsequent sections. The aim here is to state categorically which components of these methods are fit for integration, that is, how can one utilise rhetorical criticism for reading Romans 3:25-26 in such a way that it accounts for the rhetorical problem that invited the portrayal of Jesus as sacrifice? Then the plan is to outline what is to be followed in pursuing the “rhetorical situation” and rhetorical problem to which the portrayal of Jesus as sacrifice is construed as a “fitting response.” My objective then is to use categories from these three distinct, yet related rhetorical approaches, as a “terministic screen” to argue why considering ἱλαστήριον in sacrificial context is a viable option. To say it differently, the concern here is how one can utilise rhetorical criticism for the interpretation of Romans 3:25-26, in such a way that she/he is able to move from the “world of the text” of Paul to “the possible worlds of the Roman community” as well as rhetorical problem.⁷⁰

Romans 3:25-26, in particular, makes use of the story of Jesus explicitly through his presentation as sacrifice. The content and nature of this rhetorical text requires one to pay attention to the data of sacrifice. It is premised that the construction of a “terministic screen” can sufficiently aid one in constructing a rhetorical situation. The integrated method is likely to do more justice in aiding the pursuit of the question: *Why* did Paul describe Jesus as ἱλαστήριον? As a result, the following are major components of rhetorical critical analysis that are to be engaged in the interpretation of Romans 3:25-26 in subsequent chapters.

Firstly, from the perspective of Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, I will demarcate Romans 1-4 in terms of the *dispositio*. Briefly, I will pay attention to the *exordium*, *narratio*, *propositio*, *probatio* and *peroratio* (Kennedy 1984:23-24; Anderson 1999:69; Vorster 2009:519-21). The objective is not to engage in many of the interpretational problems that still form part of the academic discussion, but rather to provide with a rhetorical demarcation and arrangement that would satisfy the requirement of the internal

⁷⁰ For a discussion of this problem, see Lategan & Vorster 1985; Petersen 1985; and Meeks 1986. It is my argument that Schüssler’s steps and proposal of a rhetorical critical analysis of the rhetorical situation will be beneficial in achieving my goal. I will be able to move from the ‘world of the text’ of Paul to the possible world of the Roman community. Such a rhetorical reconstruction of the social-historical situation and symbolic universe of the epistle to Romans is still narrative-laden and can only be constituted as a ‘subtext’ to Paul’s text. Yet this subtext is not simply the story of Paul; it is, rather, the story of the Roman *ekklesia* to which Paul’s rhetoric is to be understood as an active response (Schüssler 1999:109).

aptum. Most importantly too, is the use of *aptum* (relationships that exist between the speaker, the speech, and the audience) from traditional rhetoric and the coupled with Robbins' common social and cultural topics. My objective is to investigate via an enquiry of the *dispositio* how Romans 3:25-27 fit into Romans 1-4, thereby deploying the notion of *aptum*. I will argue that Romans 3:25-27 occupies a position that has been especially foregrounded for the non-Jewish implied audience in order to show the performativity of ἰλαστήριον for them. In the pursuit of performativity of ἰλαστήριον, Voster's (1990:126) "interactional model" is also taken seriously. Furthermore, there is need for examining the type of *stasis* theory in each rhetorical *dispositio*, and for investigating the significance of each category for the analysis of Romans 3:25-25.

Illustratively, keeping in mind that I have promised to use certain categories, I hereby put *dispositio* and the notion of *aptum* into brief practice. Pertaining to the notion of *aptum*, it requires that also I pay attention to what can be called the tension between *honestum* and *utilitas*, the first concerned with morality and virtue, the latter with advantage and benefit. Amidst all other challenges of Classical Rhetoric, arguably it would be possible to assign *utilitas* to the deliberative genre. This is because it entailed persuading the audience by showing that the route one wishes them to follow will be beneficial to them. This explains why the deliberative rhetorical genre can be associated with the political characters who promise a lot and wants their audiences to adhere to certain goals. The interest of *honestum* is concerned with shame and honour, with morality, with virtue and therefore usually belonging to the epideictic rhetorical genre where a person or an action is shown to be moral, virtuous, and honourable.

In view, in Romans Paul hovers between the *honestum* and the *utilitas*. With reference to *dispositio*, for example, his interest and that of his audience in the *propositio* is expressed first in terms of the honourable: "For I am not ashamed [boastful] of the gospel" (Rm 1:16). If he is "not ashamed," then he is proudly honoured by it. Moreover, here the encoded author uses the rhetorical figure *litotes* thereby explicitly emphasising that he is exceedingly proud of the gospel that brings about the inclusiveness of the non-Jews among God's people. Nevertheless, the *utilitas* is not lacking here, because the good news is to the benefit of the Jew and the non-Jews (1:16).

Still on the *honestum* and the *utilitas* but in the *probatio*, Romans 3:21-31 has a reversal from a position of shame to a position of honour. For example, shamefully "all" (both the Jews and the non-Jews) have sinned and fallen short of God's glory, but all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus, which is nobleness. Meaning that, they have been rescued from shameful bondage to the

honourable “ransom-rescue” (v24). While constant slavery to sins (**τῶν προγεγονότων ἀνομιῶν**, vv25-26), is shameful, through the performativity of ἰλαστήριον those who have Jesus’ faith are honorably declared righteous. Through ἰλαστήριον, the non-Jews have been saved from a wrathful predicament and from shameful exclusivity to impartial inclusivity. They now belong to Abrahamic family by faith of Jesus, even if they were formerly regarded as uncircumcised (v30) and Gentiles (v29). My argument is that all these are part of the functionalities of ἰλαστήριον.

In the *probatio* there is first the ambiguously articulated 1:18-32 where anti-Jewish polemics is used most probably to serve as introduction for further indictments to follow. The first part of the *probatio* appears to be an attempt to define what it means to be a “Jew.” If this is the case, then we find ourselves in the realm of *status definitionis*. Given the acts done by the Jews, given the incompatibilities between adherence to the law and actual acts, given the privileges accorded them and yet their behaviour, a critic is left asking: “Can a Jew be Jew only on the basis of adherence to the law in particular by virtue of circumcision?” Paul’s answer to this is “no”--a “Jew” has to be understood differently, and the question is dealt with in terms of *apostrophe*.

Apostrophe, a traditional rhetorical technique with which the author destroys the argument of the other, is fundamental to this pursuit. Significantly, Paul framed this notion of ἰλαστήριον using the rhetorical figure of *apostrophe*. Romans 1-3 is further substantiated by the use of *paradeigma*, an environment of debate that cannot be understood unless the rhetorical situation is integrated into the act of interpretation. Unlike with the traditional analyses of *apostrophe* and diatribe, however, I intend to analyse this rhetorical technique within an “*interactional*” framework in which both the encoded Paul and the implied audience are used.⁷¹ These terminologies have been derived from reception-criticism and that they have been imported by Schüssler Fiorenza, others and myself. The interest is to know which inter-relational issues that the encoded author wished to address. Which functions did the author wish to accomplish through the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον in the politics of the Jews verses the non-Jews and by framing the notion of ἰλαστήριον into the *apostrophic* strategy?

Then from Romans 3 it appears as if *status qualitatis* appears on the horizon, because here benefit, advantage becomes the issue, and again *apostrophe* is called in to problematise and to secure a response. In Romans 3:21a, 22 we see how the category of

⁷¹ The important question will be: “is the text successful in meeting the rhetorical exigence and what are the implications for the author or reader?” (Snyman 1988:220) According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969:19), an audience is: “the ensemble of those whom the speaker wishes to influence by his argumentation.”

aptum has featured in the *amplificatio* right from the *propositio* because here the lines are indeed drawn together and made very explicit to the non-Jewish audience, then further to be substantiated by the *exemplum* in Romans 4.

Secondly, the intention is to examine the profitability and applicability of Robbins' third texture of social and cultural phenomenon. From a social and cultural perspective, these socio-cultural phenomena are explicitly dealt with while analysing Romans 1-4: patron-client relationship, honour-shame, and riposte. Preventing from venturing towards ethnocentrism and succumbing to anachronistic critique, an analysis of the common social and cultural texture as provided by Robbins' model, compels one towards an enquiry of the underlying social principles that generated the letter to the Romans and rendered the notion of sacrifice intelligible and sensible to its non-Jewish audience. What was the interactive social context within which such a portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον was necessary? How can social and cultural topics enlightened the interactive social context within which such a portrayal was necessary and what effects was such utterance expected to have? In what ethno-geographical context did the performativity of ἱλαστήριον modify the Jews' ethnic privileges to accommodate the non-Jews in the family of Abraham? How can the acquired shamefulness of the non-Judean society significantly facilitate one's understanding of interactive situation? In the politics of relations between the Jews and the non-Jews, did the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον sanction anything? How do components like patron-client relationship in relation to the Jews versus the non-Jews politics and the inclusiveness of the non-Jews within the Jews' family support the pursuit of the performativity of ἱλαστήριον? What values did ἱλαστήριον have within ethnicity and status of the non-Jews in sight of the Jews? Which elements did Paul extrapolate which were common to his audience to signify ἱλαστήριον? In addition, what was the effect such utterance was expected to have?

Thirdly, I have indicated that very little attention has been paid to the sacrificial element concerning ἱλαστήριον, in some cases this has been out rightly rejected in favour of either "mercy seat," "propitiation" or "expiation." However, a question one must ask is whether this obfuscation from the sacrificial by biblical critics is not an attempt (albeit unwittingly) to evade the brutality of the violence that accompanied Jesus as sacrifice. I will argue, via the use of socio-rhetorical categories, that violence constituted part and parcel of everyday life in antiquity and to such an extent that it inclined more to virtue than to vice. As a matter of fact, I will indicate that violence was

the default of Graeco-Roman society and not only pervaded but also structured practices, institutions, social hierarchies and bodies. Could elaborations of sacrificial rituals, particularly of a human sacrifice (Beate 2007, Bell 2007, Weiler 2007 and Berthelot 2007), be of assistance in socio-rhetorically explaining the performativity of ἱλαστήριον? Since this aspect forms such an important part of my argument, considerable attention will be paid to this dimension.

Given this, then how does one account for the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον in a society that had institutionalised violence? To what extent was the sacrificial violence in the antiquity the context of brutality within which Paul interpreted Jesus as ἱλαστήριον? How is sacrifice and aggression connected to justness? What could be the enactments of ἱλαστήριον in the context of sacrificial brutality? What was the performativity of sacrifices? If sacrificial acts had acquired relations of power (Bell 1992:207-208) could it have enhanced anything? Still interested in the text's practicality, *why* was Jesus interpreted as a sacrifice? What were the functionalities of sacrifices, especially when a human being was "sacrificed," in the wider Graeco-Roman world? Which accomplishments did the metaphorisation of Jesus' death achieve? Which tasks did the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον sanction? The argument is that the answers to these questions may help greatly in determining *why* Paul describes Jesus as sacrifice. Without proper answers to these questions, it may be impossible for one to accurately approximate why Jesus is portrayed so. Consequently, to achieve my aim, these issues introduced here but I will socio-rhetorically explore them in details in the subsequent chapters.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the methodology. I have integrated three-pronged rhetorical models, with Traditional Rhetorical Criticism advancing the enquiry and Robbins and Schüssler Fiorenza intercalating all through. I have maintained that Robbins' and Schüssler Fiorenza's rhetorical models go beyond the Traditional Rhetorical Criticism itself. "Rhetoric" being the key word in all the three-pronged approaches served as a starting point. I designed a "terministic screen" that allows one to ask particular questions in relation to *why* Jesus is described as ἱλαστήριον. I have argued that such a "terministic screen," an appropriate terministic filter for the problem under investigation, enables one to pose definite questions to the text, which I have raised throughout this chapter and in the preceding paragraphs. I have indicated to what extent

there are pro's and con's in all three approaches and what I intend to select and appropriate for an analysis of Romans 3:25-26.

From the perspective of Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, I have proposed to demarcate Romans 1-4 in terms of the *dispositio*, paying brief attention to the *exordium*, *narratio*, *propositio*, *probatio* and *peroratio*. The objective is to provide myself with a rhetorical demarcation and arrangement that would satisfy the requirement of the internal *aptum* (the relationships that exist between the speaker, the speech, and the audience). My objective is to investigate via an enquiry of the *dispositio* how Romans 3:25-27 fit into Romans 1-4, thereby deploying the notion of *aptum*. Putting it differently, I have proposed to be *inter alia* using traditional rhetoric, especially the categories associated with the *dispositio* phase in order to demarcate the sections of Romans 1-4. Approaching it from the perspective of the *aptum*, I will be able to cohere my work by showing that by enquiring of the *dispositio* in terms of the different sections must be done in order to attempt understanding why ἰλαστήριον occupies the specific textual location. Additionally, I have argued that the elements of *apostrophe* and the notion of *rhetorical situation*, which is not synonymous with *Sitz im Leben*, are fundamental to this pursuit. Which functions did the author wish to accomplish through the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον in the politics of the Jews verses the non-Jews and by framing the notion the *apostrophic* strategy?

Social and cultural texture is one of the five textures (Robbins 1996a; 1996b) that I have proposed to analyzed ἰλαστήριον with. I have indicated that I will use these socio-cultural phenomena while analysing Romans 1-4: patron-client relationship, honour-shame, and riposte. I am premised that they will provide me with the ethno-geographical context within which the performativity of ἰλαστήριον ought to have modified the Jews' ethnic privileges to accommodate the non-Jews in the family of Abraham. In the politics of relations between the Jews and the non-Jews, did the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον sanction anything? What values did ἰλαστήριον have within ethnicity and status of the non-Jews in sight of Jews? Which elements did Paul extrapolate which were common to his audience to signify ἰλαστήριον? In addition, what was the effect such utterance was expected to have?

With reference to the rhetorical situation advanced by Schüssler Fiorenza, I have argued that the main distinguishing criterion is that she constructs a version that is indeed guided by the principle of performativity. I have indicated that the embeddedness of the audience, but also Paul, in this socio-cultural world can provide with an alternative

reading of ἰλαστήριον. It is for this reason that Schüssler Fiorenza's notion of rhetorical situation and that of "the world" has been viewed as beneficial to this study. It is in this sense that categories such as those provided by *stasis* theory can assist, and although they cannot provide with absolute certainty, they do provide me with questions that I need to ask concerning ἰλαστήριον. Finally, in the preliminary applications, I have considered a rhetoric portrayal of Jesus as Jesus as "sacrifice," ἰλαστήριον. I have raised pertinent questions that I will socio-rhetorically explore in details in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

A SOCIO-RHETORICAL READING OF ROMANS 1-4

3.1 Introduction

This chapter has three sections that demonstrate aspects of the three different complementary approaches to Romans 3:21-31: Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, social and cultural phenomena, and the notion of *rhetorical situation*, which is not synonymous with *Sitz im Leben*. The first analysis is the application of the Traditional Rhetorical Criticism whose aim is to detect an argument working towards 3:21-31. The second section presents on the *apostrophe* with the intention of yielding more specific information concerning the encoded author, the implied audience, and the interlocutor. And then social and cultural phenomena will be identified in order to demonstrate that Romans 3:21-31 indeed is given prominence. My objective is to move towards a delineation of the rhetorical situation, but my intention with the use of Traditional Rhetorical Criticism is to provide me with the outlines of the rhetorical situation since its categories also furnish us with clues as to the interaction between encoded author and implied audience, and since the audience and an identification with the audience is at stake, these categories also provide me with a glimpse into aspects of the mutual value system that are evoked and required for persuasion to take place.

As a point of departure, I will specify different sections of Romans in terms of ancient rhetorical categories: *exordium*, *narratio*, *propositio*, *probatio*, as well as *peroratio* (Kennedy 1984:23-24; Anderson 1999:69). These demarcations are followed by their definitions, persuasive functions and brief analysis. This is done on grounds that rhetorical categories are of significance in the construction of a rhetorical situation, especially their valuable information of the author, addressee, and their situations. Furthermore, I intend to investigate the significance of each category as they relate to Romans 3:21-31 in the pursuit of the performativity of ἰλαστήριον.

Additionally, there is a plan to apply the *stasis* theory. In the previous chapter, I have argued that approaching my text from the perspective of the *aptum* will enable me to cohere my work by demonstrating that the enquiry of the *dispositio* in terms of the

different sections must be done in order to attempt understanding why ἰλαστήριον occupies the particular textual location. Thus, my objective here is to investigate via an enquiry of the *dispositio* how Romans 3:25-26 fit into Romans 1-4, thereby deploying the notion of *aptum*. But in my view the category of *aptum* requires that *stasis* theory be considered with each phase. This is because I am premised that both the notion of *aptum* and *stasis* doctrine are aspects that concern the *inventio*. On this basis, I intend to work towards a formulation of the *stasis* theory via the *dispositio* in order to come closer to the notion of the rhetorical situation. I do not have all the answers, but I intend here to display the problem and the possibility of *stasis* doctrine. I will concentrate on Romans 1-4 throughout because therein is the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον.⁷²

Because addressees change in Romans 1:18-32 and the commencement of Romans 2 I have to consider the notion of *apostrophe*, which will be the next section of this chapter. The intention is to set off with theoretical observations before embarking on why Paul framed the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον within *apostrophic* context. And I will pursue the performativity of ἰλαστήριον in such a context.

In the final section, I will introduce a socio-rhetorical reading of these chapters in which I will integrate the results of both the traditional rhetorical approach as well as the focused attention paid to the rhetorical strategy of *apostrophe*, required by the interactive situation of Romans 1-4. In order to address my leading question namely to enquire *why* Paul described Jesus as ἰλαστήριον I will in this section use an earlier model of Vernon Robbins. In particular, I will make use of the categories concerned with social and cultural dimensions because a consideration of the socio-cultural value-systems of antiquity will provide with an insight into the performative power of ritual, in particular sacrifice, thereby also addressing the question raised by the *stasis* theory of this rhetorical situation.

The line of reasoning is that the rhetorical strategies deployed in the *dispositio*, specifically *exordium*, *narratio* and *peroratio*, functioned in the interaction between the

⁷² *Stasis*, also known as *status* or *constitutio*, is all about the “basic issues” of a speech. There are four forms of *stasis*: fact (also known as *conjecturalis* --when the fact is an issue), definition (also called *definitiva* --when the definition of an action is debated), quality (also known as *generalis* --when it is the matter of nature, quality or classification of an action), and jurisdiction (or *translatio* --when the jurisdiction of the tribunal is questioned) (Kennedy 1972: 110, 623; Kennedy 1980: 92, 104; Kennedy 1984: 18).

non-Jewish implied audience and the encoded author. This was done in order to secure audience's attentiveness, goodwill and receptivity of what the encoded Paul had to communicate, the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον inclusive (cf. Anderson 1999:69; Witherington 2004:40). This is strategically achieved by carefully constructing his person and that of his addressees, clarifying his own *ethos*, illuminating that the subject of his presentation is of critical implication to them, inducing his implied audience to consent and have confidence in him and in the matter he puts forward. Moreover, in reference with the suitability and applicability of the common social and cultural topics to Romans 3:25-26, the argument is that they ably aid this pursuit. It enables one to uncover the underlying social principles with reference with Romans and notion of scarifies. The question is what was the interactive social context within which such a portrayal was necessary? Within the rhetorical situation, what problematisation and values did ἰλαστήριον have within ethnicity and status of the non-Jews in sight of the Jews? How can the acquired shamefulfulness of the non-Jewish society significantly facilitate one's understanding of interactive situation? In the politics of relations between the Jews and the non-Jews, did the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον sanction anything?

3.2 Rhetorical *Dispositio* of Romans

3.2.1 The Significance of *Exordium* in the Pursuit of ἰλαστήριον's Performativity

Exordium (προσίμιον) or *proem* served as an introduction (Kennedy 1984:24). It had various functions. It informed the audience "why" they are addressed (Classen 2000:24). From the *functional* perspective of *proem*, there are three "normal" *prooimial* search formulae: *iudicem benevolum parare*, *iudicem docilem parare*, and *iudicem attentum parare* (Lausberg 1998:124). These three formulae aim at producing appropriateness (πρέπον) between the *proem* and the persons involved (Lausberg 1998:124). Romans 1:1-12 is taken as *proem* (Witherington 2004:17, 40; Jewett 2007:58). Besides, the discourse's cases of *metastasis*⁷³ the argument is that the three

⁷³ *Metastasis* is a subdivision of *status* of quality that entails the transference of responsibility to someone else (Kennedy 1984: 88,118). The *Benevolum* is "epideictic in character" for it is achieved through praising or blaming (Lausberg 1998: 129). According to Lausberg (1998: 129-132), it entails four aspects: *ab nostra persona*, praising oneself by showing his obligatory virtue as a *vir bonus* and one's party as upright; *ab adversariorum persona*, blaming the opposing party; *ab iudicum (auditorum) persona*,

main functions of obtaining audience's attention, receptivity and goodwill (Anderson 1999:69; Witherington 2004:40) are all performed by the *exordium* of Romans.⁷⁴

Illustratively, in regards to *iudicem docilem parare* that is closely related to securing of goodwill (Lausberg 1998:124, 128), in the *exordium* Paul gives a hint on what topic is to be presented to the audience (cf. Kennedy 1984:48; Lausberg 1998:128-129). It functions to prepare the audience's receptiveness towards what is to be said. Its two major components are: topic and recipients. For receptivity purposes, Paul writes to his audience by acquainting them with his long-standing desire to visit them (1:8).

praising of the audience; and *a causa (a rebus ipsis)*, praising the position of one's own party and reproaching the opponent's position. For example, Paul is "insignificant" (**duloj**) but his praiseworthiness (**apostoloj**) is found in Jesus alone, he is not as self-appointed but as **klhto. j**, the gospel is not his inventiveness but God's own disclosure; in addition to stipulating that, he is doing God's obligation, the addressee's globally known faith is not established by Paul, and the anticipated reciprocal blessings upon his visit.

⁷⁴ In Romans' *exordium*, the encoded Paul uses three search formulae of obtaining audience's attention, receptivity and goodwill to produce appropriateness (*πρέπον*) between the exigence of the discourse and the persons involved. Firstly, relating to *iudicem attentum parare*, *proem* serves to prepare, attract and "arrest" the audience's attention to remarkably generate persuasive interaction. It targets a "well disposed, attentive and receptive" audience (cf. Kennedy 1984: 44; Lausberg 1998: 125). The encoded Paul gains attention of his addressees by clarifying that the subject of his presentation is of vital significance to them "all" in Rome (1: 6-7). Also, it may be argued that, his own *ethos* and responsibility as privileged appointee, **apostoloj**, is central to securing audience's attention.

Secondly, in connection with *iudicem benevolum parare*, for ingratiating purposes of the rhetor with his audience, *proem* acquires the goodwill (Kennedy 1984: 48; Lausberg 1998: 129). In Romans, goodwill is secured through praises that revolves around the "facts" and the "persons" involved (Kennedy 1984: 48; Lausberg 1998: 129). The "facts" herein are clear: to "call all the Gentiles to the obedience of faith" (1: 5) and thus "obedience" (v6) is expected. The relationship between Paul and his audience is in the pole position. The encoded Paul carefully constructs his person (*ab nostra persona*) and that of his addressees (*ab iudicum persona*) in order to influence them. As Christ's delegate, he writes to influence the Roman Christian community on behalf of his Lord and by his commission. His *ethical appeals* emerges in the manner he praises his audience, which gives us additional instances of *status generalis*. He frankly tells his addressees of his feelings toward them: he thanks God for the fame of their global faith (1: 8; cf. Kennedy 1984: 153). He craves to see them so as to convey 'some spiritual gift' to them and to reciprocally strengthen each other (v11-12). This enables him to avoid any suspicion of "arrogance." The sincerity here targets at concretising the relationship with them so as to interactively communicate. If this relationship is cemented, positively "strengthened" (Du Toit 1989: 206), consequently then the implied audience ought to be willing to receive what the encoded Paul has to communicate.

As a result, ethical appeal, *ethos* permeates in the manner he praises himself and his audience. With a possibility of *definitiva stasis*, herein there are persistent elements of *status generalis*. To win their attentiveness and to generate persuasive interaction with his audience, the encoded author presents himself as doing *God's* will; and also as capable of imparting "some spiritual gifts" and source of encouragement to his audience. He depicts himself as the Lord's servant (Graston 1997: 1), the one who called them. Consequently, he is their master unto whom they ought to be attentive and receptive audience. He addresses them on a personal level. He descends to their level, ambles among them, and socialises with them so as to display to them "his mind." He briefly concludes with the main purpose of his letter, his forthcoming visit to Rome for the sake of evangelising the whole world. Further, similar identities between author and audience are intended for establishing a relationship between him and his audience for receptiveness. Both author and audience are *called* of Christ by same God, *called/set* aside to be holy, *God's appointees among the gentiles* and thus both are at their master's disposal.

Correspondingly, he touches on “the Gentiles,” “... all in Rome” and “the obedience that comes from faith” (1:5-7). If receptivity follows naturally from achieving their attentiveness, then this is meant to induce his implied audience to consent and have confidence in him and the matter [**to euaggelion**] he puts forward.

Paul creates anticipation in the *exordium* for what is to follow and fulfils it by the end of chapter 3. Relating the *exordium* to Romans 3:21-31, this reference of “the Gentiles ... all [**pantwn**] in Rome” directly has a linkage to the **pantaj** (3:21), **pantej** (v23), mention of **peritonlm** [circumcised] and **akrobustian** [uncircumcised] (v30), the Jews and the Gentiles (v29) where ἰλαστήριον has brought about equality. The construction of the implied audience as the non-Jewish believers (**pantwn**v8, **epesin**-v13, **{Elhsin}**v14) in the *exordium* relates directly to a passage where the “righteousness of God,” a critique on discrimination and God’s impartiality are fore grounded (3:21-31). Whereas in the *exordium* it is mentioned, in Romans 3:29-30 the equality between **h Voudaiwn** [the Jews] and **epwnh** [Gentiles] (v29), **peritonlm** and **akrobustian** is emphasised.

In the *exordium* Paul changed the Greek customary greeting formula (**aspazetai**) to **carij** (1:7) thereby confirming the notion of “gift” which socio-rhetorical critics tell us that it is part and parcel of the value-system of the Mediterranean world. But the linking of “gift” with the righteousness of God and the justification of specifically the non-Jewish implied audience is a dominant theme of the letter, and what is found in 3:24 [**carin**] can already in embryonic form be found back at the beginning of the letter in 1:5 [**carin**], 7 [**carij**], 11 [**carisma**], as well as in verses 16-17.

Consequently, faith (**pistewj** in v5 and v12; **pistij** in v8) is another topic in the *exordium* that has a direct association with Romans 3:21-31. It is notable that there is a constant reiteration of the term **pistewj** (3:22, 25, 26, 27, 30) and **pistei** (v28). **pistewj** is a dominant theme of the letter and is also found in 1:17 three times, and in 3:3. Paul’s argument is that **pistewj** is a means through which ἰλαστήριον has brought about God’s impartiality and inclusivity of the non-Jews into the chosen race of Abraham. There is other connection between the two passages: the promises are made through the prophets and holy writings, that is **twh profhtwh autou/ en grafaij agiai** (1:2) and **upo tou nonou kai. twh profhtwh** (3:21). There is again a disclosure of a particular righteousness

promised through the law and the prophets in the *exordium* (1:2), but has been testified by the law and the prophets as it is fulfilled by Jesus in 3:21. In the *exordium* the target is depicted as “his son,” Jesus Christ (1:3) but in 3:22 the righteousness is particularised “by faith of Jesus Christ unto all” (**δικαιοσύνη διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας**). Moreover, in the *exordium* it is already hinted that this promise can be expanded to include the non-Jews (1:5), but in 3:22 it is clearly argued that the righteousness is for “all” who believe. Consequently, in the *exordium* the optimistic “resurrection from the dead” features Jesus’ person (1:4), but in 3:25 God has resurrected and has made him an ἰλαστήριον, with the aim of bringing about a different genealogy into effect where the circumcised and the non-circumcised share the same paradigmatic father.

3.2.2 The Significance of *Narratio* in the Pursuit of ἰλαστήριον’s Performativity

Besides the *exordium*, another “occasional” element of arrangement is *narratio*, which is found in Romans 1:13-15 (Jewett 2007:67). Banking on the rhetoricians of the antiquity, scholars (cf. Kennedy 1984:24, 79; Lausberg 1998:137, 160; Witherington 2004:17, 40) assert that *narratio* is background information and is the foundation of the *argumentatio*. It sets stage for the *propositio* (Lausberg 1998:152, 160). It stipulates the concerns for which the *exordium* has striven to acquire: the audience’s attention, receptivity and goodwill, and about which Paul desires them to decide for.

If indeed *ethos* is a precondition for persuasiveness (Brandt 1970:218), then Romans 1:13-15 portrays the encoded author in a continuing effort of establishing an *ethos* as well as the circumstances in which he had found himself. Paul continues to demonstrate his suitability. His long-standing missionary agenda of visiting the audience helps him to construct his “person” and functions as ethical appeal, *ethos*. His eagerness to evangelise his audience arose from his recognition that the gospel is an unpaid debt to the world. In the *narratio* Paul hints on the unpaid debt, but Romans 3 demonstrates how ἰλαστήριον has paid it. As a result, he successfully persuades his addressees over the submission of the *propositio*. Paul’s use of the *narratio* serves to ingratiate him with his non-Jewish addressees.

Why visit them? In order to press forward one another's faith (v12), and "have a harvest among" them (v13). As a messenger to **εἰς πάντα**, the encoded Paul was principally in "debt" to the Gentile world, to the "Greeks (**{EIIhsin}**) and the non-Greeks (**barbaroi**)" (v14). It is interestingly notable on how Paul "abstracts" or "generalises" this. He *often* intended to visit them, but no specifications are given on when this "often" was. Moreover, he broadly refers to the "other nations," the non-Jewish groupings (**{EIIhsin}** and **barbaroi**). One wonders why he does not specify exactly what he wants to achieve and with who in particular. Furthermore, it is also notable that these generalisations occur all before he specifically ties himself to those in Rome (v15), which is more specific. This generalisation, just like that in 3:23 ("all have sinned") helps to divert attention away from the differences between ethnic groups that are interacting, to minimise their differences and thus to maximise the possibility of identification.

Significantly, with reference to *ethos* and *stasis* theory, *narratio* has powerful components of *status qualitatis*.⁷⁵ Given these components, regarding Romans 1-4, my question would be what has given the non-Jews the right to have a claim on or a stake in the righteousness of God? According to Paul, what has given the non-Jews the right also to become part and parcel of God's nation, and what has denied the Jews the right to absolute exclusivity, to a total usurpation of the righteousness of God only for themselves? In the same vein, what has given Paul the right to write to them, is it correct, fair, justified or legitimate that he considers himself appropriate to write to them about these issues? Considering the first set of questions the objective of my analysis is then to argue towards the symbolic significance of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον, how this has *performed*, effected a righteousness of God that has had inclusionary significance.

Relating Romans 3:21-31, Paul uses the *narratio* to ingratiate himself with the non-Jewish addressees. The *narratio* has given an indication that the audience is non-

⁷⁵ Paul claims that, on his own free will, he never absconded his evangelistic duty to his audience. He had habitually planned to visit them (vv 11, 13), but he was constantly prevented. Why visit them? So that he may advance their faith (Wedderburn 1988: 98); and "have a harvest among" them (v13). As an apostle to the Gentiles, he was particularly in "debt" to the Gentile world, to "Greeks and non-Greeks" (v14). Even if it was shameful to have a debt unpaid, to his audience he depicts his willingness to preach (v15) and the justifiable obstructions so far. So his long-standing desire to visit them must neither be regarded as opportunism nor negligence towards his audience, but as a timely response to his obligatory divine calling; and thus it constitutes an invitation to the audience to collaborate with resembling willingness (Jewett 2007: 68; Du Toit 1989: 207). All these are instances of *status* of quality, specifically its *metastasis* form.

Jewish, **{Ellhsin** and **barbaroi**. Romans 3:25 argues that Jesus has become ἱλαστήριον, a gift which signifies the dissolution of boundaries between the Jews and the non-Jews. Further, Romans 3 advances for the equality between **h' Youdaiwn** [the Jews] and **εθνη** [Gentiles] (v29), and that of **peritonin** and **akrobustian** is emphasised in Romans 3:29-30. While the *narratio* hints on the ethno-geographical context, Romans 3:21-31 takes it up and explains it as the ethno-geographical context within which ἱλαστήριον amends the Jews' ethnic privileges with the intention of the "outsiders" becoming the "insiders." Thus, the *narratio* does the foregrounding for impartiality in order to accommodate the non-Jews in the Abrahamic family which is enacted by ἱλαστήριον.

3.2.3 The Significance of *Propositio* in the Pursuit of ἱλαστήριον's Performativity

In addition to the *exordium* and the *narratio*, there is *propositio*. Usually the *propositio*, a thesis, told the audience what the discourse was all about (Kennedy 1984:49; Lausberg 1998:160; Witherington 2004:17, 47). Hultgren (2011:70; cf. Jewett 2007:82; Kennedy 1984:153) identifies Romans 1:16-17 as the "thematic *propositio*." It focuses on "salvation." It is given enthymematic form and is supported by scriptural quotation in verse 17 (Kennedy 1984:153). The encoded author explicitly and emotionally (*pathos*) claims that he is exceedingly proud of the gospel: "for I am not ashamed of the Good News of Christ....salvation for everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile..." (vv16-17). According to Keck (2005:50), most likely this is a *litoles*, an emphatic affirmation of something by denying its opposite. Paul is saying "I am so proud of the gospel." Most importantly, it contains various terms that hints on what this discourse (*probatio*) is about: the gospel, God's power of salvation, faith, Jew, and non-Jews.

Relating *propositio* to Romans 3:21-31, firstly, according to Paul the gospel is a source of pride, he is extremely proud of it. It is of significance to mention here that for the Jews, the non-Jews were objects of shame, they were the "others" that they were warned against, and against whom they have fortified themselves with a host of legislature. In the context that Paul's differentiation is also a homogenisation, a rhetorical technique in order to universalise, I am left asking: What would it require, what immense

effort would it entail to revert them from this position of shame to an extreme of pride? In my view, Paul is laying the foundation for 3:21-31 already in his *propositio*. This is because, according to him, both the gospel and ἰλαστήριον bring about pride in what they can do for the non-Jews. This is the reason as to why *propositio* has references to **Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλλήνι** (v16) and Romans 3:21-31 has similar ones: **πανταῖς** (3:21), **παντεῖς** (v23), the mention of **περιτομῆς** [circumcised] and **ἀκροβυστίαν** [uncircumcised] (v30), **ἡ Ἰουδαίων** [the Jews] and **ἐθνῶν** [Gentiles] (v29). The advantage is to the non-Jews because the target of righteousness is differently defined and expanded to accommodate them. This pride lies in the advantages of bringing the non-Jews into the covenantal relationship. This is because, according to Paul, “salvation,” just as the ἰλαστήριον, is the inclusiveness of the non-Jews among God’s chosen people.⁷⁶

Secondly, at the heart of this gospel of which Paul is so proud, is the death of Jesus but the death of Jesus is a sacrifice (ἰλαστήριον) orchestrated by God. It is important to bear in mind that for a Roman non-Jewish audience, the death of Jesus by crucifixion would have been a cause for shame, something that could have prevented them from identification with the gospel. So again it is a pre-emptive move. There is therefore a kind of ambiguity in the *propositio* as it evokes values that would have troubled both the Jews and the non-Jews and Paul is here indicating that he is actually very proud of those very ambiguous values. Such a portrayal of ἰλαστήριον should perhaps be seen in the inverted sense of a gift to the non-Jews.

⁷⁶ Throughout the letter to the Romans the encoded Paul turns forth and back on the issues of the Jews and the non-Jews. The implied audience is implicitly stated, but I can only infer to the Jews and the Gentiles and their relation to the “gospel.” This purposeful demarcation, the Jew and the non-Jews, points to the interactional social elements of ‘salvation.’ This differentiation is not of individuals, but of ethnic groups; not in regards to the life to come but in their present interactive life and its politics. Herein, as it has been the case in the foregoing sections and even in Romans 3, the main point is that the encoded author wishes to let his implied audience be acquainted with ‘salvation,’ the inclusiveness of the non-Jews among God’s race. Most probably here he thinks of salvation in social sense, with its current politics and performativity. In other words, here it undoubtedly means “to belong to God’s people” at this present time (Johnson 1997: 26). As much as one cannot wholly eliminate *status definitiva*, especially when the author re-defines ‘salvation,’ in this *propositio*, there are strong elements of *status qualitatis*. Seemingly, he justifies the ground upon which the non-Jews are included in the company of God’s “family,” faith and hints on the quality of life thereof, *ethos*. As in *exordium* and *probatio*, the encoded Paul is obligated to inform the implied audience on how God brings back non-Jews into his own legitimate sphere, through faith. This being the case, then ἰλαστήριον, just like the gospel, has to do with the inclusiveness of the non-Jews and the means through which this is achieved.

Thirdly, in both cases Paul justifies the ground upon which the covenantal inclusivity has happened. In the *propositio*, Paul makes it clear that it is through faith (**pisteuonti** –v16; **ek pistewj eij pistin** **ek pistewj** –v17) that such inclusiveness (“salvation”) is possible. Faith is the prerequisite for acceptance in the case of the Jews and the non-Jews (Kruse 2012:188). In Romans 3:21-31 there is notably a constant reiteration of the term **pistewj** (3:22, 25, 26, 27, 30,) and **pistei** (v28) besides in 3:3. Paul’s argument is that **pistewj** is a means through which ἰλαστήριον has brought about God’s impartiality and inclusivity of the non-Jews into the Abrahamic dynasty. In both cases, inclusiveness becomes possible for the non-Jew on grounds of faith.

3.2.4 The Significance of *Probatio* in the Pursuit of ἰλαστήριον’s Performativity

The fourth element of rhetorical arrangement is the *probatio* (**pistij**). Banking on rhetoricians (Aristotle, *Rh. Al.* 36, 144b, 37), scholars (cf. Kennedy 1984:24, Lausberg 1998:160; Witherington 2004:17) argue that it is the “main body” of argument wherein proofs and evidence are assembled, in support of the main *quaestio* raised. It consists of the invention and production of arguments. It was intended to address the *how* and the *why* questions. Jewett (2007:103) and Hellholm (1993:137) categorises Romans 1:18-15:7 as *probatio*. They subdivide it into θέσις (1:18-8:39), ὑπόθεσις (9:1-11:36), and *exhortatio* (12:1-15:7). Hellholm (1993:137) further subdivides **qesij** into *refutatio* (1:18-3:20) and *confirmatio* (3:21-8:39). On the basis of Jewett’s and Hellholm’s subdivisions, Romans 1-4 is θέσις, part of the *probatio*, of which the aim is to answer how and why humanity, both the Jews and the non-Jews, belong to one family. Touching on my text, Bird (2008:378) regards Romans 3:21-26 as an elaboration of the main *propositio*. Taking Hellholm’s subdivisions as probable, work from probability, the attention is given to θέσις because the notion of ἰλαστήριον is found therein.

In connection to the *stasis* theory, I argue for a *status generalis* or quality.⁷⁷ This is because it, particularly θέσις, deals with the Jews’ quality of life in the context of their “moral conduct” and classifications of actions. Illustratively, the Jews’ “moral conduct” (the foolishness in vv22-23) and classifications of actions (wickedness) of those who are

⁷⁷ See footnote number 72, the first in this chapter.

subjected to wrath (vv18-19): they intentionally worshiped and served created things rather than the creator, they *suppressed* the truth (v18) and also *exchanged* it for a lie (v25), the horrible depths to which they sank when God deserted (vv 24-25) them to their persistent wickedness(vv26-27) and the depths of lawlessness that they indulged in (vv28-31). One can also argue that herein he qualitatively demonstrates, to his non-Jews audience God’s impartiality in judging the non-Jews. Given this, then this impartiality is an attempt to pre-empt the performativity of ἰλαστήριον. But still one can note some components of the *status definitionis*, when the encoded author distinctively redefines a “Jew.” Under this ambit of *redefinition*, the encoded Paul redefines not only a “Jew” but also ἰλαστήριον. In my view, the ritual of sacrifice would have made sense to the non-Jewish audience when it was used to demonstrate that a radical change of situation has taken place. The non-Jews have been afforded the opportunity to become Jews without circumcision. This *probatio* has applicability pertaining to the pursuit of the performativity of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. It enlightens one on the function and purpose for which such a portrayal was necessary. It demonstrates God’s impartiality in judging the non-Jews and their inclusion.

In the *probatio*, the encoded author points out to the Jews (2:9, 10, 17, 28, 29; 3:1, 9, 29) and the non-Jews (2:14, 24; 3:9, and twice in 29), to the circumcised (2:25- twice, 26, 27, 28, 29; 3:1, 30; 9:9, 10- twice, 11, 12- twice) and the uncircumcised (2:25, 26- twice; 3:30; 4:9, 10- twice, 11), and emphasises the fact that, though they claim ethnical difference, the similarity in deeds constitutes a similar identity, an identity that has indeed been identified as “other” by Jewish discourses. Both the Jews and the non-Jews have no excuse. Both are under sin and have been exposed to wrath (Keck 2005:64, 81, 88-89). The *probatio* also demonstrates impartiality of God’s wrath (:55-59).

This *probatio* serves as the foregrounding of the impartiality demonstrated by ἰλαστήριον. The assertion that there is no partiality with God in the previous verses (2:6, 11) corresponds particularly to what is said in Romans 3:23 and to what ἰλαστήριον endorses (cf. Hultgren 2011:116; Kruse 2012:117). No distinction is made between the Jews and the non-Jews. In Romans 3:21-31, the discussion centres on **peritonon** and **akrobustian** (v30), **h' Voudaiwn** and **epwñ** (v29), and how through the enactments of ἰλαστήριον the non-Jews have been facilitated to be have family connections with

Abraham. Since there are no distinctions between the Jews and the non-Jews, ἰλαστήριον signifies uniformity. It effects “sameness.” Additionally, faith (3:3), and when we add Romans 4 (4:5, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, and 20) to the argument, in θέσις acts as foreground discussion on what faith can do in Romans 3:21-31. As argued, it is notable that there is a constant reiteration of the term **pistewj** (3:22, 25, 26, 27, 30) and **pistei** (v28). Paul maintains that that **pistewj** is the only means through which ἰλαστήριον has brought about God’s impartiality and inclusivity of the non-Jews into the Abrahamic family. Pertaining to “God’s impartiality,” most importantly, Paul’s problem is a Jewish tradition that functions exclusionary and God is presented as the legitimating mechanism for this exclusivity. In my view, this impartiality is not really impartiality, it is not equality between two parties, and one party has to be made into “Jews.” The non-Jews are not included because they are non-Jews, they *have to become Jews*. “Jewishness” must be redefined. It is therefore a *partial* impartiality, an impartiality requiring adhering to the identity conditions of a particular group.

In addition, Romans’ *probatio* can be divided into *amplificatio* (1:18-3:31) and *exemplum* chapter 4. In the *amplificatio* the main technique in the case of Romans is *comparatio*, which is a constant comparison between the Jews and the non-Jews. My argument is that this comparison is elaborated by redefinition, redefining what it means to be “Jew” as substructure for a *status qualitatis* intent on claiming a right for the non-Jews to the righteousness of God. Furthermore, I will not be going into detail how the comparison works in all aspects, but I argue that Paul will be using *apostrophe* in order to elaborate on this comparison and make the comparison lively debate for his implied audience. Finally, in my view, Romans 3:21-31 brings to an end *amplificatio* in order for *exemplum* to commence in chapter 4, thereby evoking the primary narrative around which Jewish ethnicity was centred. The accumulative force of these arguments provides highlighted prominence to ἰλαστήριον as the act that accomplished this transformation.

In summation, the rhetorical *dispositio* has offered a tentative demarcation of a work area and a detection of arguments that works towards Romans 3:21-31. The rhetorical position of 3:21-31 within the *dispositio* and its rhetorical role was to enable in Paul to identify with non-Jewish audience and to redefine the Jewishness. The discussions of the rhetorical *dispositio* have elaborated the ethno-geographical context

within which ἰλαστήριον amends the Jews' ethnic privileges with the intention of the "outsiders" becoming "insiders." *Dispositio* has acted as the foreground for impartiality to facilitate the accommodation of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic family which is ἰλαστήριον's performativity. Additionally, this rhetorical critical enquiry has revealed that a significant change has occurred from Romans 1:18-32 and the commencement of Romans 2. The addressee has changed, and this necessitates further considerations. This necessitates that I proceed to the rhetorical technique of the *apostrophe*.

3.3 *Apostrophe* of Romans 2-3

3.3.1 *Apostrophe*: Theoretical Observations

It is noticeable that Romans 1:18-32 addresses the implied audience by references of "them" (**αὐτῶν, αὐτοῖς, αὐτοῦ**), then all of a sudden we are confronted with second person singular pronouns (**su, se, sou**), albeit universalised by *apostrophe*. This indicates that this is typical of the *apostrophe*. The objective here is to show how Paul's use of the *apostrophe* can clarify the performativity of ἰλαστήριον. How does the *apostrophe* help one in solving the problem of Romans 3:21-31? Strictly speaking ἰλαστήριον does not fall within the requirements of the *apostrophe*, but exactly that is significant. The passages preceding ἰλαστήριον and that following it employ *apostrophe*. The term ἰλαστήριον falls within the *apostrophic* context. In my view, by utilising *apostrophe* and then again abandoning it fixes the attention of the implied audience. Given this, *apostrophe* requires an explanation. The *apostrophic* context also explains why it is necessary to deploy *apostrophe* technique. This section sets off with theoretical observations pertaining to rhetorical technique of *apostrophe* before embarking on its applicability to Romans 2-4.

The term *apostrophe* literally means "turning back or away" (Korhonen 2008:3). It is a rhetorical figure in which a speaker abruptly makes a direct appeal to someone else (Kennedy 1984:27, 42). Kneale (1999:11, 17-20) insists that one of its indispensable features is that of "redirecting of voice" to another or to a more specific audience. So, it entails an unexpected turn from the general addressees with the aim of addressing a particular group, person or personified abstraction absent or present. Aiding us to identify

its new “specific” audience, Korhonen (2008:3; cf. Kneale 1999:19) writes: “...the *apostrophe* is, grammatically speaking, a turning of the discourse from the third person to the second person, directly addressing someone or something as “you.” This aided the diversion of the audience’s attention from the issue at hand. So, *apostrophe* is a rhetorical strategy, characterised by the stimulation of dialogue, which functions to manipulate the “real” constraints of a rhetorical situation by inviting the audience into a set of “hypothetical” constraints and promises of the speaker’s desire (Elliott 2008:124).⁷⁸

Meaningfully, the issue relating to *apostrophe*’s significance bears notice. With its rhetorical approach of *insinuatō*, indirect address (Witherington 2004:76), the technique of *apostrophe* was used in attacking one’s adversaries, especially if they were directed at absent persons or inanimate objects (Korhonen 2008:9). Through it, inner thoughts about adversaries are conveyed as though one was talking with them (Witherington 2004:74). So, contrary to Witherington’s assertion,⁷⁹ the encoded author uses *apostrophe* to *identify* with his implied audience (Elliot 2007:186). That is why he really goes into redefining who a “Jew” is, that is why he even has to recapitulate and tell his implied audience that his invective against the conduct of the Jews does not annihilate their privileges.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ In classical rhetoric, for example, the *apostrophe* was also seen as a device by means of which the orator changed “to a new subject,” what Quintilian, according to Korhonen (2008: 5), terms as *aversio*. Kneale (1999: 3) equates the Latin *aversio* to the Greek term *apostrophe*. In this regard, Korhonen (2008: 5) avows: “The use of the apostrophe thus either involves or cause a change of subject; it is a technique that serves to get -smoothly or abruptly- from one thing to another.”

Apostrophe is counted among figures of thought (Kennedy 1984: 27); and particularly among those relating to the emotions like: *paianismos* (thanksgiving), *sarkasmos* (sarcasm), *execratio* (curse), *obsecratio* (appeal), *admiratio* and *votum* (pray) (Korhonen 2008: 9). *Apostrophe* is also associated with other figures of thought such as **proswpopoiia** (“an imaginary conversation”) (cf. Witherington 2004: 73; Korhonen 2008: 4, 9). It is notable that both *apostrophe* and diatribe, as tools of deliberative rhetoric, are characterised with dialogues with imaginary interlocutors (cf. Ulmer 1997: 54; Witherington 2004: 74; Changwon 2004: 3, 16-18, 61-62).

⁷⁹ According to Witherington (2004: 76), it enabled indirect confrontation of the “real audience.” To this end, Witherington (2004: 76) considers it as a “distancing technique” through which the rhetor could fruitfully critique his listeners and their defects in thoughts and practicality.

⁸⁰ Moreover, *apostrophe*’s features like vivid dialogues with interlocutors were predominantly monologues by the teacher himself with imaginary adversaries; they encompassed some answers to the students (Changwon 2004: 16). Also in relation to the importance of the rhetorical questions, they help one to track important issues at hand in an argument (Witherington 2004: 110). In all four example that Stowers (1994: 162-164) cites, the leading questions are directed to the interlocutor. The interlocutor can only answer them as per the teacher’s wish. Sometimes, these questions represented false reasoning, “unthinkable alternatives” that aimed at forcing the interlocutor to reject them and avow the logical alternative/s towards which the teacher desired to lead him. Then the teacher ultimately elaborates the implications before drawing a conclusion. Additionally, the implication is that this technique particularly,

Unlike the habitual analyses of *apostrophe* and diatribe, however, the intention here is to analyse this rhetorical technique within an “*interactional*” framework in which both the encoded Paul and the implied audience are used. If indeed these categories are perceived as “*inventional tools*” that effect an influential conversation then their use within an interactional framework effects an extremely lively debate situation, which becomes crucial in constructing the performativity of ἰλαστήριον. It is on this basis that one insists that these conversational features are of importance in understanding Romans 3:25-26. In my view, it explains what Paul had to say in the *apostrophe* that proceeds and one that is subsequent to ἰλαστήριον. Of significance also, is the fact that Paul framed this text with its notion of ἰλαστήριον within *apostrophic* context (Romans 2-4), an environment of debate that cannot be understood unless the rhetorical situation is integrated into the act of interpretation. The argument is that the *apostrophic* context brings about issues that the encoded author wished to address.⁸¹

I have argued that using the *apostrophe* in the analysis of 1-4 acquaints me with the rhetorical situation and the rhetorical problem that invited the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. Turning to analysis of Romans 2-4 using *apostrophe* (2:1-16, 17-29), one is premised that the imaginary debate between the encoded writer and the interlocutor aids in knowing how the former positioned himself so as to influence the implied audience by staging the latter. Through *apostrophe*, it discloses that the author *entextualised* the shared codes, such as knowledge of the Law, circumcision, and Abraham, in an attempt to move the audience to the recognition that even the non-Jews are now included in the sphere of the Jewish family. Since the encoded writer used this *apostrophe* in a discussion with his implied audience over the role and function of the Jews, then the analysis *apostrophe* will prove to be worthwhile. Ultimately then there is an attempt to explain the functionality of ἰλαστήριον within *apostrophic* context.

besides being used for teaching purposes, could also be used to persuade addressees to identify with the encoded author, especially when their values are evoked in the dialogue and the “other” shown to be inconsistent and non-understanding.

⁸¹ Stowers (1994: 150) holds that “...the dialogical features of chapter 3-4 maintains the characterization of 2: 17-24 with remarkable consistency. The reader must therefore well understand 2: 17-24, since it remains a key to 3-4.” Elsewhere, Stowers (1994: 143) avows: “Romans 2: 17-29 provide a key to understanding the letter’s rhetorical strategy.”

Stowers (1994:16 cf. Witherington 2004:75; Changwon 2004:260-261) identifies five passages in Romans' *probatio* that he labels as **proswpopoiia**: 2:1-16; 2:17-29; 3:1-9; 3:27-4:2; and 7:7- 8:2. He terms the first two as of *apostrophe* and the others as dialogues. The focus is only on the first four, because they form the context within which the notion of ἰλαστήριον performs.⁸²

3.3.2 Rhetoric of *Apostrophe* in Romans 2:1-16

Various aspects of the *apostrophe* in Romans 2:1-16 (also in vv 17-29) should be noticed. Firstly, there is a “redirecting of voice,” a “turning” of the discourse abruptly from the third person plural (as found in the previous section) to a stylised second-person (Kennedy 1984:27, 42; Kneale 1999:11, 17-20; Korhonen 2008:3). In other words, the second person singular herein signals the implied audience that they are not targeted, but particularised individuals who are discriminating, and they are now being addressed. Notably, Lamp (1999:39) argues that Romans 2:1-29 “turns away from Gentiles” and then focuses upon “Jewish culpability.” He interprets verses 12-16 in an integral way in “defining the essence of being Jewish” (:37). He notes and then discusses four objections that relate to: supposed Jewish moral superiority (vv1-11), possession of Torah (12-16), Jewish national privilege (17-24) and circumcision (25-29) (Lamp 1999:39). Witherington (2004:76) highlights Romans 2 as a discourse where Paul is, in a dialogue, critiquing an imaginary morally superior *Gentile*. In Romans 2:1-16, for example, Paul addresses a judgemental *Gentile* who is morally superior to the fellow *Gentile*, in the light of his hypocrisy (Witherington 2004:73, 78). Verse 5 reaffirms that Paul addresses non-Christian *Gentile* as he describes contemptuous, “stubborn” and “unrepentant”

⁸² According to Changwon (2004: 5), on the one hand, non-diatribal scholars have difficulties of identifying diatribe in Romans because it is too “complex and confusing.” But, on the other hand, others have sought to identify some rhetorical features that appear within Romans. For example, Changwon’s (2004: 9) investigation pursues the identity of unique features of the diatribe in Romans. Particularly, in Romans 1-4, the rhetorical features that have been singled out include: rhetorical questions (2: 3, 4, 21-23, 26; 3: 1, 3, 5, 6-9, 27, 31; 4: 1, 3, 9-10), *apostrophes* (2: 1-11, 17-29), dialogue (3: 1-10; 3: 27-4: 2), refutations of objections (3: 1-9, 27-31; 4: 1-2), comparisons (2: 6-10, 12-16) and example stories [also called **paradeigmata**] (cf. 4: 1-25; Tobin 2004: 93; Olbricht 2008: 17; Bird 2008: 378). Generally, Paul uses diatribal forms especially in Romans 2: 1-16, 17-24; 3: 1-9; 3: 27-4: 25; 9: 17-21 (Witherington 2004: 75; Changwon 2004: 260-261). Additionally, we have rhetorical technique known as **proswpopoiia**, for example in Romans 2-4 (cf. Stowers 1994: 16; Witherington 2004: 75; Changwon 2004: 260-261). But other scholars like Campbell (1994: 325-327) rejects Stowers’ views on the diatribe.

person who has stored up God's wrath (Witherington 2004:81). However, there is need to re-examine Witherington's view that it is a morally superior non-Jews, and not Jews, who are targeted. One can problematise his proposal, yet there is no ultimate answer. But, the argument is that the notion of implied audience can help one in managing the complexities when the *apostrophe* is brought into play. That is deploying the *apostrophe* within the interaction between the encoded author and the implied audience renders a completely different reading than without these categories. For example, the positive construction of the implied audience, the negative construction of the "they" in 1:18-32 makes it very unlikely that the implied audience is here to be reprimanded for hubristic behaviour. How could that be when the main argument is to problematise excluding privileges usurped by the Jews?

Secondly, the personal pronouns and verbs in second person singular confirm that the implied audience is not targeted, because all through they have not been identified with inconsistent behaviours. But rather, they have consistently despised God's kindness, tolerance and patience that were intended for true repentance (vv 4-5). Their stubbornness and unrepentant hearts of these moralistic individuals, declares the encoded author, has stored up the wrath. By pointing to someone else, the encoded author convincingly persuades his implied audience that such individual will not abscond judgment. There shall be no special dispensation on the wrathful judgment day to anyone. Because the encoded author maintains that "all" [paj] evil and law-binding people, both the Jews (2:9, 10) and the "Gentiles" (2:14) shall have trouble and joy respectively. God demands total loyalty of all. Such mentions directly responds to those of **pantaj** in 3:21, **pantej** in v23, circumcised and uncircumcised in v30, the Jews and the Gentiles in v29. The question is whether such a removal of ethnic preferentiality has not been accomplished by attaching sacrificial value to the death of Jesus, by evoking the performativity of sacrifice?⁸³

Thirdly, another evident rhetoric aspect is a *protrepsis*, a discourse that urges its audience to leave one way of life and take up another (Stowers 1994:107). If God's patience means that arrogant and unrepentant individuals are "storing up wrath" (v5),

⁸³ Additionally, in vv14-16 there is change of personal pronouns from second person singular to third person plural (**autwn**), whose implication is that the encoded author distances the implied audience and himself from the "them."

then this is an admonitory *apostrophe* indeed. Through it, Paul warns against hypocrisy that presumes upon God's mercy as an escape for accountability to God (Witherington 2004:73). This is admonitory *apostrophe* of "all" pretentious individuals following their degeneration (Stowers 1994:100). The deterioration into vice necessitates the warning that the unremorseful ones are "storing up wrath" for the day of reckoning; and ultimately, the need for "salvation," that is being part of Abrahamic kinfolk. My argument is that such inclusivity is achieved through the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. Then the persuasive force of this *apostrophe* is the call for repentance (2:5) as well as for good works (2:6-11).

Fourthly, this *apostrophe* is building towards Romans 3:21-26.⁸⁴ Subsequently, in Romans 3:21-26 Paul explains that God has manifested his righteousness by regarding Jesus as a solution to the wrathful predicament of the gentile world and whose sins he had passed over and allowed to accumulate. So, Paul seemingly in 3:25-26 refers back to 2:4 when he talks of the accumulated sins (1:21-32) that God had held back from punishing. Jesus thus means a special twist to theme of God's delayed judgment that brings justice for all (Stowers 1994:106). In other words, hereafter Paul portrays Jesus' sacrifice as the one directed to "the sins committed beforehand" and were left "unpunished" having storied "up wrath."

In sum, Paul's *apostrophe* has two intentions: disapproves in order to influence anyone with presumptuous thoughts among his audience without directly reproaching anyone of anything and this markedly denotes the individuals' status in the face of God's stern impartiality and imminent verdict (Stowers 1994:103). Through its "distancing technique," it effectively enabled to solicit for their support. The non-Jews' deterioration call for this admonitory *apostrophe* and persuades them to the solution (ἰλαστήριον) of being part of Abrahamic family. As argued, the ritual of sacrifice would have made sense to the non-Jewish audience when it was used to demonstrate that a radical change of situation has taken place. The non-Jews have been afforded the opportunity to become Jews without circumcision. Putting it differently, the perspective of *apostrophe* in service of *stasis* theory means that the challenges thrown at the interlocutor in these passages are

⁸⁴ According to Elliott (2008: 131), this *apostrophe*, just like the second one, serves as the *protasis* for an argument to follow.

concerned to display to the non-Jewish implied audience that they indeed have a right to God's righteousness, because the constituents of "Jew," that which "fabricate" a Jew should be differently understood. In my view, this is *status definitionis* serving as *status qualitatis*. If the identity of the Jews is differently constructed, the non-Jews can be integrated into Abrahamic family, the nation of God.

3.3.3 Rhetoric of *Apostrophe* in Romans 2:17-29

There is uncertainty in regards to the identity of addressees. But I do differ with Witherington's (2004:73) view that there is a shift to a new conversation partner (**eivde su**).⁸⁵ The argument is that most probably the encoded author stages a particular type of a

⁸⁵ Witherington (2004: 79) disagrees with Stowers (1994: 103) over the guiltiness of the "you." Whereas Stowers (1994: 103) attributes this guiltiness to "the idolatry and vice," all moral sins listed in 1: 18-32, of the Gentile world; Witherington (2004: 79) maintains that such a person is guilty of carrying forward a pagan life into Christian existence to some degree and of 'some hypocrisy and judgementalism.'" Thus, this confirms the view of impracticality of identity of specific apostrophic debating partners. On this ground, one can insist that there is also ambiguity in regards to the identity of addressees.

In connection with rhetorical questions, unquestionably one gain a clearer understanding of the *apostrophe* in Romans 2: 17-24 if s/he applies to Romans Stowers' description of how *leading questions* operated in diatribal rhetoric. Therein one finds the picture of the pretentious person as well as of the conceited moral and religious leader. But the encoded Paul censures the interlocutor for the disparity between his pretentiousness and his behaviour, through series of rhetorical questions. Despite Stowers' good scholarship, however, other scholars disagree with him. For example, Elliott (2008:103) agrees with Stowers' (1994) identification and understanding of how diatribal technique functioned in moral or instructional address. But, according to him, some categorical confusion distorts Stowers' reading. Elliott (2008: 103) observes: "Unfortunately, Stowers does not carefully maintain the distinctions between diatribal techniques that he has identified." As a result, Stowers (1981: 96, 113) misunderstands Paul's purpose in 2:17-24, where he regards a Jew as a "pretender." But (against Stowers) the person Paul addresses is *not* "bragging about what [he] does not truly possess." To the contrary, Paul is clear that the Jewish does possess these things.... Neither do we hear Paul's Jewish interlocutor admit that he has broken the law..." (Elliott 2008: 103).

Elliott (2008: 102), in agreement with Stowers (1994), maintains that Paul's *apostrophe* in 2: 17-3: 9 is not to indict/criticise the Jews but to enlist a fellow Jew as a witness so as to make an important point his non-Jewish audience. Elliott (2008: 102) asserts: "...Stowers ably demonstrate that the sudden rhetorical turn to second-person-singular address at Rom. 2: 1...was not a rhetorical "trap" for the Jew, but fit a broad pattern of moral exhortation in which speech-in-character was used as "a personal indictment of any of the audience to whom it might apply.... The address in 2: 1ff. reaches out to sharply indict those who have pretensions of being on a different plane morally.""

Dissimilarity between 2:1-6 and vv17-24 bears notice. Whereas in the former Paul used indicative statements to level an accusation against a hypothetical interlocutor; but, in contrast, in the latter he asks hypothetical Jewish a series of rhetorical questions: "...do you not teach yourself? ...do you steal? ...do you commit adultery? . . . do you rob temples? ...do you dishonor God by breaking the law?" Moreover, he does not wait for interlocutor's answers. The *apostrophe* here remains *conditional*: if you steal, commit adultery, and rob temples, *then* you dishonour God by breaking the law that you teach other except yourself; and thus, *then* the scriptural verdict apply: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you" (v24). Quoting Isaiah 52: 5 he admonishes the interlocutor's behaviour. *Then* your circumcision will avail you absolutely nothing (v25). It would be impossible to imagine a Jew who could

Jew, as he has been doing so far, before his non-Jewish implied audience and then he concretises his deeds (v18). Moreover, this precise type of Jew represents a particular ethnic group claiming for themselves exclusivity. It is notable that all verbs herein are in second person singular which obviously indicates to the implied audience that they are not directly targeted. By “staging” this type of a Jew, it means that both the encoded Paul and the non-Jewish implied audience are spectators watching the show together. He consistently points away to someone out there who is characterised by personal association with the law. This precise type of Jew claims to reputation, the reputation of being “real Jew” owing to the adherence of the “law,” owing to only one criterion of fulfilment, namely circumcision, which was the token par excellence of what constituted an “authentic Jew. Herein the encoded author explicitly clarifies to the implied audience that by the law system it is only its “doer” who can become a “real Jew,” not merely a spectator or/and a bearer. He distinguishes *hearing* the law from *doing* it. Regardless of ethnicity, it is the *doing* the law that is a determining factor in God’s impartial judgment. The question is whether the *apostrophe* has not been deployed in order to display to the non-Jewish audience how even the Jew, claiming superiority on the basis of ethnicity, lacks righteousness, a righteousness to be effected by the performative power of sacrifice. The encoded Paul labours to clarify that all people, both the Jews and the non-Jews, without the presentation of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον are helplessly excluded from Abraham’s family connections.⁸⁶

argue *against* Paul’s views. Paul targeted, not his Jewish contemporaries, the non-Jewish audience in Rome (Elliott 2008: 104).

⁸⁶ To demonstrate further impartiality and for persuasion purposes, Paul imagines of a very religious and moral “Jew” (2: 17-29), who stands in a sharp contrast to anti-Gentile elements in 1: 18-32, and then stages this type before his the non-Jewish audience (2: 1-5). The Jew in question boasts: has been instructed in the law and relies on it. Eventually, he emphasises that in God’s impartial sight a wicked Jewish interlocutor is no better than addressee (Stowers 1994: 108). The encoded Paul ironically describes interlocutor’s conceited claims to knowledge and wisdom to his implied audience. Therein is a portrayal of his self-estimated contemporary who relies on the Torah because he is familiarised with it as well as with the Jewish tradition. Evidently he tells us in verses 19-20 that he is dealing with someone who calls himself a “teacher” for those in darkness, the spiritually blind, to the foolish and to mere infants. These verses emphasises his pretensions towards being a teacher and moral religious model. To the implied addressee, he is portrayed as the one who depends on his meritorious works in addition to his privileged ethnic heritage for justification rather than relying on God alone.

Witherington (2004: 87) maintains that Stowers (1994: 143-158) has rightly pointed out how harmful the misreading of Romans 2: 17-24 has been. In agreement, both argue that it is important to identify who the imaginary interlocutor is and they harmoniously demonstrate that in this passage the characterisation of the Jews, the typical Jews or Judaism has caused an enormous amount of harm. In his own words, Witherington (2004: 87) argues: “Just as Paul’s dialogues with judgemental and hypocritical Gentile in 2:

The encoded Paul confirms that the implied audience is not targeted. He has consistently been pointing away to others out there maybe to the Jews [**Voudaiój**] particularly those characterised by their association with the law and circumcision. Putting it in a different way, possibly through this *apostrophe*, Paul paradoxically “demolishes” Jewish privileges. Since a Jew cannot plead to be ignorant, instead of boasting and relying on the law, he ought to take his possession of it as a medium of his accountability to God (2:20). If it is indeed true that a Jew (in possession of privileges, Romans 2:17-20) is not exempted from God’s wrath when he violates the very Torah that constitutes those privileges (2:12b) then how can the non-Jews who have no such privileges escape the wrath that is stored up for them? While staging an imaginary interlocutor, the implied addressee is again distanced from the Jew but is positioned on Paul’s side, functions as judge and as spectator, not as accused. By so doing Paul persuades his audience that the Jews as well as the non-Jews are acceptable into Abrahamic family. He clearly declares that both stand on the same footing. Seemingly, it is in this context that the encoded Paul carefully deployed the *apostrophe* which ultimately illuminates the “rhetorical situation” in which the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον is enacted.

It has been confirmed by the non-Jewish audience that they too have been afforded the opportunity to become members of the Jewish family. Through this perspective of *apostrophe* in service of *stasis* theory the “Jew” has been redefined. It has displayed to the non-Jewish implied audience that they indeed have to understand a Jew differently. This is *status definitionis*. Through this *apostrophe*, the encoded Paul together with the non-Jewish audience have harmoniously confirmed that the self-righteous Jew has no shield in himself. The non-Jewish implied audience have realised that Jesus has to function for them as an ἰλαστήριον. It is clear to them that without this violent

1-16 was not intended to be a broadside against any and all Gentiles, so too it is a serious mistake to see 2:17-3:20 as a broadside against all Jews...” Contrary to Witherington’s and Stowers’ endeavours of identifying the imaginary interlocutor, this leaves one perplexed whether it is possible to exactly allocate questions and answers to the specific apostrophic debating partners. Thus, I retain some ambiguity. I problematise their proposals, but also I do not guarantee a definitive clarification. It should be made clear that homogenisation was not a strange phenomenon in antiquity and when one wanted to vilify it was no problem to apply that to entire nations. Paul was not an exception to the rule. Political correctness was not his strongpoint. What Witherington and Stowers are doing is to anachronistically attempting to be politically correct. What they should be doing rather is to acknowledge that Scriptures can sometimes be dangerous and can sometimes be used to destroy people.

sacrificial death, usually reserved for criminals, they could not have had a chance of being incorporated in the nation of the universal God.

3.3.4 Paul's Rhetorical Dialogue with Fellow Jew in Romans 3:1-9

The encoded Paul has been addressing and characterising an interlocutor and now in Romans 2:25-29, he argues the criterion for acceptability by God that applies equally to the Jews and the non-Jews. In the Jewish interlocutor's view, Paul here seems to insist that membership in Jewish community provides no advantages and is valueless. Such a view is resisted in the response to the query, and the benefits of Israel are listed (v2) besides generating an imaginary conversation. In this dialogue, there are various types of *rhetorical questions* (1, 3, 5, 7, 8) followed by [objections] rejecting false conclusions of **nh. genoito** and **ou pantwj**.⁸⁷

However, the identity of the questioner is problematic. And logically, this is true about the one objecting. Stowers' (1994:165) assigning of Romans 3:1, 4, 6, and 9a to the interlocutor and other verses to Paul is contentious. Elliott (2008:105) agrees with Stowers that teachers generally used *leading questions* and *false conclusions* to move their fictitious hearers to the right conclusions. But to Elliott's (2008:105) puzzle and dismay, Stowers (1981) read those rhetorical questions (3:1, 3, 5, 8, and 9), not as Paul's leading questions, but as Jew's *objections*, of which he had (in 1994) modified but still insisted that vv 1 and 9 are objections. Having problematised their proposals without offering a final answer, there is need to maintain the ambiguity in regard to designating exact questions and answers to the particular apostrophic debating partners.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ The encoded Paul eagerly advances to specify the exact nature of the Jew's covenantal advantages. He then turns to Jew's privileges and accountability (3: 1-9), with a logical rhetorical question: "What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew. . ? (v1). That is to say, his address continues till interlocutor Jew interrupts with an objection. Jews indeed have real privileges (1-2), but these privileges are founded upon, and do not undermine, God's righteousness (3-8). Jews have no defence. They can raise no excuse (v9).

⁸⁸ As such, Witherington (2004: 93) contends: "the question in vv 3, 5, 7, and 8 are not objections from the interlocutor but Paul's own probing questions meant to make the dialogue partner rethink things. In the diatribe it is traditionally the teacher who asks the probing or daring questions, as in Socratic dialogue." How can leading questions be assigned to interlocutor; yet these rhetorical questions were intended to help in tracking the important turning points in an argument (Witherington 2004: 110). If they are interlocutor's then he is the one leading the conversation through leading questions. And if so, there is a risk of turning points in an argument without the consent of the author. But I do insist that herein Paul "drives" his discussant partner "to be witness." Both are in agreement that God's faithfulness to his word and gracious activity to all people is steadfast. In response (vv3-4) to the questions of verse one, the interlocutor affirms

Most probably, one can also read the rhetorical questions (3:1, 5, 8, and 9) as Paul's leading questions, but the one in verse 3 and **nh. genito** and **ouv pantwj** as interlocutor's. But still there are numerous uncertainties with such a proposal. Indeed, it is almost impractical to accurately allocate questions and answers to the specific apostrophic debating partners. As a result, such amendments obviously confront Stowers' insights about the way teachers used leading questions to shape audience's perceptions and attitudes. Such a reading, in accord with Stowers (1994:162-164) but contrary with his application, regards leading questions as Paul directed to the interlocutor.⁸⁹

Moreover, Paul is not confronting a fellow Jew but rather he is *enlisting* a Jew colleague, as his non-Jewish audience witness. In unison, they agree that *if* such sins are committed, irrespective of ethnicity, judgement is deserved. The Jew interlocutor is not provoked to a defence, because he is talked about and talked "to" only in front of the implied audience. They enthusiastically that Jews enjoy no defence against judgment. The non-Jewish audience upon "perceiving" this imaginary conversation is meant to learn an important lesson on how God deals with the Jews, his impartiality. The encoded Paul to an extent argued himself into a dilemma, because the law was indeed given to the Jews, and the law indeed specifies circumcision but in the process he is indeed coming closer to the answers he provides in 3:21-31. But also the reference to the Jews [they] here points away from the encoded author and the implied audience; and at the same time, establishes a workable relationship between them, both are harmonious observers. This explanation to his non-Jewish implied audience is done through addressing the "Jew." From a rhetorical and in this case *apostrophical* perspective, what is being observed is the fact that ἰλαστήριον can bring about the relationship between the Jews and the non-Jews. The latter have been afforded the opportunity to become members of the Jewish family. They are convinced that its performativity can facilitate the two groups

exactly what Paul's argument hold: whatever happens, God is faithful to his promises. Consequently, Elliott (2008: 139-141) modified conversation by assigning the leading questions in verses 1 and 3 to Paul.

⁸⁹ For example, unlike Stowers' reading, in verse 9a Paul's question contains an "unthinkable alternative" that forces the interlocutor to reject it and admittedly state the logical alternative that Jews are advantageous. The interlocutor can only answer it as per Paul's wish. Perhaps this is what Paul desired. Through such a conversation encoded Paul identifies a particular group [within or outside the "the implied audience"] to whom *he* constitutes a particular identity- circumcision. Circumcision and possessing of God's oracle are probable indicators of the shared knowledge intended to persuade the implied "audience" to a given direction.

to have the family connections with Abraham. This is because this perspective of *apostrophe* in service of *stasis* theory the “Jew” has been redefined. This is *status definitionis*. To the non-Jewish implied audience it has proved that the Jews have to be understood differently. God’s impartiality has persistently been fore-grounded. His truthfulness is steadfast in any ethno-geographical context.

3.3.5 Paul’s Rhetorical Dialogue with a Jew Interlocutor in Romans 3:27-4:2

The author has rhetorically proved that what he speaks about is scriptural (3:10-20). By the use of term **gegraptai**, he points to past time, to that which was written for others who are neither the encoded author nor the implied audience. The passive signifies stability. The argument is that this quotation, which is a source of authoritative argument herein, indicates that the amicable interaction between the encoded author and the implied audience is done in relation to time and space.

Having situated the Jews in a given arena of past time and space, the encoded author and the implied audience in present are harmonious onlookers. At this point, the encoded Paul draws the attention to the present time and current space [**Nuni. de** v21] where mainly the implied audience would be on focus. That is to say, he maintains inclusive elements but with specific inclination to those among the implied audience. He insists that this is a revelation of God’s righteousness (3:21-26). And then, in a dialogue, the encoded Paul maintains that all human boasting is excluded.⁹⁰

There are certain problems with Stowers’ viewpoint, which necessitates alteration. Yet, there is no pledge to offer ultimate clarifications. According to the encoded author, the portrayal of Jesus as “sacrifice” was intended to demonstrate God’s righteousness. This is because in his forbearance he had passed over the sins committed beforehand [gentiles’] and they stand unpunished, it was to demonstrate his own righteousness at the present time, in an attempt to be just and the one who justifies those

⁹⁰ Inclusive elements includes **pantaj touj pisteuontaj** [v22]; **pantej ga. r hparon kai. usterouantai** [v23].

In diatribal format Paul: “as if he has given a brief sermon in vv 21-26 and now allows time for questions and answers” (Witherington 2004: 110). That is to say, Paul interrogates his Jewish interlocutor (Stowers 1994: 233-234).

who lies upon Jesus' faith (vv25-26). Then the first rhetorical question commences in verse 27.⁹¹

In the modified conversation, the questions particularly in 3:27, 29, and 31 are Paul's probing questions, not the interlocutor's. They contain "unthinkable alternatives" that forces the interlocutor to reject them. The interlocutor can only, contrary to his opinion, answer them as per Paul's wish. Ultimately they enable Paul to make a right conclusion. The interlocutor provides evidence for a conclusion that Paul makes, faith eliminates bragging as in the case of Abraham.⁹²

Of significance is the fact that the interpersonal politics has not been terminated. As a matter of fact, the politics of relations between the encoded author, the implied audience and the Jews solidifies as Abraham is portrayed to be the ancestral forebear of both the Jews and the non-Jews. The inclusiveness of the latter in that family magnifies their interrelation. The argument is that the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον enacts equality between the circumcised [**peritonim**] and the uncircumcised [**akrobustian**]. Through it, not only Abraham is portrayed to be their ancestral grandparent, but God is God of both the Jews and the non-Jews. It solidifies when Abraham is staged as an example, a prototype of what a Jew entails, an *exemplum* of faith (Keck 2005:118). It is faith, not circumcision, which has made him the father of all nations. His use of Abraham, as well as David later on, has more persuasive power. The reason for this is that the record of Abraham is taken from authoritative divine Scripture. The encoded author and the implied audience in harmony are currently spectators to **Abraam** who is

⁹¹ I doubt Stowers' assigning *leading rhetorical questions* (3: 27, 27, 31; 4: 1) to interlocutor and *objections* (3: 27, 27, 3, 5, 8, and 9) to Paul (Keck 2005: 114). This, according to me, contradicts his own proposal concerning them. They ought to be Paul's leading questions (cf. Stowers 1994: 162-164) or his "own probing questions" (Witherington 2004: 93) intended to help in tracking the important turning points in an argument (Witherington 2004: 110). Contrary to Stowers' reading, thus, I propose that *leading questions* (3: 27, 27, 29, 31; 4: 1, 3) are Paul's, not interlocutor's. I maintain the ambiguity in regards to designating precise questions and answers to the particular apostrophic debating partners. From v27 the encoded author points to a particularised group but with ambiguity of identity. Perhaps it is Jews for therein are references to boasting [**kauchsij**], law [**nomou**], and Abraham [**Abraa. ni**] that may be associated with them. These concepts are not elaborated thus, they are shared codes.

⁹² It is also noted that this diatribe uses a less confrontational "we" as opposite to the provocative "you" in the previous section (Witherington 2004: 110). Through such imaginary interrogation, Paul rhetorally persuades and wishes to influence his audience to accept that boasting has been eradicated by faith. Any person, a Jew or gentile, is acceptable to God by faith, apart from keeping the law. He insists that faith is not undermining the law, but upholding it in its original intention. The fact that God has made the unrighteous gentile righteous through faith eliminates Jews' boasting.

situated in the past time and space. In unison, they can now call him “our father” (**patroj** **hivn Abraam**v12 cf. v16). Additionally, by ascertaining that God accepted Abraham on the basis of grace, the encoded author dismantles any obstructions to the way of grace, which magnifies the interrelation between the encoded author and the non-Jewish implied audience.

Moreover, the politics of relations between the encoded Paul, the non-Jewish implied audience and the Jews solidifies as Abraham is portrayed to be the ancestral forebear of both the circumcised and the un-circumcised. In this passage there are constant references to **peritonij** [circumcision] and **akrobustiaj** [un-circumcised]. And seemingly, the inclusiveness of the latter in the Abrahamic family, which has been achieved through ἰλαστήριον, magnifies their interrelation. As a result, Abraham being the father of all who believe undercuts the ethnic and cultural boasting (cf. Witherington 2004:110; Keck 2005:118). The drift of the argument is meant to persuasively lead the conclusion that faith is reckoned as righteous and Abraham is an example. Evidently then Abraham here is much more than just an “example” of faith. His experience then becomes paradigmatic for spiritual “descendants,” both the Jews and the non-Jews. Through it, the encoded author makes it clear to his non-Jewish audience that it is not obligatory to be the “Jew” to be a member of Abrahamic household. The portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον has enacted their inclusivity.⁹³

Through these *apostrophes* and the rhetorical dialogues, the implied audience has directly been engaged alongside the encoded Paul to witness and confirm that the self-righteous Jew has no shield in himself. I have argued that the ritual of sacrifice would have made sense to the non-Jewish audience when it was used to demonstrate that a radical change of situation has taken place. The non-Jews had been afforded the opportunity to become “Jews” without circumcision. This is because via this perspective of *apostrophe* in service of *stasis* theory several “Jewish” elements have been redefined. It is for that reason that Paul is constantly also defining or redefining. The good news (gospel) is defined, what Jew is, what circumcision is, what the righteousness of God is,

⁹³ Witherington (2004: 116) illustrates: “The appeal to examples in a staple item in deliberative rhetoric, for, as Aristotle says, “examples are most suitable for deliberative speakers, for it is by examination of the past that we divine, and judge the future” (*Rhetoric* 1. 9. 40). The use of such example is in fact an inductive method of persuasion.”

and even ἰλαστήριον itself, albeit cursorily touched upon, also entail a redefinition, but these redefinitions form the substructure of the argument which is concerned with the fact that non-Jews have a right righteousness owing to a sacrifice made. As a result, the non-Jewish implied audience has to understand the “Jews” as well as their standing before Jews differently. In my view, this is *status definitionis* serving as *status qualitatis*. If the identity of the Jews is differently constructed, the non-Jews can be integrated into Abrahamic family, the nation of God. It has been displayed to the non-Jewish implied audience that they indeed have a right to God’s righteousness. The non-Jewish implied audience have realised that Jesus has functioned for them as an ἰλαστήριον with the purpose of enacting their inclusivity into Abraham’s dynasty. It has been made clearer to them that without Jesus’ sacrificial death, customarily set aside for criminals, they had no chance of being incorporated into God’s nation. In a dialogue, the encoded Paul maintains that all human boasting has been disqualified by the enactments of ἰλαστήριον. For sure faith has eliminated bragging as in the case of Abraham, *exemplum*, paradigmatic ancestral forebear of both the Jews and the non-Jews.

3.4 Common Social and Cultural Topics

3.4.1 Introduction

The first analysis was done from the perspective of Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, using its categories selectively in conjunction with the categories from Reception Criticism, such as encoded author and implied audience, in order to demonstrate how Romans 3:21-31 acquires prominence within the flow of the argument, but also to demonstrate the multi-dimensionality of the text itself. The second section presented on the *apostrophe* with the intention of yielding more specific information concerning the encoded author, the implied audience and the interlocutor. By “staging” a “Jew,” through this perspective of *apostrophe* in service of *stasis* theory the “Jew” has been redefined. It has displayed to the non-Jewish implied audience that they indeed have to understand a Jew differently. I have maintained that this is *status definitionis* because it has enabled the encoded author to confirm to his non-Jewish implied audience that they too have been afforded the opportunity to become members of the Jewish family without

circumcision. Now I intend to apply another complementary approach in order to demonstrate that Romans 3:21-31 indeed is given prominence and also demonstrate the underlying social principles with reference to this text. In order to explain *why* Paul describes Jesus as ἰλαστήριον, the purpose for which such a portrayal was necessary and the effect such utterance was expected to have, it is at this point that an examination of the profitability and applicability of Robbins' third step of social and cultural phenomena is explored. The questions that I have raised in the previous chapters will guide: What could be the functionality of ἰλαστήριον in the politics of inclusiveness of the non-Jews among Abrahamic family? Which social elements did Paul extrapolate which were common to his audience to signify ἰλαστήριον? What values did ἰλαστήριον have within ethnicity and status of the non-Jews in sight of the Jews?

The common social and cultural topics concern the social and cultural systems and institutions that a text both presupposes and evokes. In rhetorical terms, this is a matter of analysing "common topics" in a text (cf. Kennedy 1991:45-47, 50-51, 174-213; Robbins 1996b:159-who banks on Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.3.7-9, 2.19-24). In other words, another way to "thicken" the social and cultural analysis of a text is to explore the manner in which it evokes social and cultural systems and institutions in the Mediterranean world. Meaning that, these topics exhibit broad insights about systems of exchange and benefit. This category also reflects the socio-cultural world in which the author and his community lived, which safeguards interpreters from "ethnocentric" and "anachronistic" interpretations. These topics in the discourse display the general view of the context in which its people lived (Robbins 1996a:71, 75-77; Robbins 1996b:159).

In this section, the common social and cultural topics of the first century Mediterranean world are investigated and their appropriateness in analysing Romans 1-4. From social and cultural perspective, the following socio-cultural phenomena are implicitly or explicitly stated in the text: patron-client relationship, honour-shame and riposte.⁹⁴ Below is the presentation of each of these topics within the categories of the *dispositio* framework, with the attention focused on Romans 3:21-31. It is necessary to investigate specifically the text's social and cultural world and its people as depicted in

⁹⁴ I do acknowledge that such elements (like patron-client relationship, honour and shame and riposte) belong to the methodology of *social-scientific criticism*.

the text, in pursuit of the “rhetorical situation” to which the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον (Rm 3:25-26) can be construed as a “fitting response.”

3.4.2 Patron-client Relationship within Romans 1-4

The group-oriented persons of the antiquity were implanted in patronage relations. This relationship was significantly important in their political, social, legal, religious and economic aspects of lives (Saller 1982:203). It is also notable that whatever happened on a social level, could also be deployed on a theological level. DeSilva (2000:767) describes patronage as: “[T]he basic building block of Greco-Roman society. In a society where a minority of people controlled the majority of the resources, the patron-client relationship was the path to both well-being and improving one’s lot of life.” In antiquity, an individual’s social status and power were indicated by the size of his/her clientele. On the one hand, the patron’s ranking was inaugurated by his/her clientele. But also, on the other hand, the client’s potential for “upward mobility” or even deterioration leaned on the power and the effectiveness of his/her patrons as well as their willingness to lend aid. Primarily, the patron gave his client safety, gifts and even remunerated him /her with an office. The latter was to explicitly pay tribute to the former (Saller 1982:203-205).

Premised that the patron-client relationship exists throughout Romans each category of the *dispositio* is briefly looked into to see the demonstration of the relationship. In the *exordium*, the encoded Paul portrays himself as **douloj** of his master [**douloj Vhsou/ Cristou**]. His patron awarded him with apostolic office, an “ambassador.” As the called apostle [**proskekhlhmenoj apostoloj**] to evangelise his non-Jewish audience, the encoded Paul assumes lordship (Graston 1997:1). And logically his implied audience becomes his client. For favours received from the patron, clients were expected to respond with “loyalty and commitment” (Saller 1982:205; Malina and Neyrey 1996:163). This implies that he is their master unto whom they ought to be a receptive audience. Consequently, he prefers to act as the broker of God’s patronage, a

dispenser of God's favour, including the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον.⁹⁵ Turning to Romans 3:21-31, the encoded author's clients includes both **peritonim** and **akrobustian** (v30), the Jews and the Gentiles (v29). The implied audience having been excluded from Abrahamic blessings could regard themselves in need of certain favours. As a broker of God's patronage, Paul impartially distributes God's favours to "all" [**pantaj** (3:21), **pantej** (v23)]. These favours, enactments of ἰλαστήριον, have brought about inclusiveness of the non-Jews into Abrahamic dynasty. Reciprocally Abraham is portrayed to be the ancestral forebear of the circumcised and the un-circumcised.

In the *propositio* and in the *probatio*, the patron-client is used differently. Besides the social level, it is deployed on a theological level. On a theological level, the master-slave patronage is exhibited in the *probatio* and in the *propositio* as well as in the text under investigation (Hultgren 2011:156). "As property, slaves were bought and sold privately or through "retailers"...Freedom, the goal of every slave, required the generosity of the master, his willingness to lose the monetary value of his property" (Gorman 2004:7). In the context of Graeco-Roman's view of gods as saviours who intervened in human life to help (Hans-Josef 2000:28) in order to transform a situation for better (Luther 1996:24). Romans 3:25-26 portrays God's gracious generosity and willingness to save humanity from exclusivity (cf. Hultgren 2011:156). In consequence to this "ransom-rescue" (v24), by faith of Jesus the non-Jews now belong to Abrahamic family. Thus, on a theological level, not on a purely societal level, this text evokes master-slave patronage, because "all positive relationships with God are rooted in the perception of patron-client contracts" (Robbins 1996a:77).

Illustratively, in the *propositio*, relationship shown in the gospel, specifically "salvation," is the inclusiveness of the non-Jews among God's people. Its determined

⁹⁵ So, as their patron, he ought to bring about obedience (1: 5, 11, 13) and holiness (vv5, 7) among his clients. As a broker, dispenser of various favour from his master, Paul thanks God through Jesus Christ for them all, because of their famous faith. He consistently remembers (v9) and prays (v10) for them. He has undivided desire to visit them and minister to them (vv10-11) in order to strengthen them by impartation of the gospel and spiritual gift. But, ultimately, this aims at reciprocal services: that both -patron and clients-may reciprocally be encouraged by each other's faith. So the encoded Paul depicts himself as the Lord's servant, the one who called them. As their apostolic patron, though constantly prevented, he had planned numerous visits. The intention of visiting them was to have a harvest among them, just as he had had among the other Gentile clients (v13). As their patron, the eagerness to evangelise his clients, both Greeks and non-Greeks, arose from his recognition that the gospel is an unpaid debt and thus an obligatory service to them at Rome (vv14-15).

demarcation, the Jew and the non-Jews, points to the interactional social elements of salvation. The former have been enjoying the patron's favour for ages, but now even the latter are inclusive. Then the Jews and the non-Jews, as well as the encoded Paul, are clients who are exceedingly proud of "salvation." "All" ought to be faithful servants of the "gospel." In reference to ἰλαστήριον, this inclusiveness of the non-Jews is cemented and through its enactment they have come part of Abrahamic family.

Also in the *probatio*, on a theological level as argued above, both the Jews and the non-Jews are clients while sin is their master. In addition, the former are slaves to the law. For instance, the patron-client relationship include: due to the enslavement to the wickedness and godlessness God's wrath is revealed from heaven against them (Rm 1:18-19). As slaves, their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened (1:20-21). They are enslaved to mortal images rather than to the immortal God, to the sinful desires of their hearts of sexual impurity and to shameful lusts (1:22-27). Due to their enslavement, they have depraved mind and are filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They not only continuously do these evil things but also approve those who practice them (1:28-32).⁹⁶

Significantly in Romans 3:25-26 there seems to be additional patronage vocabulary implied in the text by the words **τῶν προγεγονότων ἀμαρτημάτων** (the sins that were previously committed). If this phrase implies continual sinning of the implied audience it then here, as elsewhere, evokes master-slave patronage on a theological level. As argued, slavery formed an integral part of the Greco-Roman way of life (Williams 1999:111; Gorman 2004:7). It is this status that might have prompted the encoded author's description of humanity's condition as a form of slavery (Rm 6:19). The human race especially the implied audience, by nature, is in service to sin. In a personified manner: sin reigns (5:21; 6:12), sin has a mastery (6:14), which is the counterpart of God's mastery (6:13, 22), either we serve sin (6:6, 16, 17, 20) or we are set free to serve God (6:22) which implies one's subjection to an absolute master. On the other hand, the

⁹⁶Additionally, the Jews are also enslaved by sin and law, their stubbornness and unrepentant hearts which have stored up wrath (2: 1-3). Could Jews have regarded themselves as patrons and Gentiles as their clients? Could the privileges of being guides for the blind, light for those in the darkness, instructors of the foolish, and teachers of infants (2: 17-24) have led them to regard themselves as patrons? But now they, both Jews and non-Jews, ought to be clients to Paul and his "gospel" (3: 21-26). Abraham, their forefather and exemplary patron, was justified by faith alone. So was David. Subsequently, his non-Jewish clients ought to rely on faith as the only way for the inclusiveness among God's people (4: 1-12).

thought of service to a new master (God) is also expressed in the phrase “under grace” (6:14-15; 6:1). Particularly Romans 3:24 has a commercial term, **apolutrwsēwj**, which is borrowed from a marketplace (Stott 1995:113; Hultgren 2011:156). This redemption, just like Israelites who were redeemed first from Egyptian captivity (Ex 15:13) and then from Babylonian (Is 43:1), implies that humanity were unable to liberate themselves which necessitated God’s generous intervention (Rm 3:22-26; cf. Hultgren 2011:156). Such gracious liberation has been made possible through ἰλαστήριον, which impartially results into inclusiveness of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic connections. Through the performativity of ἰλαστήριον, Abraham is enabled to be an ancestor of the Jews and the non-Jews.

3.4.3 Honour and Shame in Romans 1-4

Honour and shame were major elements in the first-century Mediterranean world (cf. Malina & Neyrey 1996:176-177; Gorman 2004:4). “The social values of honor and dishonour were foundational to the first century culture whether Roman, Greek or Egyptian” (DeSilva 2004:125). These phenomena “dominantly” characterised their societies (Malina & Neyrey 1991:15). Viewed from a patriarchy perspective that dominated first-century society (cf. Williams 1999:51; DeSilva 2000:20; Gorman 2004:6), on the one hand, *honour* stands for a person’s rightful place in society, one’s social standing (Robbins 1996a:76; Gorman 2004:4). “Honour is a claim to worth along with the social acknowledgement of worth. The purpose of honour is to serve as a social rating that entitles a person to interact in specific ways with his or her equals, superiors and subordinates, according to the prescribed cultural cues of the society” (Robbins 1996a:76). Honour was either ascribed or acquired (Robbins 1996a:76; Malina & Neyrey 1996:76; Moxnes 1996:20). On the other hand, shame refers to nonconformity to the prescribed societal norms, or when honour is lost and one is seen less than valuable (Robbins 1996a:76; DeSilva 2000:20).⁹⁷

These phenomena were “group” values, which were determined differently by different groups. Besides, honourableness or/and shamefulness were indicated by

⁹⁷ *Ascribed honour* happens to a person passively through birth, family connections, or endowments by notable persons of power. While, *acquired honour* in honour actively sought and garnered most often at the expense of one’s equals (cf. Robbins 1996a: 76; Moxnes 1996: 20).

components of gender: “male” and “female” (Malina and Neyrey 1996:176; Knust 2006:27), as well as by terms such as “boys” and “girls” (Moxnes 1996:23-24). The implication here is that honour and shame were “general,” not individualistic, attributes that were given to those slaves, women, and, to a lesser extent, laborers (often thought to be former slaves, i.e., “freedmen”) are deficient in virtue.” So, transgressing one’s prescribed “group” values and boundaries facilitated one’s movement accordingly, upward mobility or deterioration of his/her social standing.

Honour and shame are so much interconnected that one cannot talk about one without explicitly implying the other. In regards to Romans 1-4, I now proceed to discuss these claims to worthiness or worthless along with the social acknowledgement of worth. In connection to the genealogy of Jesus in the *exordium*,⁹⁸ it is an honourable “descendant” or “seed of David,” also declared as the “son of God” (Rm 1:3-4), who eventually was shamefully sacrificed. Think of what a Roman would have thought of an event like crucifixion. Shame! Sacrificial events evoked shame and nothing but shame. Yet, this “scandalous” event is infused with honour by having it redefined as a “gift” in Romans 3:21-31. In that regard it would be important to point that Paul maintains hospitality codes and expects receptivity and acceptability of that “gift.”

In regards to the *propositio*, the honour-shame elements are shown when the encoded author explicitly claims that he is exceedingly proud of the gospel that brings about the inclusiveness of the non-Jews among God’s people. He states: “I am not ashamed of the gospel” (Rm 1:16). If he is “not ashamed,” then he is boastful, he is

⁹⁸ Illustratively, the encoded Paul’s ascribed honour, endowments by notable person of power, is indicated by the fact that he is Jesus’ appointee: **apostoloj**, **klhto. j** and **afwrismnoj**. By the virtue of God’s call and love, his implied audience, even though the non-Jews, are saints- **klhtoj agioj** (called to be saints) (v7). Their ascribed honour, as **klhtoi**/(vv 6-7), is found in their patron, the one who called them. Though being “gentiles” (v8) may be regarded as ‘shameful’ (Knust 2006: 27), their famous and globally “reported” faith (v8) that led the encoded author to thank their patron God was certainly honourable. The encoded Paul has not ignored them; he personally yet persistently remembers them in prayers (vv9-10). The reciprocal blessings of the author-audience fellowship (v11), ‘some spiritual gifts’ and the strengthening of each other, is honourableness since none of them is deficient.

In Romans’ *narratio*, although the encoded author’s long absence and “absconding” of his evangelistic duty to his implied audience may be viewed as shame, his habitual planning to visit them (vv 11, 13) that had constantly been prevented was unquestionably nobleness. Even if it was shameful to have a debt unpaid to his “Greeks and non-Greeks” (v14) audience, the author honourably depicts his willingness to preach (v15) and the justifiable obstructions so far. The orator’s *ethos* herein that targeted persuasiveness, his irresistible duty to his implied audience, his consistent enthusiasm to impartially execute his long-standing missionary agenda, as opposed to a sudden opportunistic desire, may be perceived as honour.

proudly honoured by it. That is, Paul is telling his non-Jewish implied audience that what was shameful to the Jews (namely the transgression of boundaries between the Jew and the non-Jew) is an honour for him. In Romans 3:21-31 this reversal from a position of shame to a position of honour abounds. For example, shamefully “all,” the Jews and the non-Jews, have sinned and fallen short of God’s glory, but all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus, which is nobleness. Meaning that, they have been rescued from shameful bondage to the honourable “ransom-rescue” (v24). While constant slavery to sins (**τῶν προγεγονότων ἀνομιῶν**, vv25-26) is shameful, but through the performativity of ἰλαστήριον those who have Jesus’ faith are honorably declared righteous. Through ἰλαστήριον, the non-Jews have been saved from shameful exclusivity to impartial inclusivity. They now belong to Abrahamic family by faith of Jesus, even if they were formerly regarded as uncircumcised (v30) and Gentiles (v29), “outsiders.” The argument is that all these are part of the functionalities of ἰλαστήριον.

With respect to *probatio*, the honour-shame phenomena “dominantly” characterises it. It is apparent that for one to be a lawbreaker, which a deviation from societal norms (Robbins 1996a:76; DeSilva 2000:20), irrespective of whether circumcised or not, is indeed shameful (2:26-29).⁹⁹

⁹⁹ On the one hand, if Gentiles’ godlessness and wickedness has suppressed the truth that brought about wrath (Rm 1: 18-19), then this is shameful. Is it not disgraceful for them to persistently despise God’s revealed invisible qualities? In addition, they neither glorified God nor thanked him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened (1: 20-21). Contrary to their claims, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for man-made images (1: 22-23). And in my view it is disgraceful to become fools.

Consequently, God gave them over into the sinful desires of their hearts: to sexual impurity after degrading their bodies, exchanging God’s truth for a lie and worshipping and serving created things rather than the Creator (1: 24-25). Accordingly, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Both women and men, inflamed with lust, exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. They committed indecent acts with others of same sex (1: 26-27). According to Romans 1: 28-32, because they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind and they did what ought not to be done. They became filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They were full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They became gossipers, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful. They invented ways of doing evil. They disobeyed their parents. They became senseless, faithless, heartless and ruthless. Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such shameful things deserve death, they continue to do these very things and also approve of those who practice them. The argument is that if these are examples of nonconformities to the prescribed societal norms, then they are indeed true example of dishonor (Robbins 1996a: 76; deSilva 2000: 20).

On the one hand, Jews too have no excuse. Is it not disgraceful to be excuseless? Because of their shameful stubbornness and their unrepentant heart, they are storing up wrath in God’s impartial righteous judgment day. But honourably, to those who persistently do good and who seek glory, honour and

In Romans 3, the Jews indeed are bestowed with honour. Circumcision was a token of honour, the honour to belong to God's nation. As a matter of fact, they "have been entrusted with the very words of God" (v2). But disgracefully their unfaithfulness does not nullify God's faithfulness (v3). Honourably God's truthfulness endures despite humans' falsehood (v4). God is righteous even when he expresses his anger (v5). Conclusively, both the Jews and the non-Jews are all shamefully under sin. None is righteous (3:9-17). But now worthily righteousness from God, through Jesus' faith, has been made known. On the one hand, the non-Jews belong to a "group of people" that can be called the "outsiders," a group that disgracefully sinned (v23). And those outside are objects of shame, simply because they are outside, they are dirt. But, on the other hand, all are honourably justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. Jesus is set forth as ἱλαστήριον with the purpose of demonstrating justice, because in God's forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished (3:25-26). As a result, honourably ἱλαστήριον has turned exclusivity of the non-Jews from Abrahamic family to inclusivity. The argument is that this inclusion magnifies honour because Abraham becomes the father of all (4:18, cf. 16), both the circumcised and the uncircumcised (3:27-31; 4:12). Emphasising it differently, paradoxically ἱλαστήριον evokes shame and honour at the same time. To a Roman crucifixion, Jesus sacrificed, was indeed shameful. Yet, this "scandalous" event, the portrayal of Jesus as

immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who selfishly follow evil, they will face wrath and anger (2: 1, 5-7). In other words, there will be trouble and distress for all evil doers which is dishonourable; but glory, honour and peace for everyone who does good, either a Jew or a non Jew. No favouritism with God (2: 9-13). Such impartiality bear notice, because through **ἱλαστήριον** inclusivity of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic chosen race has been demonstrated.

Moreover, is it not shameful to be contradictory, saying one thing but doing the other? For example, Jews rely on the law and brag about their relationship to God. They regard themselves as guiders for the blind, light for those who are in the dark, instructors of the foolish, and teachers of infants. Yet they themselves do evil things: stealing, committing adultery, abhorring idols and robbing temples, breaking the law. Contrary to their teaching (v17-23), God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of them (2: 17-24). Circumcision has value, honourable, if they observe the law, but if they break the law, they have become as though they had not been circumcised (2: 25). If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn the circumcised who, even though they have the written code and circumcision, are lawbreakers (2: 26-27). A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God (2: 28-29).

ἱλαστήριον, is infused with honour by having it redefined as a “gift,” a precious “gift” that brings about the inclusivity of the non-Jews into Abrahamic family.

3.4.4 Riposte in Romans 1-4

Riposte, also known as challenge-response, is a type of social communication in the antiquity in which messages are transferred from a source (challenger) to a receiver. A message is a symbolized thing (a word, a gift, an invitation) or event (some action) or both. The channels are always public, and the *publicity* of a message guarantees that the receiver reacts in some way (Robbins 1996a:80). It is worth remembering that the *challenge* is either a positive or negative claim to enter the social space of another. A positive reason for entering the social space of another would be to gain some share in that space or to gain a cooperative; while a negative reason would be to dislodge another from his/her social space, either temporally or permanently. “In the first-century Mediterranean world, every social interaction that took place outside one’s family or outside one’s circle of friends was perceived as a challenge to honour.... Thus gift-giving, invitations to dinner...-all these sorts of interaction take place according to the partners of honour called challenge-response” (Robbins 1996a:81).¹⁰⁰ I will apply *riposte* because these first four chapters of Romans entail exactly the challenge of crossing boundaries and entering alternative social spaces, the non-Jews have been integrated into Abrahamic family. As I have argued, Romans 1-4 has displayed to the non-Jewish implied audience that they too indeed have a right to God’s righteousness, unlike before.

With reference to *riposte* in Romans 1-4, it is premised that the encoded author, a challenger, wishes to extricate his non-Jewish audiences from their “social sphere.” For example, in the *propositio*, the challenger’s message is the gospel, which is God’s power unto “salvation” of all believers, the Jews and for the non-Jews. This message anticipates permanent dislodgement of non-Jewish community from their social circle and their ultimate inclusiveness among Abrahamic family.

¹⁰⁰ Challenge-response, in the antiquity, in the context of honour entailed at least three phases: first, the challenge in terms of some action (word, deed or both) on the part of the challenger; second, the perception of the message by both the receiver (individual) and the public at large; and third, the receiver’s reaction and the public’s evaluation of that reaction (Robbins 1996a: 80).

The inclusion of the non-Jewish society into Jewish family is “dominantly” characterised in *probatio* especially when the quality of life thereof is emphasised. There are permanent dislodgements from one social sphere to another.¹⁰¹ Actually, it also argued that Paul tried to dislodge the Jews from their held specific identity and exclusivity. Relating this to Romans 3:25-26, the outcome of these permanent dislodgements is the inclusivity of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic family. For the effectiveness and the justification for this inclusiveness, God set forth Jesus as ἰλαστήριον in an attempt to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished (3:21-25). Ultimately, the faith principle lastingly disentangles both the Jews and the non-Jews from all and any boasting (vv27-31). As a result, they have been disengaged from their own family and have been included in that of Abraham. Abraham is now the father of both the circumcised and the uncircumcised. Through the display of such dislodgement and then inclusion of the non-Jews in God’s family, the author persuades them to dispel all ethno-geographical distinctions between the Jews and the non-Jews (4:1-12).

3.5 Concluding Remarks

It has been observed that all rhetorical categories of Romans (*exordium*, *narratio*, *propositio*, and *probatio*) have various rhetorical functions. Each topic has been presented within the categories of the *dispositio* framework with attention focused on Romans 3:21-31. Three different complementing approaches have been used for various reasons. The application of Traditional Rhetorical Criticism approach aimed at detecting an argument working towards 3:21-31. Insights gleaned from the rhetorical strategy of *apostrophe* demonstrate how the argument has been embedded within an interaction

¹⁰¹ Therein are permanent dislodgements from one social sphere to another. For example, on the one hand, the encoded author aims at dislodging non-Jews from their godlessness and wickedness that has brought about God’s wrath (Rm 1: 18-19); from their none-glorification attitudes and thankless to God and from their darkened, futile and foolish hearts (1: 20-21); from their adoration of the man-made images (1: 22-23); from the degradation of their bodies; from the worshiping and serving of created things rather than the Creator (1: 24-25); from indecent sexual acts with others of same sex, and from the due penalty of their perversion (1: 26-27); from their depraved mind of doing unworthy things and from the deserved death (1: 28-32) and from trouble and distress of all evil doers to glory, honour and peace (2: 9-13). On the other hand, the encoded Paul endeavours to extricate Jews from their mere outward and physical circumcision to inward circumcision of the heart; from man’s praise to God’s (2: 29-29); from their unfaithfulness (3: 1-5), and from all their evil, from ways of ruin and misery, from their contemptibleness (3: 9-17).

between the encoded author, the implied audience, and the Jewish interlocutor. In addition, it has also indicated how the interaction itself, that is, the debate between the encoded author and the interlocutor playing off in front of the implied audience, forms part and parcel of the argument, leading to the crucial moment of 3:21-31 which functions as pivotal before the beginning of the *exemplum* in Romans 4. Social and cultural phenomena demonstrated the underlying social principles of Romans 3:21-31.

The rhetorical *dispositio* has offered a tentative demarcation of a workable area and a detection of arguments that works towards Romans 3:21-31. The rhetorical position of 3:21-31 within the *dispositio* and its rhetorical role was to enable Paul to identify with his non-Jewish audience and to redefine the Jewishness. The discussions of the rhetorical *dispositio* have elaborated the ethno-geographical context within which ἰλαστήριον amends the Jews' ethnic privileges with the intention of the "outsiders" becoming "insiders." *Dispositio* has acted as the foreground for impartiality to facilitate the accommodation of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic family which results from ἰλαστήριον's performativity. Against this background, my enquiry concerning the *dispositio* has shown that Romans 3:21-31 occupies a crucial place in the argumentative structure. As part of *probatio*, it functions as a summary of the preceding *amplificatio* and yet its reference to faith already hints at the *exemplum* which is to be presented in Romans 4. The use of *apostrophe* has indicated that ἰλαστήριον cannot be interpreted apart or divorced from the religio-political interaction of an implied audience that is constituted as non-Jews and who often functioned within Jewish ideology as the "outsiders," the "dirt," the "sinners," and who were symbolically physically tarnished with non-circumcision and therefore outside the spectre of God's covenantal relationship.

In general, it has been argued that the encoded author has laboured to dismiss any likelihood of discriminatory treatment of the non-Jews based on their ethnic origin. With some elements of *status* of *definitiva* here and there, there are strong components of *status qualitatis* throughout, as he persuades them to dispel all ethno-geographical distinctions between the Jews and the non-Jews. Moreover, he argues that Jewish privileges do not racially exclude the latter. He particularly justifies the ground upon which the non-Jews are included in the company of the "Jewish family" and then hints on the quality of life thereof- *ethos*. Thus, the *exigence* throughout, is to convince the

addressees on how God has brought back the non-Jews into his own legitimate sphere, through faith. This is because through this perspective of *apostrophe* in service of *stasis* theory has several “Jewish” elements that have been redefined. It is for that reason that Paul has constantly redefined them. The good news (gospel) is defined, what Jew is, what circumcision is, what the righteousness of God is, what boasting is, and even ἰλαστήριον itself, albeit cursorily touched upon, also entail a redefinition, but these redefinitions form the substructure of the argument which is concerned with the fact that the non-Jews have a right righteousness owing to a sacrifice made. Significantly, therefore, in relation to Jesus’ portrayal as ἰλαστήριον, this “main function” enlightens us on its performativity and purpose for which such a portrayal was necessary and the effect such utterance was expected to have. Consequently, ἰλαστήριον’s performativity in a context of ethno-geographical distinctions ought to modify the Jews’ ethnic privileges in order to accommodate the non-Jews in the family of Abraham.

In connection to *apostrophe* in Romans, it has been argued that the implied audience has directly been engaged alongside the encoded Paul to witness and confirm that the self-righteous Jew had no shield in himself. The argument was that through this *apostrophe* he had proved, to his non-Jewish audience, God’s impartiality in judging both the Jews and the non-Jews. He also attacked boastfulness and self-righteousness based on the meritorious works and ethnic privileges like circumcision. These issues were indeed important for they drew some light on their inclusiveness in the Abrahamic family. It has been considerably noted that the encoded Paul has framed the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον within apostrophic context and elaborated within paradigmatic context. Illustratively, through *apostrophe*, the non-Jewish implied audience realised that Jesus had functioned for them as an ἰλαστήριον with the purpose of enacting their inclusivity into Abraham’s dynasty. It had been made clearer to them that without Jesus’ sacrificial death, customarily set aside for criminals they had no chance of being incorporated into the nation of God. The non-Jewish implied audience has been persuaded that it is not mandatory to be a “Jew,” to be a member of Abrahamic household. Explicitly, according to the encoded Paul, faith alone, apart from works (4:3-8) and apart from circumcision (vv9-12), is sufficient to gain entrance into Abraham’s spiritual “family.” In a dialogue, the encoded Paul has maintained that all human boasting has been disqualified by the

enactments of ἰλαστήριον. For sure faith has eliminated bragging as in the case of Abraham, *exemplum*, a paradigmatic ancestral forebear of both the Jews and the non-Jews.

Whereas scholars have been interested in the meaning of ἰλαστήριον: “propitiation” (cf. Cottrell 2000:260; Nyquist 2000:170; Bussey 2001:32; Russell 2003:533; Witherington 2004:109; Stevenson 2008:89-90); “expiation” (cf. Johnson 1997:56-57; Ziesler 1997:112-113; Craig 2001:1092; Dunn 2003:214; Tobin 2004:138-139); and “mercy-seat” (cf. Bailey 2000:155-158; Bell 2002:1-27; Hultgren 2011:157) this dissertation explores “*why* Paul describes Jesus as ἰλαστήριον.” With reference to my problematisation, and part of that problematisation was the problem of ἰλαστήριον’s meaning, in chapter I problematised “propitiation,” “expiation” and “mercy-seat” as interpretational models for ἰλαστήριον. Within these models ἰλαστήριον was seen as related to soteriology, to salvation. Furthermore, these models sought its substantiation via harmonisation by finding other texts of similar inclination and tendency. Finally, harmonisation also implied decontextualisation, that is ignoring the contingents of the rhetorical situation, an exigency or a problematisation that is pertinent to the specific context, particular actors, such encoded author, implied audience, real author, real audience, characterisation, the force of persuasion and the evocation of a socio-cultural world in which the arguments would appear sensible. In my view, these theological models of “propitiation,” “expiation,” and “mercy-seat” which neglects the rhetorical situation cannot but lead to a misunderstanding of ἰλαστήριον and a misappreciation of the political effect, and the use of this metaphor signifies within a paradigm of performativity. My argument is that by applying the three-pronged rhetorical models to my text has enabled me to move the discussion away from a purely textual, away from the harmonization of “ideas,” away from a traditional theological paradigm thinking only in terms of soteriology and the salvific to a paradigm where the rhetorical, to where the social-cultural and the religio-political contexts has been taken into consideration.

Concerning the performativity of ἰλαστήριον in such a context, this study has argued that the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον serves to modify the Jews’ ethnic privileges to facilitate the accommodation of the non-Jews in the family of Abraham. For Paul to influence his audience, as circumcision was a sign of inclusivity so is

ἰλαστήριον. That is ἰλαστήριον accomplished the removal of what rendered the non-Jewish implied audience “impure,” as “dirt.” So it brought about inclusivity of the “outsiders.” As a result, the argument is that, the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον is consequently part of a political debate concerning the collective inclusiveness of the non-Jews in the chosen race. This is proved later as the paradigmatic Abraham is staged as the father of “all” believers, the circumcised and the non- circumcised.

Substantially, framing the notion of ἰλαστήριον into the context of *apostrophe* had several functions. The presenting of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον served in the politics of race, of the Jews verses the non-Jews. Then, in that very politics of race, it also worked to demonstrate that God’s righteousness as well as Abrahamic dynasty cannot racially applied, that indeed the non-Jewish implied audience have a right to God’s righteousness now. It further functioned as a symbol of belief and thus admission of the non-Jews as true offspring of Abraham. The notion of ἰλαστήριον functions within the framework of *apostrophe* as reconciliatory sign. Moreover, it terminated another ritual, the blood of Jesus renders the blood of circumcision ineffective. Ultimately, ἰλαστήριον brought about a different genealogy into effect where the circumcised and the non-circumcised share the same father. Whereas it remains ambiguous as pertaining to its meaning, the meaning theologians have work so hard to discover, but the *apostrophic* analysis suggests its performativity and locates this performativity to have the same beneficial effects a divine gift, a self-sacrificing divine gift may bestow, it brings “them,” the “outsiders,” into the circle of God’s nation.

In reference with the appropriateness and applicability of the common social and cultural topic to Romans 3:25-26, these tools enabled the pursuit of the performativity of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. Firstly, not only have they helped in the avoidance of “ethnocentric” and “anachronistic” analysis, but has also enabled to uncover the underlying social principles with reference to this passage. These topics have displayed the general view of the context in which the “persons” of the text lived and interacted. Secondly, the ascribed or acquired honourableness or/and shamefulness of the non-Jewish society significantly has shed light in comprehending the interactive situation once they have been included in the Jewish family. Honourably ἰλαστήριον has turned exclusivity of the non-Jews from Abrahamic family to inclusivity. Stressing it differently,

paradoxically ἰλαστήριον evokes shame and honour at the same time. I have argued that to a Roman, crucifixion, Jesus sacrificed, was indeed shameful. Yet, this “scandalous” event, the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον, was infused with honour by having it redefined as a “gift,” a precious “gift” that brought about their inclusivity into Abrahamic family. Additionally, in connection with Romans 3:27-28, “boasting” also evokes exactly this honour versus shame matrix and Paul has already indicated in 1:16-17 that he is extremely proud of the gospel. “Boasting” is excluded as far as works are concerned but not as far as the gospel is concerned. A redefinition of “boasting” is being provided.

Thirdly, the components of patron-client relationship have also enlightened on the issues pertaining to the Jews versus the non-Jews. The inclusiveness of the non-Jews within the Jews’ dynasty is an enactment of ἰλαστήριον. Reciprocally Abraham is the ancestral forebear of the Jews and the non-Jews. It has been argued that Romans 3:25-26 evokes master-slave patronage on a theological level, not on a purely social level. Fourthly, turning to riposte, there are permanent dislodgements that resulted to the inclusivity of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic family. It has maintained that the first four chapters of Romans entailed exactly the challenge of crossing boundaries and entering alternative social spaces.

The notion of ἰλαστήριον and its performativity becomes sensible in compliance with the socio-cultural conditions of the Jews and the non-Jews of the antiquity. The inclusivity that has been argued for could make sense only in such ethno-geographical distinctions. Based on socio-rhetorical, one is compelled by the value-system underlying the utterance of ἰλαστήριον to ask about its performativity. The socio-cultural environment of relations between the circumcised and the uncircumcised plays a major part when trying to understand ἰλαστήριον. This context ought to be accounted for in the process of pursuing functionality of ἰλαστήριον. Consequently, all the foregoing hint on the ethno-geographical context within which the performativity of ἰλαστήριον had customized the Jews’ ethnic privileges with the aim of accommodating the non-Jews in the family of Abraham. So they have enlightened us on the interactive social context within which such a portrayal was necessary and the effect such utterance was expected to have especially in convincing the addressees on how God had brought them back into his own legitimate sphere, through faith.

We have seen that ἱλαστήριον interpreted within a sacrificial context has received scant attention, and in some cases interpretation has opted for rejection. Yet the following should be taken into consideration: Firstly, the argumentative position of Romans 3:21-31, looked at from the perspective of the *dispositio* not only recapitulates major themes that have been proposed, but it metaphorises the death of Christ as a divine gift (sacrifice) for the first time in the letter. Secondly, the *apostrophic* elements have been used and embedded in the argument, have located the main issue within the religio-political interaction of the Jews and the non-Jews, with the Jews claiming superiority on the grounds of being God's particular nation and brought into nationhood via the ritual mechanism of circumcision. I have problematised these claims to superiority. Thirdly, the notion of ἱλαστήριον is evoked and textually located central to a summary of a debate. Although reconciliatory, it inclines to privilege the non-Jewish implied audience, because it "demonstrates God's righteousness" (v25b) and removes what has separated the outsiders from insiders (v25c), thereby effectively opening up access to a new identity. Fourthly, to a certain extent the metaphorisation of ἱλαστήριον softens the blow for the non-Jewish implied audience, because a death by crucifixion would not have gone down well with a Roman audience. On the other hand, sacrifice was part and parcel of everyday life in Rome, formed part of their value-system, a system that glorified and institutionalised violence. Constant violence, irrefutably brutality, was part and parcel of their value-system of the so-called slaughter-sacrifice (Vernant 1991:293). Within such a system it would have made sense that such an act could effect privileged access to an alternative nation. And it is to this that I now turn.

CHAPTER FOUR

A SOCIO-RHETORICAL APPRAISAL OF JESUS AS SACRIFICE

4.1 Introduction to Sacrifices in the Antiquity

I am working on this chapter because I want to demonstrate that a rhetorical approach to ἰλαστήριον with the objective to integrate the rhetorical situation into the interpretative act necessitates that I need to enquire the sacrificial dimension. In addition, my view is that the sacrificial dimension was downplayed by theological interpretations, whereas a socio-rhetorical interpretation cannot bypass this aspect. In chapter 3 I have used a socio-rhetorical analysis, in particular the version proposed by Vernon Robbins, to identify and elaborate on particular topics. This has highlighted how ἰλαστήριον can be seen to function within the matrices of honour versus shame, patron versus client and challenge versus response (riposte). I have argued that the metaphorisation of Jesus' death as ἰλαστήριον performed to shade the shame of the crucifixion facilitating the acceptance of a crucial element in Paul's argumentation concerning the inclusivity of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic family, the righteousness also for the non-Jews. I have demonstrated how the notion of ἰλαστήριον created a somewhat ambiguous space with a reconciliatory inclination allowing for those who had been despised (the non-Jews) to be integrated into the nation of God, shame inverted into honour. I have revealed how patron versus client relationship emerged in the depiction of ἰλαστήριον as a gift from God, evidence of his righteousness, and how riposte operated in dislodging the non-Jews from their social position and relocating them within the nation of God. It can indeed therefore be said that the performativity of ἰλαστήριον happens by virtue of an intersecting of several underlying social matrices. However, crucial to this argument is the sacrificial or ritual context from which ἰλαστήριον derived. As a matter of fact, ἰλαστήριον is no "idea" proposed, is not an abstract concept, but a concrete mechanism to evoke the sphere of the sacrificial system. Metaphorisation has taken place precisely to express the performativity of a ritual or sacrifice performed by God. It is to this performativity of ritual that I now have to pay attention.

Sacrifice was a predominant cultic practice in Judean as well as in the Graeco-Roman world. Burkert (1983:9) states: “Animal-sacrifice was an all-pervasive reality in the ancient world.” It was executed either at the collective public level or the private one. Although it can be assumed that the Christians of the first century, whether the Jews or the non-Jews, played a part in sacrificial rituals, the practice did not occupy the prominent position it did in Graeco-Roman religion.

As a matter of fact, during the second century the refusal of some early Christians to sacrifice and/or to participate in sacrificial ritual was regarded as an assault. In the third century during the time of Diocletianus just before Constantine came into power, the vehement persecutions against Christians were implemented because of their refusal to sacrifice to the traditional gods of Rome. However, evoking sacrificial terminology in addressing early Christians, especially non-Jewish Christians in Rome, would not have been considered as strange since this practice was part and parcel of their socio-religious everyday life. Moreover, a watertight distinction between a Jew and a Christian was not on the cards at the stage when Paul wrote this letter. So to invest the death of Jesus with terminologies deriving from sacrificial practice could be quite profitable. That is to say, it could be rewarding to “metaphorise” the death of Jesus using sacrificial practice as reservoir of strategies and terminologies, defamiliarise its common use thereby opening space for ambiguity, which would have stimulated the audience’s reaction, involvement, even participation. Sacrificial practices provided access to a comparison of values within a particular community. Paul’s appropriation of the terminologies of sacrificial practice, albeit in a vague sense and not at all elaborated, could therefore give a glimpse into the value-system of the implied audience in Rome. This ultimately allows the possibility to explore what Jesus as ἱλαστήριον accounted for.

In this chapter, four aspects are dealt with. Firstly, I will commence with theoretical observations of sacrifices in antiquity which provide a framework for understanding the sacrificial rituals of the Judean and of the Graeco-Roman societies. Secondly, the intention is to explore sacrificial violence in antiquity with the aim of establishing the type of context within which Paul referred to Jesus as ἱλαστήριον and to foreground its peculiar brutality. Thirdly, the proposal is to peruse the performativity of sacrificial rituals in the antiquity which forms the immediate background of the portrayal

of Jesus as sacrifice and its performativity, *why* Jesus was interpreted to have been sacrificed. Fourthly, I have also the plan to explain sacrifices in early Christianity and in Pauline writings with the purpose of knowing different sacrificial metaphors used by the ancients to explain the sacrificial notion. This then culminates in a consideration of Romans 3:25-27 in an attempt to determine what element Paul extrapolated to differently re-signify ἱλαστήριον and the function that Jesus' sacrifice had within the rhetorical situation of the letter to the Romans.

4.2 Sacrifices in the Antiquity: Theoretical Observations Pertaining to Ritualisation

The aim here is to get acquainted with sacrificial rituals of the Judean and the Graeco-Roman societies, which entails a theoretical framework within which one can interpret these rituals. To a certain extent it is impractical to completely remove the non-theoretical because one requires examples to illustrate what is meant. The plan is to follow a socio-rhetorical analysis, which implies that rhetoricity and performativity of the sacrificial ritual assumes outstanding position, and that attention is paid to the manner it was metaphorised, as argued in first paragraph of this chapter. Putting it differently, what were ritualistic social behaviours or rhetorical acts that sacrifices enacted?

Theoretically, in both Judaic and Graeco-Roman societies, rituals had been invested with power to a level of being an agency of empowerment. Rituals having been institutionalised could produce results (Bell 1992:211). Meaning that they could be seen as performative, they did not simply symbolise. As performative acts, they brought new and alternative situations into existence. They actually achieved something by bringing a particular type of reality into existence (Bell 1992:221). So in the pursuit of rhetoricity of the sacrificial ritual, the attention is focused on the relations of power that functions as the framework.

Worship was, and is, part and parcel of religious practice. There were three principal acts of worship in the ancient world: sacrifices, votive offerings and prayer (cf. Herondan, *Mime* iv as found in Ferguson 1997:145). Sacrificing was significantly common in the Judaic temple, as it was at the Graeco-Roman altars. Hans-Josef (2000:38) quoting Plato (*Euthyphr.* 14c) insists that: “sacrificing means giving something to gods [**dwreisqai**].” From a religious point of view, sacrifice was a means of, especially of a

ritually slaughtered animal or person, offering something or somebody to a deity. In principle, publicly and privately, Roman religion was in essence the performance of rituals. That explains why great emphasis was put on proper observance of rituals (cf. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 13.10 as quoted in Ferguson 1997:145). It is also insisted upon that Christians sacrifice in order to demonstrate their allegiance also to the Roman gods. Although Romans made sacrifices to their deities, especially during their festival times, the performance of rituals most probably might have been the order of the day.

The rituals, especially sacrificial acts, in both Judaic and Graeco-Roman communities had been invested with power. Ritualisation often defined, empowered and constrained the community members (Bell 1992:221). It was a comparatively institutionalised means of objectification, one that constituted “traditional forms of authority” via system of “formalisation” (Bell 1992:211). Most probably such rituals may have gradually attained “relations of power” through repetitive sacrificial performances, which were also realised from “the social body” and then re-appropriated by “the social body” as familiarity (Bell 1992:207). Then seemingly, sacrificing later had become part of their daily living. Bell emphasises that ritualisation controlled the community by “modeling,” “defining,” and “molding.”

Illustratively, on the one hand, the second division of the priestly ministry in Judaic Temple was primarily sanctuary-centred sacrificing, besides the morning and evening sacrifices. Unquestionably, through such forms of ministry, the High Priest made an atonement for the sanctuary, as well as for the people, and brought about cleansing of both (Lev 16:16-20, 30-33) (cf. Rodriguez 1990:139-143; Millar 2000:114; Ministerial Association of the General Conference of SDA 2006:316-8). It had become “natural” with the Jews to sacrifice. Their sacrificial rituals had controlled, modelled and moulded them. On the other hand, just as in the Judaic temple, at the Graeco-Roman altars sacrificing, particularly of animal sacrifice, was a never-ending issue (Burkert 1983:9). Subsequently, sacrificing had become institutionalised, acceptable as part of the reality of their lives. As a result, it became an agency of empowerment. For example, to ensure the successful performativity of sacrifice, regulations were stipulated for its repeated deployment. But it was exactly in this repetition that it also acquired its power. As far as regulations for offering sacrifices were concern, people had deemed it forceful enough to actually reflect

and write down how it should be done. They did not only maintain those regulations, but also preserved and simultaneously handed down the inherited customs from one generation to another (Ferguson 1997:145). The “handing down through generations” within a framework of power relations most likely brought about the repetitions thereof. It stands to reason that its transgenerational appropriation would have contributed to an increase in regarding these sacrificial acts as effects of power.

Moreover, in the Judaic temple and at the Graeco-Roman altars, sacrificing indeed became an agency of empowerment to a level of having exact time of doing it. As a result there were spontaneous and fixed occasions /times for sacrifices. Animal sacrifices normally came in festivals that were celebrated annually or occasionally. The Greeks, especially the old religion, knew only yearly or monthly observance. Nonetheless, less costly rites were observed more frequently (Ferguson 1997:145). Definitely, these discursive practices had acquired such power, that specific moments in time had been decided upon to repeatedly perform the sacrificial acts.

In addition to its temporal deployment as repetitive acts through periods of time, a rhetoric of spatiality also points to an investment of power in the particular place where the sacrifice was done. Sacrifices could not be done at random and at any place. Sacrificing was carried out from a godly appointed place, “an altar” (Hughes 1995:46-47). The repetitions of the sacrificial practices taught the ancients that they could not simply sacrifice any animal anywhere. Specific places were allocated where such acts were committed. It could not just happen anywhere, any place whose hygiene and sanitation was uncertain. It is within the ambit of power relations that specific “place” that was given an exceptional status had been predetermined to enact the sacrificial acts.

Additionally, the ancients deemed their institutionalised sacrificing forceful enough to demand for a “consecrating” performer, a special “chosen” and “empowered” individual, not everybody. According to Bell (1992:207), the ritual construction of power also entailed dynamics whereby the power of ritualisation empowered individuals who may at first appear to be controlled by the rituals. Actually, the sacrificial acts were officiated by persons who enjoyed social respect such as the kings, army leaders, and the house masters, before priesthood office emerged (cf. Plato, *Leg.* 6.7 [759a-760a] & Plato, *Polit.* 29 [290c] as quoted in Hans-Josef 2000:17, 30; Ferguson 1997:141). In the

hierarchical society of antiquity, not everyone was authorised to enter the temple or altar. This was because the realm of the supernatural beings was considered sacred, and hence the “sacred” acts were done at the “sacred” place by the “consecrating” actor, which consisted of slaughtering sacrificial animal, **îereuin ta îereia** (Burkert 1983:2). Bell (1992:208) insists that the ritualised representative often acquired schemes that he or she deployed, more or less successfully, to generate accomplishments that were more or less coherent with individuals and/or the whole community.

However, it has been argued that ritualisation depersonalised authority, and lodged the power of the consultancy in an office, not in an individual (Bell 1992:211). Accordingly, roles were specified empowering certain persons in priesthood office with the act of killing, training in doing it, procedures that must be followed, and thereby giving status, which made the act “normal.” Three ways in which the empowerments of those who controlled ritualisation were: objectification of office, “hierarchisation” of practice, and “traditionalisation” (Bell 1992:212). It was only a priest for a particular deity, who was prearranged for such nobly sacrificial tasks (Ferguson 1997:141). Further, according to Bell (1992:211), if such power was demonstrated as imparted on an appropriate individual by external sources, for instance ancestors or deities, that power came to be seen as vast, legitimate and accessible only to those in appropriate offices. So anyone could not simply perform sacrificial acts.

Consequently, the power of ritualisation unmistakably brought about communal attendance besides participation (Bell 1992:207).¹⁰² Most probably since the sacrificial acts had acquired relations of power it could enhance attendance, a mandatory communal participation of a given community of members. However, an individual in a society conceited to participate and got involved in ritual activities with specific people, groups, places, and events by a variety of internal discriminations about one’s relation to what was going on (:207-208). Further, Bell (210-211) maintains that the power of ritualisation was manifested in three interconnected features: inventing a consensus among participants, encouraging and inducing a consent customarily by drawing attention to the personal rewards to be gained or costs to be incurred by not being submissive, and stirring up

¹⁰² Bell (1992:207) even insists that “[s]pecific relations of domination and subordination are generated and orchestrated by the participants themselves simply by participating.”

participants' approval by availing participants an occasion to appropriate and/or resist bargained ways. Thus, the power of ritualisation induced an obligatory communal attendance as well as participation.

Taking cognizance of how the ritual of sacrifice performed as agency of power and its relevance to this study; one, it clarifies why Paul had deemed it appropriate to evoke this metaphor in a discussion concerning effective integration of the non-Jews into the nation of God. And two, it also clarifies that the significance of using this metaphor is less concerned with semantics, but what it performs.

Summing up, the point is both temporal aspects and spatial dimensions contributed to the empowerment of the sacrificial act, functioned as those conditions that make the sacrificial performative. Along with the defined "space" of sacrifice there came a fixed location, set occasions and predetermined times in the sense of fixed periods of the calendar, thereby necessitating preparation on the side of a "consecrating" performer, evoking anticipation and inducing an compulsory communal attendance plus participation. And these invested the repetitive sacrificial acts with power. This is consistent with Bell's (1992:211) four ways on how power was negotiated in ritual. She maintains that ritualisation empowered those who more or less controlled the rite, explains how their power was limited and constrained, how ritualisation controlled participants, and how this domination involved a negotiated involvement and resistance that empowered them as well.

4.3 Sacrifices in the Antiquity: Theoretical Observations Regarding Performativity

For a critic to get at least approximated views of the whole panorama of ideas about the ritual of sacrifice in the Graeco-Roman and Jewish period, there is need to revisit the rhetoricity or the performativity of sacrificial rituals within a framework of power relations. In other words, before turning to the portrayal of Jesus as *ἱλαστήριον* and its possible performance, one has to be faced with the task of finding out *why* sacrifices were offered in the antiquity because the question "why" leads us to the conditions by virtue of which performativity takes place. This is further demonstrated by quoting and examining examples from their value-system.

Firstly, a primary condition for sacrifice was comparison. Sacrifice did not exist as an act without there being some kind of comparison. Such condition was concerned with a comparison of values, which in itself again presupposes a hierarchy of values. A sacrifice always entailed at least two “terms” or two “elements” that were compared with each other in terms of their relative value. Illustratively, to sacrifice A for B implies a measurement of value, and it means that a particular high value has been assigned to B. If A is also of high quality, that is features high on the scale of social hierarchy, such as a person with prestige, it enhances the value of B, because the value attributed to A is transferred to that of B. If the Son of God who features extremely high, is sacrificed in order for one group (a) to become part of another group (A), extreme value is assigned to group a. It is within this hierarchy of values invested with power that the values associated with divine were elevated as superior (sacred) to a community (regarded as profane). For example, if one of the central roles of slaying a victim was to effect partnership, scarcely can one discard elements of comparison. Under ambit of power relations, sacrifices drew humanity near to deities, because, when compared, the two were incompatible. Deities counted as the absolute. In regards to companionship enacted by sacrifices, Vernant (1991:292) notes that sacrifice acted as: “An intermediary a technique for connecting the two usually separated spheres of sacred and profane.” Putting it in his own words, Burkert (1983:35) asserts: “Whether in Israel, Greece, or Rome, no agreement, no contract, no alliance can be made without sacrifice.” The consecrated object, thus, served as the intermediary between the sacrificer and the divinity (Vernant 1991:291). Sacrificing, then, was a strategy that gave ultimate value (godlike value and sanction) to the values a particular community wanted to advance. For that reason, sacrifice was expressed in terms of the relationships between humans and the divine (Burkert 1983:2). So it ultimately put the former in the right relationship with the holy world beyond (Vernant 1991:282). Saying it differently, sacrifices produced fellowship, association.

Hans-Josef (2000:39; cf. Beate 2007:6-7) views sacrifice as *communio*, whose fundamental idea is that: “a sacrifice is a table of fellowship between gods and human beings.” Beate (2007:7) particularly asserts:

The function of the sacrifice was to re-affirm the union between social community and their deity. Famine, plague and other disasters were signs of the deterioration of the community’s link with the deity, and the sacrificial meal was only means by

which to re-establish this union. Smith's idea was that the blood of the sacrificial animal connected humans and gods, and therefore the idea of expiation and atonement became part of the communion. His idea of atonement was linked to the idea of the deity's presence in the sacrificial meal.¹⁰³

Besides the problematical aspects of the deity's presence in the sacrificial meal (Douglas 2000:45), all in all, the significance of the sacrificial blood is that it rhetorically effected association between humans and supernatural beings.¹⁰⁴ If this was a reality, then, in my view, sacrificing necessitates comparison. How? On the one hand, values of a deity were deemed tremendously superior to that of human beings thus constraining them to desire for partnership with a deity. On the other hand, values of human beings are of high-ranking compared to those of sacrificial victims; and that is why the latter had to lose life for the sake of the former. Additionally, if a sacrificial victim had to die in order to draw the non-Jews into the nation of God then it denotes that even that sacrificial victim had value, except that the value of a deity and that of nation of God were outstanding in comparison to that of the other two.

Similarly, with reference to comparison and performativity of sacrifices in Judean context, sacrifices involved comparison and that they brought about purification owing to impurities. In Judaism, for an "impure" person to become "pure," only "pure" animals were sacrificed (Douglas 2000:40-41). It is obvious that, under scope of power relations, "pure" animals were sacrificed to ensure purification of Israelites. Even on the Day of Atonement- another form of partnership with a deity to which I shall return to in a while- a goat was sacrificed to attain decontamination of a nation. This evoked comparison. The implication is that, the ultimate values were linked to the divine and that of nation was

¹⁰³ See Smith, William R (1914). *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites: The Foundational Institutions*. London: Black.

¹⁰⁴ Both in the Judaic and in the Graeco-Roman contexts, depending on the type, sacrifices were often followed by a sacrificial meal (Douglas 2000:45). Despite an immeasurable unworthiness of the Israelites, they were invited to eat same kind of food with God at one table. For them, in fact, "Sacrifice is a communal feast. Leviticus expects the people of Israel to never to eat meat except in God's company, in his house and with his blessings" (Douglas 2000:45). The normal form of sacrifice for Greeks and Romans was the so-called slaughter-sacrifice, which was usually followed by a sacrificial meal (Hans-Josef 2000:13).

However the challenges are, first, one wonders whether this sharing was an experienced reality or just a mythical idea. Second, Platarch (*Suav. Viv. Epic.*21 [1102a] see Hans-Josef 2000:39) reports the presence of a god at the sacrifice, but not directly of his participation in the meal. Then where is the *communio*? Third, in the table of fellowship, were deities regarded hosts or guests (as in *theoxeny*)? Fourth, were gods present in persons or were represented? In summation, finally, one may easily conclude that: "the idea of the god sharing directly in the human person's table fellowship comes more from a mythical idea than from experienced reality" (Hans-Josef 2000:39).

regarded as superior to that of a goat. If that were not the case, a goat would have been retained. That does not imply that a goat did not have value. In fact, owing to the tremendous prominence of Israelites, a goat had to be of high value, “unblemished,” and “pure.” Moreover, if a “pure” goat had to be sacrificed in order to endorse a nation’s cleansing; then purification must have had a higher value. I maintain that it was within the ambit of power relations that the notion of “values” triggered such sacrificial acts.

Secondly, if the foregoing comparative components of sacrifice are conceded, sacrifice always happened where an exchange of values within a community intersected. Depending on the value system of a society, a cat or a mouse or chicken would not be sacrificed with the aim of attaining something which is of high value. The cost must also be of value. Within the scope of the relations of power sacrificial victims also demonstrated a hierarchy of worthiness. If indeed vegetables and animals were presented as “sacrifices” (Ferguson 1997:145), then vegetables were less valuable than animals, animals were worth more than vegetables, certain animals worth more than others, and definitely human beings worth more than animals.¹⁰⁵

In connection with human sacrifice, I intend to first show that human sacrifices could have taken place by citing some probable evidences. My argument is that although it was prohibited by legislation, there were still instances where a hero’s death was seen as admirable and noble. Then once I have shown that human sacrifice was not really an institution among the Romans, but that self-sacrifice was seen as a noble death when in service of the state or polis, I will proceed to its metaphorisation, because its metaphorisation helps my argument on the necessity to view sacrifice within the framework of an argument of comparison.

There are probable evidences that illustrate that human sacrifice could have taken place. For example, the need to sacrifice a young virgin to Artemis before undertaking a battle in order to ensure its success, as Agamemnon did with Iphigenia at Aulis, is expressed again in the stories about Agesilaus. This was done as he was about to embark on his expedition to Asia (Vernant 1991:256 who relies on Plut., *Agesil.* 6.6-11) and about

¹⁰⁵ The various unblemished (cf. Seneca, *Oed.* 299-300 see Hans-Josef 2000:16) sacrificial animals among the Graeco-Romans included: bulls, cows, goats, sheep, pigs, camel, and poultry (Burkert 1983:9; Vernant 1991:291; Ferguson 1997:144; Socrates, *Phaed.* 66[8a] see Hans-Josef 2000:16; Beate 2007:10); and among Jews they included: cattle, sheep and birds (Poorthuis & Schwartz 2000:6).

Pelopidas on the eve of the battle of Leuctra. During the night preceding the combat, Pelopidas had a dream: if he wants to vanquish the enemy, he is bidden to sacrifice a red-haired virgin. Since the act seemed strange and criminal to him, he informed the seers and generals of his vision. They counselled him to obey. Actually, to bolster their advice, they recalled the ancient examples that, by the success they achieved, validated the grounds for these human sacrifices. By contrast, they added, “when Agesilaus was setting out on an expedition from the same place and against the same enemies as Agamemnon, he had the same vision when he lay asleep at Aulis, in which the goddess Artemis demanded that he sacrifice his daughter, but he was too tender-hearted to give her up, and thus ruined his expedition, which ended unsuccessfully and ingloriously...” (Plut., *Pelop.* 21.1-5; 22.1-4- as found in Vernant 1991:256).¹⁰⁶

In some of the sacrificial rituals of the *religio romana* there are traces of practices that allude to an earlier time when human sacrifices were probably made (Dumezil 1970; Scullard, Thames & Hudson 1981; Beard, North & Price 1998). Human sacrifice remained a powerful religious symbol in the *religio romana* long after its actual practice had been abandoned. As a matter of fact, the practice of human sacrifice was prohibited by legislation following senatorial decree in 97 BCE under the consulship of P. Licinius Crassus (cf. Livy IX.40.17, Pliny, N.H. 35.52 as found in Hughes 1995:75-77). On this basis then, human sacrifice was not a *common* practice among non-Jews. As a result, some dubious occurrences of human sacrifice are known. For example, the three instances recorded by Livy and Plutarch as they are reported in Hughes (1995:79-81), where a ritual human “sacrifice” was performed at Rome (cf. Plutarch, *Roman Questions* 83)¹⁰⁷. In my view, there are other instances that cannot be seen as “human sacrifice” but rather as self-

¹⁰⁶ Usually, the human victim to be slaughtered as a condition for victory is a *parthenos*, like Iphigenia sacrificed to Artemis, Makaria to Kore, or the daughter of the Massenian Aristomedes to the gods below (Vernant 1991:256. n.25).

¹⁰⁷ According to Hughes (1995:79-81), who depends on ancient informants hereafter shown, two pairs of Gauls and Greeks, a man and a woman each, were buried alive in the Forum Boarium. The instances recorded took place in the years 228, 216 and 113 BCE. In each case, these “sacrifices” were made in response to instructions taken from the Sibylline Books. The sacrifices seem to have been made to the Manes and *Dii Inferi*. Plutarch (*Roman Questions*, 83) noted that Romans disapproved others from offering human sacrifice to the deities; and yet, they themselves offered to the Manes. We hear of Vestal Virgins being buried alive too, usually on the excuse that they had broken their vows of chastity. In the year 483 BCE, for example, Vestal Oppia was so buried as unchaste. The same, seemingly, is the case in the execution of Vestal Cornelia by Domitian (Pliny the Younger, *Epistle* 4.11). The burials of the Gauls and Greeks in 216 and 113 followed shortly after the burials of Vestal Virgins. It is thought that these burials were connected in a common ceremony of propitiation to the Manes.

sacrifice which was a token of nobility. These instances consisted of where the Romans may have employed “human sacrifice” were in the *devotio* of Roman generals, sacrificing themselves to the Manes, as did Decius Mus in 340 BCE (cf. Livy VII. 9.1-10 as found in Hughes 1995:77-78). However, the doubtfulness of these occurrences is centred on questions that are left unanswered once one critically examines them. One, were these really sacrificial or punitive acts? Two, is there a possibility that the mentioned instances could have been part of rhetorical strategies intended to invest certain events with status and power, and not that they essentially sanctioned sacrificial practices?

One major source of dispute, however, concerning human sacrifice particularly first-borns in Jewish Bible, is whether God indeed sanctioned it. In other words, is it biblical to sacrifice first-borns? If these first-borns referred to were not sacrificed in the slaughtering sense of the word then we already have a metaphorisation. Ezekiel (20:25-26) does illuminate a first-born law of “sacrifice,” even if it cannot be determined how widespread it was (Finsterbusch 2007:90). Most probably, the oldest preserved law referring to firstborn is found in Exodus 22:28-29 where Israelites are ordered to give YHWH their firstborns. Other texts (Ex 34:11-16, 19-20; Deut 15:19-23; Num 18:15-18) in the light of metaphorisation emphasise that firstborns belong to God, and ought to be given as offerings to him. But it should be noted that none of these texts indicate that such offerings had the function of influencing YHWH; for example to make him gracious or forgiving (Finsterbusch 2007:107). Berthelot (2007:154-9) argues that human sacrifice, which is referred to in different texts of the Hebrew Bible (2 Kgs 16:3, 21:6, 23:10, Jer 7:31, 19:5, 32:35, Ez 16:20-22, 36, 20:26, 31, 23:36-37), is a Canaanite condemned practice, a pagan influence on Israel. On this basis, the Hebrew Bible considers it as “demonic” (Berthelot 2007:161-164). Nonetheless, self-sacrifice or patriotism is praised, just as that of Jephthah’s daughter and of Isaac to which a positive value was attached and praised (Berthelot 2007:166-172).

In this regard, the ritual of human sacrifice in the antiquity, for example among Greeks, implied the form of “ritual killing” for a higher end that was desired, an end that an animal was powerless to attain. Doubtlessly there were instances of self-sacrifice that targeted a communal victory during or before a battle. According to Porphyry (*Abst.* 2.56.7 as found in Weiler 2007:40-55), it was “common” practice in Greece to make a

human sacrifice before the army engaged in a battle. Porphyry enumerates a long list of 16 examples of human sacrifice before the battle at Salamis at Leuctra. Such killings were not considered illegal, and thus were un-punishable. There is further information that Delphic Apollo recommended human sacrifice “on the grounds of an oracle as last resort from a crisis” (Weiler 2007:40). In order to prevent a catastrophe, an epidemic, a famine or something similar, subsequently, human sacrifice had to be made on recommendation of an oracle. However, in regards to societies involved, Berthelot (2007:152) argues that in several ancient texts, be it biblical, Greek or Roman, human sacrifices are described as the ultimate solution-in the light of impending catastrophes. Incidentally, Green’s (1975:202) conclusion on human sacrifice is: “It is to be concluded that, aside from the early ‘foundation sacrifice’ and the ‘ritual killing’ of attendants, all evidence points to ‘human sacrifice’ during the times of political and domestic crisis.”¹⁰⁸ However, it is important to keep in mind the distinction between “human sacrifice” and “self-sacrifice.” These two forms of death on behalf of others are not the same thing and were not rated in the same manner in the antiquity.

It stands to reason that where human beings were sacrificed, whether adult or children, their exchange value would have been extremely high. In the ancient world, sacrificial victim could also be a human being, besides a wild beast or domestic animal (Vernant 1991:291). As much as an animal substituted a man, like the case of Abraham and Isaac, the reverse, a man dying instead of a sacrificial animal, was also true (Burkert 1966:116; Burkert 1983:21 n35). Whereas animals were known for slaughter, human entrails became visible only of those wounded in war [*metaphorisation*] or during human sacrifice, thus, human and animal **splagcna** bore the same name from the earliest times (Burkert 1983:20 n33). In this regard, Beate (2007:10) writes: “Human sacrifice not only involves the killing of a person or use of the human blood, flesh or bones for rituals

¹⁰⁸ According to Plutarch (*Them.* 13.2-5), this alleged sacrifice at Salamis refers to three Persian brothers of the upper classes who were sacrificed to Dionysus (Weiler 2007:42). In regards to Leuctra, the Boeotian general Pelopidas had a dream in his camp before the battle, according to which lamenting girls, the Leuctrids, curse in their graves the Spartans. Their father, Scedasus, told the general that he should sacrifice a fair-haired virgin if he wanted to win the battle (Plutarch, *Pel.* 21, source V; see Weiler 2007:42).

As an example, reference is made to the daughters of the mythological king Leon of Athens (*Leokorai*) who sacrificed themselves in order to prevent a famine, or according to another tradition they tried to prevent the pest (Demosthenes, *Epitaph.* 29; Aelian, *Var.Hist.* 12.28; as found in Weiler 2007:44). Sacrifice of daughters may entail exchange of communal values in the hierarchy of the community’s social values.

purposes; the victim must also be offered to a deity” (Jan Van Baal 1967:166-167). Given this then human sacrifice may have denoted the offering of a person to a supernatural being, like in case of an animal (Weiler 2007:35). Where human sacrifice was metaphorised in the antiquity its discursive power could not but have yielded effective performativity.

Consequently, the performativity of human sacrifice in the wider Graeco-Roman world was that it acted as the last course of action in case of a calamity, a thing that animal sacrifice could not attain. Relating to ritual of human sacrifice, according to Vernant (1991:26), pseudo-Platonic *Minos* (315c; cf. Herodotus, *Hdt.* 7.197) mentions human sacrifice at the “Lykaia festival.” Elsewhere, it is noted that Artemis’ strangeness culminates in her demand for human blood: “Every virgin, attaining the state of matrimony, must die first for Artemis” (Vernant 1991:215). Seemingly, relating to time, such “ritual killing” was done when catastrophe threatened: “...before or after a battle, during a drought, famine, epidemic or a similar catastrophe dangerous to an individual life or that of a community” (Weiler 2007:35). For that reason, the sufferer had to possess qualities of high value in sight of the community concerned.

Several values maybe espoused in the recount of the forging stories about Agesilaus relating to the sacrificing of a young virgin to Artemis before undertaking a battle with the purpose of ensuring its success, as Agamemnon did with Iphigenia at Aulis (Vernant 1991:256). Sacrificing somebody of high value, even a king’s daughter or red-haired virgin, ensured success as one undertook a battle. An individual became a sacrificial victim in order to save a community from impending catastrophe. Such sacrifices entailed several elements of comparison within society’s hierarchy of values. Seemingly, the higher the prestige of the “object” sacrificed, the higher the end that could be attained. As much as individuals had values, a community had enormously superior value compared to that of an individual; and thus a red-haired virgin in particular had to be sacrificed to ensure safety of entire society, a thing that a cat or a mouse was valueless to perform. It signifies to a community that certain values are so superior, so integral to their existence, that other values like that of an individual can be discarded. However, this does not necessarily imply that individual’s values were inferior, but they were of lesser value when ranked against those of the whole society. Thus, it can be argued that these

sacrificial rituals concerned the exchange of communal values within their hierarchy of social values.

The sacrifices in the antiquity enacted diverse rhetorical acts. Generally, among Romans, sacrifices were made privately or publicly to supernatural beings, especially during their festival times for praises, thanksgivings or supplications (Ferguson 1997:145). The numerous forms of sacrifices included: the sacrifice of gift, annihilatory sacrifice, *theoxeny* (hospitality to gods) and the one of oaths and covenant (Hans-Josef 2000:20-23). Thus, one may argue that sacrificial ritual was a religious “social phenomenon” that was capable of enacting and producing effects (Bell 2007:180; also see Bell 1992). The performativity of these sacrifices, especially in Greek religion, included functions like: offering, divination, purification, propitiation and sealing of an oath (Maria-Zoe 2008:33-34). The power of ritualisation also endorsed social solidarity in a reasonably homogeneous assemblage (Bell 1992:216). One is left speculating how definitely separate these functions were. Yet, there is certainty that sacrificing was a ritualistic social behaviour, rhetorical act.

Thirdly, if the comparative dimension of sacrifice leading to an exchange of communal values that are differently valorised is taken into consideration, the construction of a social reality insisting on a constant privileging of a particular set of values must be retained. By effectively shifting a certain set of values to one side, sacrifices brought about survival as well as inclusiveness of an “outsider” in a given society. For the purpose of illustration, I turn to purification in the Judean context. Within their set of communal values, a “purified” person was distinctively distinguishable from an “impure” one. If this is permissible, then the implication is that “purity” among Israelites counted for something else. As argued above, it is within this context that Jews sacrificed only “pure” animals to ensure “purification” (Douglas 2000:41). To Israelites, the whole matter of decontamination was tied up with communal values that they desired to advance. “Every Israelite is required to rid himself or herself of impurity through a purification process” (Milgrom 2000:30). That is to say, “impurity” needed a purification of a sacrifice called *hattat* (Poorthuis & Schwartz 2000:8). Thus, “...sacrifice is the means he [God] has given to them [Israelites] for expiation to protect them from the consequences of their own behaviour, even from his just anger. They are never, ever, allowed to eat blood, but he has

allowed them to consecrate the lives of their herd animals, to use their blood to make atonement to him for their sins, and to eat the blood-free flesh for their own nourishment (Lev 17:11)” (Douglas 2000:38).

Moreover, some scholars (Millar 2000:115f; Keck 2005:108; Beate 2007:26) classified the Israelite ritual performed on the Day of Atonement (cf. Lev 16:23:26-32; Num 29:7-11) as a purification ritual that had become a fixed ritual in the cultic calendar. There were two aspects to the ritual involving two animals: a goat for Yahweh and another for *Azazel* (Lev 16:8-10, 16-20, 26, 30-33; Rodriguez 1986:179-181; Rodriguez 1990:139-143; Ministerial Association of the General Conference of SDA 2006:318-9). Thus, verse 16 identifies the dual purpose of the ritual—the removal of impurities and of sins (cf. Millar 2000:116; Keck 2005:108; Poorthuis & Schwartz 2000:6; Milgrom 2000:30). Regarding the historicity of sacrifice ritual, it is notable that whereas the readers of the original text would definitely have taken it as historical, contemporary readers realise that even in descriptions of rituality, the political is lurking which makes it very difficult to confirm with certainty exactly how a ritual was executed.

Turning again to our notion of performativity, such purification effected by sacrifices was the result of ritualistic social behaviour, a rhetorical act, in both Jewish and Hellenistic societies (Ferguson 1997: 144). To the non-Jews, sacrificing enabled one became a member of a community with full rights (Weiler 2007:40-55). To Israelites, “purity” stood for “insiders” while “impurity” characterised “outsiders.” As a consequence, the requirement of purification was a mechanism to entrench and empower boundaries between “insiders” and “outsiders.”¹⁰⁹ In my view, what is really at stake are political situations, in our case the conflict between the “insiders” and the “outsiders,” and in such case “purification” is requested. This meant that if one is not purified, he/she belong to the “outsiders” and if purified he/she is restored. To a certain extent the act of sacrifice was “personified,” it performed a normalisation of a situation, but a normalisation in terms of a hierarchy of values.

¹⁰⁹ The Romans, for example, had a complete solemn sacrifice of purification called *suovetaurilia* which involved swine (*sus*), sheep (*ovis*), and cattle (*taurus*). Poultry were used too (cf. Socrates, *Phaed.* 66[8a] see Burkert 1983:9). While for Jewish, as so far argued, all impurities require “a sacrifice of expiation (Lev 5:2)” (Douglas 2000:40). Socrates mentions in Platon’s *Politeia* (565 D-C) that the consumption of human flesh on the altar transforms a man into a wolf (Theophrastus, *Fig.* 13.22-26; Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.27; Polybios, *Hist.* 8.13,7 as used by Weiler 2007:49-51)

Besides elements of comparison thereof, as noted above, offering of sacrifice on the Day of Atonement, for example, was supposedly to “cleanse” the nation and temple. During the year, before the Day of Atonement irrespective of sacrifices of every morning and evening, Jews were “impure” due to their “uncleanness and rebellion” (Lev 16:16). This may be likened to “dirt” and thus could be regarded as “outsiders.” Looking at Leviticus 16 critically, especially verse 16, it becomes apparent that sacrifices functioned as a powerful mechanism to entrench purification within the context of Jewishness. For that purpose, two goats were sacrificed to effect that decontamination. Therein were underlying relations of power within which these sacrifices operated. One, the goat for Yahweh whose blood was significantly sprinkled in the sanctuary was intended to purge it of “impurities.” Two, another goat was for *Azazel* upon whose head the priest laid hands and confessed people’s deliberate “iniquities” generated and effected the purification of Israelites from their “uncleanness.” I have already argued that the value of Jews’ nation was considered as higher than that of goats, but in the sight of Jews goats had higher value than pigeons, cat or even chicken. Owing to the remarkable distinction of Israelites’ nation, only “pure” or “unblemished” goats (with higher value) had to be sacrificed in order to sanction a nation’s cleansing.

Sacrificing two goats annually, as a result, repetitively reminded the Jews three things: first, their inferior status due to “uncleanness and rebellion” that had made them “transgressors,” “impure,” “dirt” and “outsiders.” Second, that such a sacrifice was powerful enough to provide, and had actually provided, them with the privileges of being allowed to re-enter the covenantal relationship with their deity and thus can now freely intermingle with other Israelites. And third, it also reminded the Israelite nation of their exclusive position, thereby effecting consolidation and an exclusionary mindset. It was in this repetitive act that the power of purification resided. Moreover, to belong to the chosen nation of Israel was cherished ideal, privileged highest value; the act of purification, rendered via the performativity of sacrifice, restored this position, thereby introducing a situation of normalcy for the sacrificing person or on behalf of the sacrificing person. If the foregoing mechanisms of normalising a situation (by a sacrifice) are conceded, then notion of justice (righteousness) appears in the sacrificial background.

Fourthly, for one to get more approximated views of the whole panorama of ideas about sacrifices and their performativity in the antiquity there is need to examine how sacrifices ceaselessly functioned within relations to the supernatural beings. I have distinguished how human beings were constrained to sacrifice due to their desire for partnership with a deity whom they regarded as superior in value. I contend that, whether in the Graeco-Roman or in the Judaism world, scarcely can one practically eradicate the notion of a deity from the context of sacrifices. If the concept of a “deity” among the concerned community denoted what was taken as its ultimate value, essentially then the deity is *made* to give the endorsement, the deity is *represented* as giving the endorsement. So a deity’s “endorsement” of a sacrifice gave an added effect to the power of the sacrificial act. For instance, it is narrated that, as they journeyed to Troy, Greeks carried off the daughter of Chryses, the old priest of Apollo, as a captive. But Apollo is represented to have “compelled” them by a means of a plague in the camp to return her home. This is done by a delegation of Odysseus, who also brought an expiatory “hecatomb” with them. The priest received his daughter back at the altar and then asked his deity Apollo to take away the curse from the Greek army and to cease punishing them (Hans-Josef 2000:14).¹¹⁰

Pertaining to how sacrifices were linked with deities, here are notable details from the preceding example: first, a deity named Apollo by “compulsion sanctioned” Greeks to offer this sacrifice, which the priest also confirmed and conformed to. Second, this sacrifice was performed on a *godly* appointed place, altar –as it was a custom (Hughes 1995:46-47). Third, in connection with the officiating officer, it is remarkable that it is a *godly* chosen individual, a priest. Fourth, with regard to the occasion of this sacrifice, basically it is a spontaneous action that arose from a specific situation: the return of a lost daughter, and *deity Apollo’s punishment* and *curse* was on the Greek army. This, however, does not eliminate already fixed sacrificial occasions on official altars.

And fifth, most importantly, is why this sacrifice is offered. It was purely for “appeasement”. This “appeasement” stands for, counts for something. Yes, the story may have shown how the deity was appeased, but rhetorically the significance is *political*. I see

¹¹⁰ “Hecatomb” most properly denotes a sacrifice of one hundred (ἑκατόν) bulls (βοῦς), but employed in a more general sense simply to designate large and solemn sacrifice (Hans-Josef 2000:14).

the political in the story, the two groups battling, and the abduction of the daughter of Chryses as an act of stealing and injustice and the conciliation only to be effected via the performativity of sacrifice. The deity's wrath was on the Greek army for taking Chryses' daughter a captive. It was necessary because, according to them, "the sacrifice was an exchange" (Ferguson 1997:147). To put it differently, for divinity Apollo to take away the curse and to cease punishing the army, he needed a sacrifice, the conciliation only to be effected via the performativity of sacrifice. The other aspect, in connection with appeasement, learnt here is that Apollo is a saviour who transforms a situation of Chryses' daughter for better, and therefore, the deity is stimulated to intervene in human life to help (Hans-Josef 2000:38). In other words, sacrifices effected substitution that saved the victims, Greeks were substituted by sacrificial victims and thus saved. So, one of the most important enactments that sacrifices in the ancient times brought about was "appeasement" (Ferguson 1997:147), which rhetorically had *political* significance. What is really at stake are political situations, in most cases the conflict between two parties. The ritual of sacrificing a human being or an animal generally aimed at stimulating supernatural beings who were considered to be "saviours" for effective help or/and punish (Luther 1996:24; Hans-Josef 2000:38). According to Hughes (1995:77-80), Livy (2.42) makes it clear that human sacrifice in specific was really made to appease the deities when bad omens appeared. In sum, this generated a "distancing effect:" "A distancing intention also applies to sacrifice to ward off divine wrath" (Beate 2007:10). It is doubtful, however, if this can be linked with sacrificial ideas of scapegoat mechanisms. In releasing hostility, according to Hans-Josef (2000:40), at the recurring period the physical force was directed against outsiders, be it animal or human that is chosen and killed, to whom the answerability for all misfortunes is credited. Hence, sacrifices could save the actual victims. According to Weiler (2007:40-55) sacrifices of expiation was demanded when one violated consciously or unconsciously divine rule or insulted the divinity who demanded as a punishment a special form of reparation, that is, the sacrifice of a person close to the perpetrator, mostly a relative. Bearing in mind that a socio-rhetorical approach has problematised decontextualised easy theologising, one ought to contextualise

“propitiation,” “appeasement,” “expiation,” or “mercy-seat” as interpretational models for ἱλαστήριον within a socio-rhetorical context as a will argue in the next chapter.¹¹¹

Concisely, the illustrative sacrifice narrated above was officially offered as a ritual to *supernatural being* (Apollo) who apparently had “sanctioned” it, on a *godly* allotted altar, by a *godly* chosen priest; it was a spontaneous act due to the *deity Apollo’s punishment* and so it enacted appeasement of a deity’s wrath. Everything about this sacrifice apparently revolves around a *deity* but in the background hovers the political tension between opposing groups. What counts for this example also applies in other cases. Actually, in the ancient Graeco-Roman world, it is reported that: “gods not only look like human beings; but they also behave like them, loving, suffering, hating ...they have family relationships; they intervene in human life to help or punish. Often the heaven of gods seems like a version of segments of human society, projected into the supraterrrestrial sphere” (Hans-Josef 2000:28). Therefore, supernatural beings were represented as saviours who can be appeased in order to intervene for a transformation of a disastrous situation for better one, as we have seen in the case of Apollo as saviours (Luther 1996:24).¹¹²

Furthermore, in close connection to the “appeasement,” the most popular notion of a sacrifice is that of a gift whose performativity was stimulation. A Greek word δῶρον, “gift,” is primarily a New Testament term for sacrifice (Mt 5:23f). A widespread view, in the Graeco-Roman world for example, was the understanding of “sacrifice as gift to the divinity” (Hans-Josef 2000:38). These presentations of gifts to deities sometimes happened without ulterior motive, but this was not the case always. Hans-Josef (2000:38) insists that sacrifices mostly had “the intention of supplying nourishment to keep the god alive or of stimulating the god to give effective help.” Such stimulation was summed up in the proverb: “*do ut des*,” “I give in order that you give in return”: the human person proposes an exchange, giving something but expecting to receive something from the gods in return, e.g. help in a situation of distress, or material prosperity” (Hans-Josef 2000:38). In other words, “The sacrifice was a gift and was intended to have a *do ut des* effect (I

¹¹¹ The scapegoat rituals among Greek *thargelia* involved the human beings- *pharmakoi*; while among the Old Testament Jews had a real scapegoat (Hans-Josef 2000:40).

¹¹² The Graeco-Roman gods, however, remains distinguished from human beings by their superiority in power, knowledge and immortality (Hans-Josef 2000:28).

give that you give)” (Beate 2007:6 cf. Ferguson 1997:147). Summarising these related enactments that sacrifices of antiquity were able to effect, Hans-Josef (2000:38) maintains that sacrificing as “the gift can also serve to appease the wrath of gods and reconcile them with human being anew.”

In brief, sacrifices in the antiquity effected social partnership. Often they entailed elements of comparison between a deity, sacrificial victim and the one offering a sacrifice. Of these three principals of sacrifices, a deity was outstanding in comparison to that of the other two. Even sacrificial victims had values in hierarchal order: vegetables, animals being worth more than vegetables, certain animals worth more than others, and definitely human beings worth more than animals. It is within this hierarchy of values invested with power that the values correlated with goddess were elevated as superior. Sacrifices always caused an exchange of values within a community. As much as a creature had values, a community had extremely superior value compared to that of an individual; and thus one had to be sacrificed to ensure security in case of impending catastrophe. Individual values were discarded for safety of the entire society. Hence, the sacrificial rituals concerned the exchange of communal values within their hierarchy of social values. Further, within the context of performativity, sacrifices frequently created a social reality where a particular set of values were given privileges to be reserved. Definitely the privilege like that of purification had a higher value and thus had to be acquired through sacrifice.

And finally, the whole lot about sacrificing revolved around a *deity*. The deity is *represented* as giving the endorsement to the sacrifice which added effect to the power of the sacrificial act. Although a deity was in most cases “present,” that was a representation in order to give enforced effect to the performativity of sacrifice. The sacrificial blood, with its empowerment, both in the Jewish and in the Graeco-Roman world, ably enacted several social effects. In their societies, sacrifices were regarded as gifts whose performativity included: “appeasement” that stimulated gods who were considered to be “savours” for effective help as summed up in the proverb: “*do ut des*,” purification of impurities—so it protected evildoers from the consequences of their own behaviour; viewed as *communio* it effected fellowship, social partnership and companionship between humans and gods by drawing humanity near to gods and ultimately putting them in the right relationship with the godly world. I have maintained that the sacrificial acts enacted a

normalisation of a situation, by “appeasement.” My argument is that this “appeasement” stands for, counts for something. Rhetorically the significance was *political*, because the conciliation was only to be effected via the performativity of sacrifice. What was really in jeopardy were political situations, in most cases the conflict between two parties that necessitated “purification.” This meant that if not purified, one belongs to the “other,” and if purified s/he is restored. To a certain extent the act of sacrifice was “personified,” it was given to a deity in order to perform a normalisation of a situation, but a normalisation in terms of a hierarchy of values. Given this, then such acts of brutality, as mechanisms of normalising a situation were linked with justice. I have illustrated that human sacrifice was worth more than animal sacrifice. Historically, human sacrifice was prohibited by legislation, but when the ancients wanted to illustrate the value of a particular thing, event or object, they would metaphorise in terms of human sacrifice in order to illustrate their worth. Relating to ritual of human sacrifice in particular, human sacrifices brought about ultimate solution to humanity’s desperate situation. For example, in case of a crisis of battle, human sacrifices before battle ensured success. This procedure, the taking of the rhetoricity of the text into account, is exactly what my dissertation is about and it differs from theological interpretations that are concerned with the meaning of ἰλαστήριον where neither reference to an argument of comparison nor metaphorisation plays any role. I have maintained that those theological models of “propitiation,” “expiation,” and “mercy-seat” which neglects the rhetorical situation leads to a misunderstanding of ἰλαστήριον. So the question is how do these sacrificial rituals help one to view the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον? Does this presentation of Jesus have similar performativity? Next is to look at violence in its the wider sacrificial context.

4.4 Sacrificial Violence in the Antiquity

Sacrifice and violence were practically inseparable. They can be likened to the two sides of the same coin. Sacrificing of human being or animal, in both the Jewish and the non-Jewish societies of antiquity could never be regarded as euthanasia, ending life in a painless manner. To introduce this high level of animosity, I now quote the Graeco-Roman sacrificial ritual as described by the Homeric epics (*Homer, 1.458-68*) as found in Hans-Josef (2000:14):

When they had offered prayers and sprinkled the barely grains, first they pulled back the victim's heads and slaughtered them and flayed them: and they cut out the thigh-bones and covered them with fat, folding it twice over, and placed pieces of raw meat on top. The old man burnt them on cut firewood, and poured libations of gleaming wine, while the young men stood by him with five-pronged forks in their hands. Then when the thighs were burnt up and they had tested the innards, they chopped the rest into pieces and threaded them on spits, roasted them carefully, and then drew all the meat off. When they had finished their work and prepared the meal, they set to eating, and no man's desire went without an equal share in the feast.

This example is cited from Homer's writings on the basis that, even not contemporary with Paul's society, certain sacrificial features therein are often applicable irrespective of time. From the cited example a number of elements of aggression are brought into light: pulling back the victim's heads ... slaughtering...flaying ... cutting out the thigh-bones ... burning on cut firewood... chopping into pieces ...roasting ... and then drawing all the meat off. In agreement, Burkert (1983:2) writes: "Thus, blood and violence lurk fascinatingly at the very heart of religion." Actually, this violent sacrificing was characterised by established forms of "unjust violence and savage brutality" (Vernant 1991:256).

Beate (2007:4) has also argued that violence, far from being abhorrent, was central element in sacrificing. Evidently it is many animals, besides humans, that were beheaded in the temples, not only of the Judaic God but also in the temples of all the other deities of the Graeco-Roman world (Burkert 1983:2, 12-14) which testify of great cruelty. As far as sacrifices were concerned, one ought to bear in mind that: "The core is always the experience of death brought by human sacrifice, which in turn, is here subject to the predetermined laws" (Burkert 1983:12).

Sacrificial victim, normally, stood chained on a rush mat until it was time for its mouth to be washed (Burkert 1983:9). Then, the victim's spine was struck with an axe, and then the throat is cut with a *machaira* (knife) to allow blood gush out (Vernant 1991:291). "The peak of the curve is marked by the animal's death and hence is the climax of the consecration, the point of maximum and definitive worship" (Vernant 1991:292). When it came to the death blow, women customarily raised a piercing scream that marked the emotional climax of the sacrificing act (Burkert 1983:5).

Additionally, thereafter the σπλάγχνα experienced terrible violence (Burkert 1983:6-7). That is to say, at the end of the sacrificial ritual, the offerings were either eaten, burned or poured out (Ferguson 1997:145), which indicates an extension of violence in case of burning. Therefore, Vernant (1991:291) is convinced that: "...all the available evidence tells us that it is impossible to conceive of an animal sacrifice without putting the victim to death, and that this immolation seems to constitute as irrefutably brutal fact whose meaning is too univocal to lend itself to discussion." This violence was institutionalised: "Sacrificial killing is the basic experience of the "sacred" (Burkert 1983:3). Yet this sacrificial killing entailed brutality: "Consecration in sacrificial rites always implies the destruction of the object-consumed by fire if it is a vegetal oblation, its throat cut and its body immolated if a living creature is involved" (Vernant 1991:291).¹¹³

For the purpose of illustrating violence further, an examination of how the victim (an ox) is put to death in *thusia*, the Greek sacrifice meant for human consumption, is worth recalling. The dramatic movement in such sacrificial scenario constituted an irrefutably brutal violence. As pointed out, the ox's spine was struck with an axe, and then its throat cut with a *machaira* to allow blood gush out (Vernant 1991:292). Apparent evidences point out clearly that: "the fundamental feature of the sacrificial rite is a scenario in which the victim is slain and that the victim's ritual murder constitutes the entire ceremony's center of gravity" (Vernant 1991:291).

If the foregoing sacrificial views are precise, then the key to the sacrificial mechanism lies in the murderous violence imposed on the victim. The brutal destruction of life, offered as a substitute, characterised sacrificing. Putting it differently, sacrifice was institutionalised violence. It was not only accepted practice as part of the factuality, it was normative practice, an act you should, and you must do.

This means that sacrificing practice was so invested with power that it was institutionalised fully. As argued, sacrificial ritual was an extremely powerful event to a level that the following had to be done: specific spots were assigned where the acts of killing were performed from, tasks spelled out empowering definite individuals with the act of slaughtering, instructing on how to do it effectively, procedures that must be

¹¹³ The σπλάγχνα is a collective term for the organs like heart, bones, skin, skull of bulls and rams and goat-horns (Burkert 1983:6-7)

adhered to, thereby giving status and turning it into a “normal” act. It was under the ambit of power relations that their sacrificial rituals had controlled, modelled and moulded them accordingly. The many animals besides human beings that were slaughtered indicate a high level of legitimate violence, to which they were accustomed. In sum, my argument is that constant violence was part and parcel of their value-system of the so-called slaughter-sacrifice. Vernant (1991:293) substantiates this: “Violence and murder are thus found at the core of a sacrifice.” Then, a critic is left inquiring if this was the context of brutality within which Paul referred to Christ as ἰλοσπήριον. If so, what necessitated it? What performativity did such a sacrifice effect? Consequently, it is in this regard that I am exploring the portrayal of Jesus as sacrifice in its socio-rhetorical context of which the sacrificial value-systems constitute a part.

4.5 Sacrifices in Early Christianity and Paul: Metaphorisation of Jesus’ Death

In an effort to socio-rhetorically discover *why* Paul describes Jesus as sacrifice, there is need to deal with the metaphorisation of Jesus’ sacrifice. And then the arrangement is to pursue its performativity by applying what has already been indicated in the theoretical section.

The bloody sacrifice is central to Christianity since antiquity. In Christian teaching, “God” became incarnate in Jesus Christ for a specific accomplishment. Early Christian language, as demonstrated in Pauline epistles, integrated sacrificial imagery and allusions to animal sacrifice. In reference to metaphorisation, different sacrificial metaphors were used to explain the sacrificial notion during in the Early Christianity, particularly in Pauline. Yet, Paul goes further than obvious meaning, and specifies what sort of sacrificial victim Jesus supposedly had been. The striking characteristic of this tactic of amalgamation worthy of notice is that these sacrificial images and allusions like “sacrifice” and “temple” (ἄζυμοι and πάσχα in 1 Cor. 5:7-8) were applied to areas of reality that had never been connected to “religion” before (Maria-Zoe 2008:238). Putting it differently, even if it was very difficult in antiquity to distinguish between religion and everyday social life and culture, Maria-Zoe provides information about how a practice had been turned into discursive practice.

Maria-Zoe has explored the fact that Christianity is known as a religion without alters for slaughter, that is “why were Christians not offering animal sacrifices”? Issues of animal sacrifice in ancient from the view point of Greeks, Jews, and Christianity, and also fundamental differences relating to their sacrificial systems are explored. Maria-Zoe does not explore human sacrifices. In her view, the attitude of Christianity towards sacrifices is “very complicated matter” (2008:211), which complicate the issues related to Christians and sacrifices. Pertaining to Paul, Maria-Zoe hints on the evidence for “change in the vertical axis of sacrificial procedure” (:211). It is noticeable that Paul’s terminology, along with determining the same entities as before, underwent a shift [μεταφορά] towards other realms of reality. Metaphorical language meant that some sections of the line stayed inoperative at the practical level, but kept their functional role at the linguistic level. Maria-Zoe (2008:240) demonstrates how Christian metaphorical sacrificial language came into existence. For example, according to her, Pauline terms like “altar” and “knives,” or more particularly “sacrifice,” stopped being exclusively connected to something hitherto regarded as sacrificial, and were applied to other sections of “the horizontal line.” These were: firstly, an entirely new section that centred in *Jesus*. And secondly, other sections that had to do primarily with activities, such as values and lifestyles of humanity. Additionally, by metaphor, the whole setting of a ritualistic animal slaughter was retained as an implicit framework of reference, although sacrifice was given a wholly new meaning.¹¹⁴

Maria-Zoe (2008:246-247) also argues that in the second century the criticism of the apologists directed against pagan animal sacrifice came to represent an independent teaching on the practice of offering itself. By their radical disapproval of pagan cultic modes, Christian apologists emphasised the different character of the Christian God, and importantly, their distinct way of perceiving the divine. From then on, the functions once performed by animals would be performed within different circumstances of reality. If indeed early Christians applied sacrificial metaphors to areas of reality that had never been connected to religious sacrifices before then there could be several ambiguities in the

¹¹⁴ Illustratively, in Romans 12:1 [**parasth̄sai ta swmata uim̄h qūsian zw̄san**], he does not describe an animal victim which, when brought to the altar, should make Christians recall their bodies. This technique would be a Philonic allegory. So, in the first century, sacrificial metaphors began to come into use, which alleviated worshipers from the techniques of animal sacrifice (Maria-Zoe 2008:243).

evocation of sacrificial material in this context. Substantially, Paul's "metaphorisation" of **ilasth~~h~~ion** into non-sacrificial context creates a dilemma and thus necessitates that some uncertainties be retained as one pursues its functions.

Stowers (1994:212), Johnson (1997:56-57), Bailey (2000:155) and Keck (2005:109) see a close parallel to the language of Jesus' death in Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees. They argue that the language of 4 Maccabees 17:22 shares ἰλαστήριον and "blood" with Romans 3:25. However, they differ in regards to whether the two contain sacrificial connotation. For instance, on the one hand, Stowers (1994:213) insists: "Further Maccabees shows that the language of Rom 3:25 could be used without sacrificial connotations."¹¹⁵ But, on the other hand, Johnson (1997) interprets the martyrdom of the seven Maccabean sons and their mother (4 Macc 17:22), as well as ἰλαστήριον in Romans 3:25, in terms of expiation. Johnson (1997:56-57) writes: "...and through the blood of these devout ones and their death as an expiation (ἰλαστήριον), divine providence prescribed Israel that previously had been afflicted." He then proceeds vigorously to oppose Stowers' (1994:206-213) argument that Romans 3:25 should not be understood in sacrificial terms.¹¹⁶ He conclusively states: "Whatever further nuances we may discover in these phrases, we can state confidently that Paul presents the death of Jesus as the central act of liberation/ redemption/ salvation by which expiation/ appeasement/ at-one-ment between God and humans is accomplished and God's righteousness is displayed. The death of the Messiah is God's paradoxical 'gift' to humans" (Johnson 1997:58). Bailey (2000:15) refutes the view of ἰλαστήριον as a sacrificial victim, on the grounds that such point of view is based on the unfamiliarity of the obtainable linguistic evidence. According to him, Paul's representation of Jesus as "a

¹¹⁵ Stowers (1994:206-209) maintains that, during the second temple era, it is the Christian conceptions of sacrificial atoning death that have been projected into ancient Jewish and Mediterranean animal sacrifices by Christian and other Jewish theology. That, further, the purpose of the sacrificial system especially the Judaic temple was neither to atone for personal sins nor to provide means for dealing with humanity's alienation from God. And that the idea of dying or suffering for others' sins is utterly alien to Jewish sacrificial system especially the second temple. Even the martyr's death (4 Macc. 17:22) had nothing to do with sacrifices or temple cult.

¹¹⁶ According to him, the phrase ἐν τῷ/ αὐτοῦ αἵματι certainly indicates that Jesus' death is the defining act of redemption. Here are his three conveying lines of evidence that supports the proposal that Paul's language here has sacrificial overtones: first, the way ἰλαστήριον has been used, both in the ritual description of Torah and in the Martyr's death (4 Macc 22: 17). Second, that Paul elsewhere speaks of Jesus' death in sacrificial terms (1 Cor 5:17). *Thirdly*, Paul in Romans 8:32 alludes to Genesis 22:16, in which God never spared Jesus but handed him over (Johnson 1997:58).

sin offering” elsewhere (Rm 8:3), metaphorisation, does not ensure an inference that analogous victim language ought to be present in Romans 3:25.¹¹⁷ This may be true, but the argument is that there is a “world” with its discursive practices of sacrifices that one also ought to consider, besides the “immediate context” and “available linguistic evidence” underlying the text. Since there is common terminologies of ἱλαστήριον and “blood” in the two texts, then metaphorisation of Jesus’ sacrifice ought to be examined within the recipients’ “world.”

Though opposed to sacrificial connotations, Stowers (1994:210) clearly states: “By referring to Jesus’ death through “blood,” Paul underlines the violent nature of his death, the readers knowing that Jesus died by crucifixion.” There was a ritual of human sacrifice, although it is uncertain to what extent it had developed before animal-sacrifice (Burkert 1983:43. n.36). If this is really the case, how can a critic account for the explicit depiction of horror when it is no longer an ordinary animal but rather a human being who is to be sacrificed like a beast? In the light of Stowers’ (1994:206-209) objections, how do these sacrificial rituals help one to view the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον? How do these elaborations of sacrifice, specifically a human sacrifice, help me socio-rhetorically to know the performance of ἱλαστήριον? How can metaphorisation of Jesus’ death in terms of sacrifice help a critic to understand Romans 3:25-26? If these conceptions of sacrifices have been projected by early Christian and other Jewish theology, would it be that they influenced Paul’s portrayal of ἱλαστήριον? Would it be that traces, discursive elements, traditions and thoughts about sacrifices in the ancient world formed Paul’s view and portrayal of ἱλαστήριον?

With reference to Jesus as an agency in the murderous sacrificial violence, whichever way one looks at it, constantly and systematically planned violence, irrefutable brutality, was part and parcel of Jesus’ sacrificial death (MacArthur 2004:201). An ancient listener would have known that the crucifixion of Jesus entailed physical and emotional

¹¹⁷ On the grounds that in Romans 8:3, the phrase “**peri. amartiaj.**” is a standard Septuagintal language for the Levitical “sin offering,” then in Romans 3:25 Jesus is said to be an ἱλαστήριον who is also said to have shed His blood. Thus, it is commonly assumed that an ἱλαστήριον in the ancient world must have been something that could shed its blood, “sacrifice of atonement.” Bailey agrees that such understanding could have been contextually appropriate had it not been for its false syllogism, which assumes that the meaning of ἱλαστήριον can be determined by the meaning of “blood.” It is also unsubstantiated by external evidence (2000:156).

series of ruthless cruelty: physical pain, extreme agony as he was gruelling that disciples might keep watch, hostility, scourges, tortures, flogging, mockery, disgrace of being spat upon or beaten, ridicule, torment, sweating blood in his intense grief and sorrow, pain inflicted by crown of thorns, forcing him to carry the cross, sleeplessness, hunger, horrible thirst, dehydration, maximised humiliation, shame and reproach evidenced by placard and stripping him naked, and torture of having nails driven through his body that finally culminated in horrific death (Truman 1965: 56; Swindoll 2004:86; MacArthur 2004:193). In a while I intend to probe into what performativity such representation of the torturous sacrifice attained. In the pursuit to answer the main question there is need to closely examine the setting forth of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον, Jesus as an agent in the murderous sacrificial violence. It is premised that the interpretation of and representation of Jesus as a sacrifice, within the context of murderous sacrificial aggression, was a rhetorical act. My argument is that the implied audience drew on a particular discursive practice (a *repertoire*) which made sacrifice to perform or effect; it is for that reason that Jesus can be named ἱλαστήριον because that discursive practice is evoked. ἱλαστήριον is performative because it *cites*, it evokes what was seen to be the function of sacrifice. That is where the rhetoricity lies in, not in the sacrifice itself which was nothing but a brutal, violent act. The brutality of the act functioned performatively exactly by virtue of its violence. Moreover, such a violent sacrificial act must be able to bring an alternative situation into existence would have been the frame of mind of the ancient audience at Rome.

Relating to the heartlessness of Jesus' "sacrifice," there is a phrase in Romans 3:25 whose placement has brought about a dispute among Pauline scholars.¹¹⁸ In my view, Paul's appropriations of the terminologies of sacrificial practice, albeit in a vague sense and not at all elaborated, avails room for ambiguity. Nevertheless, the phrase "**pistewj en**

¹¹⁸ Some scholars take "**pistewj en tw/ autou/ aipati** (v25b)" as modifying **ilasthrion** (cf. Dunn 1988:172; Bruce 1989:104,107; Godet 1989:153; Cranfield 1990:210; Moo 1996:238), which then reads that Christ is "propitiation in his blood through faith" (NASB). While, others argue that the word order favours the view that this phrase modifies faith: "through faith in his blood" (cf. NIV; Dewelt 1959:55f; Calvin 1978:143; Hendriksen 1999:32; Cottrell 2000:262). Grammatically it is very possible to take **en tw/ autou/ aipati** as qualifying **pistewj** (cf. KJV; Hodge 1994), but it is an unlikely understanding of the words. "For Paul, faith is in Jesus Christ, and it is not easy to see him speaking of faith in blood" (Morris 1988:182). Both phrases, **pistewj** and **en tw/ autou/ aipati**, seemingly refer to **ilasthrion**, that is effected through faith and in Christ's blood. Paul is emphatic from its position that Christ's blood alone that brings propitiation (cf. Morris 1988:182).

tw/ autou aipati” (v25b) may be indicating that Jesus’ death as the defining act of “redemption” and **ilasthriion** (Johnson 1997:58). In the *political* context, rhetorically the “redemptory” element here clearly does not entail a theological interpretation but this “redemption” should be seen as integration of “outsiders” into the nation of Israel. It signifies the conciliation only effected via the performativity of sacrifice.

Given this, the key to the sacrificial mechanism lies in the murderous cruelty imposed on Jesus, the victim. The brutal destruction of his life, offered as a substitute, is only a means by which sinners enter the sacred world without leaving the profane (Vernant 1991:293). It is in this regard that a critic must explore the portrayal of Jesus as sacrifice in its socio-rhetorical context of which the sacrificial value-systems constitute a part. The argument, so far, is that this constant violence, indisputable cruelty, was part and parcel of their value-system of the so-called slaughter-sacrifice. According to Vernant (1991:293), violence and murder inseparably formed essential pivot of a sacrifice in the ancient. However, a critic wonders why the suffering and death of a person who was considered to be either a criminal, or a threat to society, was turned into a “sacrifice” or a measure contributing to demonstrating God’s justice.

4.6 Socio-Rhetorical Significance and Performativity of ἰλαστήριον

The cross was indeed a symbol of shame. On the one hand, in the Jewish mind, crucifixion was a particularly execrable way to die. It was tantamount to hang on a tree (Deut 21:22-23). It required, thus, that all such executions occur outside the city walls (Num 15:35; Heb 13:12). But, on the other hand, the Romans had a slightly different concept. “Romans made sure that all crucifixion took place near major thoroughfares in order to make the condemned person a public example for all passersby. So Jesus’ crucifixion took place outside the city, but in a heavily trafficked location carefully selected to make Him a public spectacle” (MacArthur 2004:196; cf. Swindoll 2004:88). But still to the Roman citizens, for whom crucifixion signified unmanliness, a powerless condition, the cross was certainly degradation. For that reason, crucifixion itself was indeed disgraceful and a torturing event to both physical and mental.

Despite being a Jew or a non-Jew, crucifixion was indeed a *scandalon*. Socio-rhetorically the “blood of Jesus” shed by crucifixion evokes the matrix of honour versus

shame. However, I want to argue that it is precisely because of the shame attached to crucifixion that the death of Jesus is metaphorised as sacrifice. This metaphorisation enables to add other significant elements such as gift, the role of the sacrificer, the inclusion of a god or deity, the effect of the sacrifice which all contribute to invert the shame of the crucifixion into the honour of being made a sacrifice. Hovering in the background is the value Paul concedes to his implied audience. So valuable are they that God was prepared to sacrifice his own Son in order to bring them into the nation of Israel, thereby also exhibiting his justice and righteousness. I have argued that the violence of this sacrificial act, offensive though it may be for modern readers, would have been completely in line with the value-system of antiquity where institutionalised violence was often associated with the noble death. It is in this context that I have answered the question “which accomplishments the metaphorisation of Jesus’ death achieved.”

I have pointed out that scholars have been interested in the meaning of ἰλαστήριον with alternatives being: “propitiation,” “propitiatory sacrifice,” “expiation,” “mercy-seat,” and “atoning sacrifice.” I have problematised these alternatives. As a result, this dissertation has explored “*why* Paul describes Jesus as ἰλαστήριον.” These major models of interpretations sought their substantiation via harmonisation by finding other texts of comparable tendency. In addition, harmonisation implied decontextualisation, which ignores the contingents of the rhetorical situation, an exigency or a problematisation that is pertinent to the specific context, particular actors, such as encoded author, implied audience, real author, real audience, characterisation, and the force of persuasion and the evocation of a socio-cultural world in which the arguments would appear sensible. I have applied three-pronged rhetorical models that take into deliberations the social-cultural and the religio-political contexts.

Firstly, in reference to the comparison, sacrifice in the antiquity already implied comparison, as argued sacrifice entailed comparison. This had implications. Jesus’ “sacrifice” was represented as to effect partnership. It may have targeted to effect fellowship and companionship between the non-Jews and the Jews. Paul’s exhibition of Jesus as sacrifice may have been a rhetorical attempt to establish *communio*. It stands to reason that such association enacted by a sacrifice entailed more elements of comparison. I have indicated that in Romans 3:25 it is an “object of superior quality” that was sacrificed.

My argument is that the superiority of the superior object sacrificed was to show the extreme superiority of the act to bring the non-Jews also into the fold of the Israel nation. It stands to reason that if Jesus, tremendously has high values, is sacrificed in order for the non-Jews to become part of the Jews, extreme value is assigned to the non-Jews. It is worth to note that Paul is indicating to his non-Jewish implied audience the qualitative extent of the honour bestowed upon them by God's act, ἰλαστήριον. Since they were regarded of such value to God, he was prepared to sacrifice his son for the sake of including the non-Jews into the nation of Israel.

Considerably, the presenting of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον also served in the ethnic politics, the Jews in comparison with the non-Jews. It is probable that it functioned in the context of Romans' interpersonal politics of relations between the implied audience, the Jews, the non-Jews, the Christianised non-Jews and the Christianised Jews. For the endorsement of social solidarity (Bell 1992:216), the interpretation of Jesus as a sacrifice enacted the inclusiveness of the non-Jews among the Abrahamic family. That is to say, the demonstration of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον produced association and partnership between the Jews and the non-Jews. As an aspect of social consolidation, it functioned to bind them together. As a result Paul claims that there is no distinction between the Jews and the non-Jews (Kruse 2012:193). It integrated those regarded as "outsiders" to be "insiders" again while at the same time it affirmed the status and power of "insiders." It drew the non-Jews into the Jewish family, God's special kindred. Jesus' death taken as the "mode of initiation" (Weiler 2007:49-51) it inaugurated the membership of the non-Jews with full rights into the Jewish community.

The Jews versus the non-Jews interpersonal issues, consequently, formed the ethno-geographical context within which ἰλαστήριον amended the Jews' ethnic privileges in order to accommodate the latter in the family of Abraham. So the interactive social context within which such a portrayal was necessary, and the effect it had, was to convince the addressees that God had brought them back into his own legitimate sphere, through faith. Further, within the context of this very politics, it demonstrates that God's justice in association with wrath (Elliott 2008:101) and Abrahamic lineage are racially inapplicable, which is probably a universalisation of Jewish ethnicity. "Negatively, disobedience can disqualify Jews from genuine covenantal relationship. Positively,

obedience can qualify Gentiles for such status” (Lamp 1999:39). Furthermore, it can be argued that the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον introduces a political debate concerning the collective inclusiveness of the non-Jews in the chosen race. This is proved in chapter four of Romans as the paradigmatic Abraham who is staged as the father of “all” believers, the circumcised and the non-circumcised. Ultimately, then, ἱλαστήριον inaugurates a distinct genealogy where the Jews and the non-Jews share the same paradigmatic father. Therefore, the metaphorisation of Jesus’ death as sacrifice is used within the context of the demolition of boundaries between these parties. It was used in deliberative rhetoric and signifies the end of “outsiders” as they became “insiders.” There is comparison between the Jews and the non-Jews, the circumcised and the non-circumcised, the Christianised non-Jews and the Christianised Jews, and that of the Abrahamic lineage.

Secondly, if the foregoing comparative factors of sacrifice are conceded, then the presentation of Jesus as a sacrifice brought about an exchange of values within Jews-and-non-Judean intersects. Metaphorising Jesus as ἱλαστήριον within ethnicity (race) and status (reputation) evokes not only comparison but also exchange of values. This entails two aspects, the first being, under ambit of the comparative as constitutive rhetorical component of depicting Jesus as a sacrifice, I argue that the metaphorisation of Jesus’ death had ultimate value. I have indicated that the “object” sacrificed in this instance is of superior quality, it was not vegetables, animals or any human beings who were sacrificed but Jesus, God’s own son, who is unquestionably worth more than all in their hierarchical society. Most probably Paul displays Jesus as sacrifice because he wanted to point out that God was ready to sacrifice his exceptionally priceless-son on behalf of the non-Jewish Christian believers (who are subsequently regarded as extremely valuable). For a superior race to be created, they needed a superior sacrificial victim, Jesus.

Nevertheless, Paul could have used a different metaphor than ἱλαστήριον. Yet he used this specific metaphor in a non-Jewish context. What did that signify? It stands to reason that if the Son of God, who features extremely high, is sacrificed in order for the non-Jews to become part of the Jews, extreme value is assigned to the non-Jews. Otherwise if they were valueless Jesus would have been retained. In my view, ἱλαστήριον bought about a normalisation of a situation, but a normalisation in terms of a

hierarchy of values. If Jesus is sacrificed with the purpose of integrating the non-Jews into Jewish family, then Jews are regarded more valuable. To belong to the chosen nation of Israel was cherished ideal and privileged value; the act of purification, rendered via the performativity of sacrifice, restored this position, thereby introducing both a situation of normalcy and hierarchy of values.

The implication of the foregoing is that the value of the covenantal relationship sanctioned by ἱλαστήριον was regarded superior to that of Jesus. An individual became a sacrificial victim to authorise a covenantal relationship-whose value was outstandingly superior. It signifies that “new and superior race” had certain superior values, so integral to the existence of the Abrahamic family, that other values like those of Jesus had to be sacrificed. Owing to the remarkable importance of covenantal relationship, however, Jesus had higher value as argued. Jesus, the sacrificial victim, inaugurated the membership of the non-Jews into Abrahamic lineage which is racially inapplicable, thus the construction of a “new and superior race.” But then this “race” is where the values of the current (Graeco-Roman-Jewish) have been perfected, when compared to the “old race.” Besides these covenantal issues, it is notable that what God had refrained from doing in the case of Abraham, that is, by withholding him from sacrificing Isaac, he has not refrained from doing it himself and sacrificed his son.

In my view, the notion of ἱλαστήριον remains ambiguous, but part of that ambiguity can also be its vague association with the ark, where the suggestion of the covenant derives from. Arguably the presentation of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον, in the sacrificial context may have had two dimensions: covenant, an inclusion into the covenant with the nation of Israel; and Abraham genealogy, becoming part of that nation (Rm 4). One may ask: Can the other dimensions of the Abraham story be neglected? However, Paul did not continue the ἱλαστήριον metaphor into the Abraham genealogy because it was important to demonstrate the possibility of inclusion into the nation of God, but should one exclude hovering in the background of the Isaac incident evoked by the sacrificial context especially when “faith” is also recalled. Yes ἱλαστήριον is deliberately kept ambiguous but its performativity rests upon citation and citation refers us to the repertoire of terminologies, values and principles available from which an audience will be able to draw.

Thirdly, if the preceding arguments about the construction of a “new and superior race” and the exchange of communal values are agreeable, then ἰλαστήριον inaugurated values that had to be retained. The performativity of Jesus’ sacrifice is that it generated a reality where a particular set of values were given special considerations to be retained rather than the ethnic privileges like circumcision. By effectively shifting a certain set of values to one side, the metaphorisation of Jesus’ sacrifice [ἰλαστήριον] inaugurated the survival as well as inclusiveness of the non-Jews, “outsiders,” into a distinct Abrahamic genealogy. Within their set of communal values, a descendant of Abraham, especially “new and superior race,” was distinctively distinguishable from all others. To Paul’s non-Jewish implied audience “sacrificing” Jesus reinforced initiation. Through it a non-Jew became a member of Abrahamic genealogy with full rights (Weiler 2007:40-55).

Subsequently, the interpretation of Jesus as a sacrifice invalidates Jews’ racial privileges: circumcision, boastfulness, and self-righteousness based on their meritorious works.¹¹⁹ The metaphorisation of Jesus’ sacrifice, his portrayal as ἰλαστήριον, functioned as a conclusion to what precedes: the inconsistency and hypocrisy of the pretentious the Jews. It also acted as an introduction of the status of the Jews’ boastfulness, which it terminates. In such a setting, with the intention of accommodating the non-Jews as true off-springs of Abraham, faith in the “sacrificed” Jesus modifies Jews’ civil liberties. As the flow of the blood, during their circumcision, ushered the Jews into that lineage so now the flow of Jesus’ sacrificial blood having been presented as **ilasthriion** denotes and signifies the admittance of the non-Jews into that very covenantal ancestry. If circumcision was a mark of absolute maleness, then the flow of Jesus’ sacrificial blood is to be regarded as ultimate masculinity. My argument is that Jesus’ death is “noble” because it is a death that accomplishes something, an act which may be offensive to contemporary sensitivities owing to the violence attached to it, but since Jesus’ death was seen as a noble death. It is represented as a death that he voluntary endured, it was regarded not as scandalous or a shame but an honourable deed. So ἰλαστήριον functions

¹¹⁹ Seemingly, circumcision is emphasised here because of the association between the origin of its practices and Abrahams’ story. According to Witherington (2004:126), “Circumcision was believed to give access to heaven or the Messianic kingdom (*CD* 16.4-6; Jubilees 15:31-332). It was no mere ritual, and in any case it came to be seen as the sign of both the Abrahamic and the Mosaic covenants.... Paul, however, is attempting to distinguish these covenants and to suggest significance to circumcision that confirms, rather than takes precedents over, Abraham being counted as righteous through faith.”

as a metaphory that firstly removes shame because the offensiveness of a criminal deed is sidetracked, but secondly, it is infused here with the values attached to what was regarded as a noble death, that is death that acted, that enacted, that performed, that accomplished and that normalised a situation in terms of a hierarchy of values. Most appropriately, in my view, ἱλαστήριον by accomplishing “purification” brought about inclusivity of the outsiders. To put it differently, for Paul to influence his audience, as circumcision was a sign of inclusivity and manliness so is Jesus’ ἱλαστήριον. The blood of Jesus rendered the blood of circumcision unproductive. Accordingly, it terminated another ritual. Moreover, it may also have necessarily closed the long series of the Levitical sacrifices. Understanding Jesus as a sacrifice, as a result, reminded the non-Jews two things: their inferior status due to the fact that they were regarded as “outsiders,” “dirty,” and through such a “sacrifice,” under influence of the power of ritualisation, they are now privileged of being part and parcel of Abraham’s covenantal relationship with all privileges thereof. Given this, definitely such inclusivity must have had a higher value that had to be attained only through Jesus’ death. This could only happen if the sacrificial act was regarded forceful enough to enact anything, the empowerment of ritualisation.

In summation, I have demonstrated that a socio-rhetorical appraisal of ἱλαστήριον requires that the sacrificial context be taken into account. I have argued that scholars have been interested in the meaning of ἱλαστήριον. I have problematised their main alternatives: “propitiation,” “expiation,” and “mercy-seat.” The reason for problematising these major models is that these interpretations sought their substantiation via harmonisation by finding other texts of similar tendency. This harmonisation also implied decontextualisation, ignoring the contingents of the rhetorical situation, which is pertinent to the specific context, particular actors including encoded author, implied audience, real author, real audience, characterisation, the force of persuasion and the evocation of a socio-cultural world in which the arguments would appear sensible. As a result, this dissertation has explored “socio-rhetorically *why* Paul described Jesus as ἱλαστήριον.”

I have argued that the portrayal of Jesus as sacrifice, as ἱλαστήριον, entailed brutality, institutionalised violence, and how the violence that accompanied sacrifice would have been acceptable within the context of a noble death, how such a noble death would have catapulted death by crucifixion which was regarded as shameful into the

sphere of the honourable, actually one of the most honourable acts, how this death was deliberately metaphorised as ἰλαστήριον in order to divert the attention from scandalous death to honourable epithet, albeit ambiguous in terms of covenant and sacrifice. Moreover, the metaphorisation of Jesus' death as ἰλαστήριον performed to shade the shame of the crucifixion facilitating the acceptance of a crucial element in Paul's argumentation concerning the inclusivity of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic family, the righteousness also for the non-Jews. Regardless of being a Jew or a non-Jew, crucifixion was indeed a *scandalon*. Socio-rhetorically the "blood of Jesus" shed by crucifixion evokes the matrix of honour versus shame. I have argued on how the notion of ἰλαστήριον created a somewhat ambiguous space with a reconciliatory inclination allowing for those who have been despised (the non-Jews, the "insiders") to be integrated into the nation of God, shame inverted into honour. To a certain extent the metaphorisation of ἰλαστήριον softens the blow for the non-Jewish implied audience, because a death by crucifixion would not have gone down well with a Roman audience. On the other hand, sacrifice was part and parcel of everyday life in Rome, formed part of their value-system, a system that institutionalised and glorified violence.

Furthermore, I have maintained that sacrifices in the antiquity entailed comparisons. I have indicated that in Romans 3:25 it is an "object of superior quality" that was sacrificed, Jesus. It stands to reason that if Jesus, tremendously has high values, is sacrificed in order for the non-Jews to become part of the Jews, extreme value is assigned to the non-Jews. My argument is that the superiority of the superior object sacrificed was to show the extreme superiority of the act to bring the non-Jews also into Jewish nation. Since the non-Jews were considered valuable to God, to a point of sacrificing his son for their sake. Considerably, the presenting of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον also served in the ethnic politics, the Jews in comparison with the non-Jews.

Turning again to the notion of ἰλαστήριον's performativity, the presentation of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον performed an act, meaning that his death is portrayed to have acted, enacted, and accomplished something. As performative act, it effected partnership, it established *communio*. It integrated those regarded as "outsiders" to be "insiders," it drew the non-Jews and then inaugurated their membership into the Jewish community with full rights. To be a member of the chosen Jewish nation was cherished ideal and honoured

value; the act of purification, rendered via the performativity of sacrifice, restored this position, thereby introducing both a situation of normalcy and hierarchy of values. So what was actually at stake were the political situations, in this case the conflict between the “insiders” and the “outsiders,” and in such case “purification” is required. Purification was a mechanism to entrench and empower boundaries between “insiders” and “outsiders.” It normalised a situation, it brought about an alternative situation into existence, it sanctioned the construction of a “new and superior race,” it produced inclusivity, it endorsed social solidarity, it functioned to bind individuals together. It integrated those regarded as foreigners to be natives again while at the same time it confirmed the status and power of latter. Ultimately, ἰλαστήριον brings about a different genealogy into effect where the circumcised and the non-circumcised share the same paradigmatic father. The interpretation of Jesus as a sacrifice chiefly sanctioned partnership and companionship between the non-Jews and the Jews. I have also argued that as the flow of the blood during circumcision ushered the Jews into the Jewish family tree, so now the flow of Jesus’ sacrificial blood could have designated the admittance of the non-Jews into Jewish covenantal ancestry. Consequently, then, Jesus’ “sacrifice” may have invalidated Jews’ racial privileges such as: circumcision, boastfulness and self-righteousness that founded on their meritorious mechanisms.

Furthermore, it is important to note that I have applied three-pronged rhetorical models that took into deliberations the social-cultural and the religio-political contexts. The Traditional Rhetorical Criticism enabled me to provide significance to the structure of Romans 3:25-26, as well as the attention paid to *apostrophe* enabled me to foreground the interactional dynamic performing in the text. I have argued that *apostrophe* in service of *stasis* theory necessity several “Jewish” elements redefined: gospel, Jew, sacrifice, “Jewishness,” Abraham, circumcision, God’s righteousness, boasting, and ἰλαστήριον itself. Without these redefinitions the notion of ἰλαστήριον could not have been sensible. I have demonstrated how patron versus client relationship emerged in the depiction of ἰλαστήριον as a gift from God, evidence of his righteousness, and how riposte operated in dislodging the non-Jews from their social position and relocating them within the nation of God. It can indeed therefore be said that the performativity of ἰλαστήριον happens by virtue of an intersecting of several underlying social matrices. Finally, in my view, what is

at stake is also the identification of the implied audience with the notion of ἰλαστήριον as those who benefited. Yet, I have not placed the theological issues such as “propitiation,” “expiation,” and “mercy-seat” on the table for contemplation for an implied audience. Thus, I will briefly pay attention to them in my last concluding chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Recapitulation of the Issues Concerning ἱλαστήριον

Throughout this dissertation I have examined the questions of the “what” versus the “why.” “What is the meaning of ἱλαστήριον (*hilasteῖrion*)” versus “why has the death of Christ been metaphorised as ἱλαστήριον.” I have indicated that the interpretation of ἱλαστήριον has reached a relative impasse which can be assigned to the imposition of a theological framework using a theory of language which restricts to the meaning of the text, while neglecting its performativity. Despite of uniformity among theologians that the meaning of the text should occupy centre space, the enquiries of both Bible translators and Pauline scholars have yielded different meanings as far as ἱλαστήριον is concerned.

The argument is that the difficulty concerning its interpretation often arises in connection with ἱλαστήριον itself. Its meaning is clear enough, but its particular use in Romans 3:25 is variously understood with uncertainty. I have demonstrated that Bible translators as well as Pauline scholars (cf. Cottrell 2000:260; Witherington 2004:108; Tobin 2004:134-135; Keck 2005:109; Stevenson 2008:89-90; Hultgren 2011:150, 157; Kruse 2012:186) have scrutinised and rendered the meaning of ἱλαστήριον differently. In other words, what Paul means by designating Jesus as ἱλαστήριον is indeed a subject of great debate (Moo 1996:231), yet without unanimity as to its meaning (Cottrell 2000:260). This has caused much perplexity prompting several scholars to resort to different translations and interpretations.

Taking ἱλαστήριον as neuter substantive, Pauline scholars have focused sharply on whether ἱλαστήριον refers to “mercy seat,” “expiation” (*sinner-ward*), or “propitiation” (*God-ward*) and they have justified their decisions in different ways (cf. Witherington 2004:108; Tobin 2004:134-135; Keck 2005:109; Stevenson 2008:89-90; Hultgren 2011:150, 157). I have argued and indicated that there are some overlaps between these three main interpretations and this can be assigned to the notion of sacrifice that persistently hovers in the background when ἱλαστήριον is used. These

interpretations, with the objective to contribute to the meaning of a lexeme such as ἰλαστήριον, have frequently operated from two core assumptions. Firstly, that the meaning of the text *resides* in a *word*, ἰλαστήριον. And secondly, that ἰλαστήριον possesses some kind of *core* meaning/s, thereby actually decontextualising the concept, allowing it a universal meaning, without pondering its *aptum* within a specific rhetorical situation. It is in this context that this problem has plunged Pauline scholarship into divergent inconclusive arguments. Also partly because their approaches did not require them to pay attention to the “*why*” question, their main issue is *what* Paul’s ἰλαστήριον means. I have argued that to determine the meaning of ἰλαστήριον distracts from considering its performativity. As a result, this study had the “*why*” as its focus and sought to give it clarification.

The notion of ἰλαστήριον occurs within a configuration of other theologically laden concepts, such as δικαιοσύνη and πίστις as well. As much as these concepts are related to ἰλαστήριον, less attention was paid to them and more to ἰλαστήριον. This is because firstly, for this enquiry ἰλαστήριον has been the focus and equal attention paid to other terms within this configuration would have taken me beyond the scope of this dissertation. Secondly, sacrifice as the context within which ἰλαστήριον may be more appropriately interpreted is peculiarly absent among theological interpretations. Furthermore, I have discovered that from completely different angles using dissimilar approaches, although scholars’ understanding of what ἰλαστήριον may differ, they actually agree on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη and πίστις. I am reminded again of Bell (2002) and Bailey (2000) who subscribe to “mercy-seat” and are opposed to Ziesler’s (1997) “expiation” but do agree on δικαιοσύνη as a reference to God’s salvific faithfulness. Against the *justitia distributiva* view of δικαιοσύνη which “propitiation” supporters (Moo 1996; Stott 1995 and Cottrell 2000) have advocated. Yet, in respect to the meaning of πίστις, these very scholars have opted for objective genitive. There are those who agree on the meaning of ἰλαστήριον but actually disagree on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη and/or πίστις. Examples here include Johnson (1997), Ziesler (1997) and Craig (2001) who argue for “expiation,” Ziesler regards δικαιοσύνη here to be referring to God’s saving faithfulness while Craig understands it as *justitia distributiva*. Yet, these

two scholars prefer an objective genitive of πίστις, against Johnson's (1997) view which supports a subjective genitive. It has therefore rather clearly emerged that a problem regarding the meaning of ἰλαστήριον exists among interpretations that incline towards a more theological interpretative framework.

I have problematised "propitiation," "expiation" and "mercy-seat" as interpretational models for ἰλαστήριον. These models sought their substantiation via harmonisation by finding other texts of similar inclination and tendency, but, such harmonisation entailed decontextualisation, that is ignoring the contingents of the rhetorical situation, an exigency or a problematisation that was pertinent to the specific context, particular actors, for instance encoded and real author, implied and real audience, author, persuasion and the evocation of a socio-cultural world in which those arguments would emerge reasonable. These theological models of "propitiation," "expiation," and "mercy-seat" which neglected the rhetorical situation cannot but lead to a misunderstanding of ἰλαστήριον and a misappreciation of the political effect of the use of this metaphor signified within a paradigm of performativity. Consequently, applying the three-pronged rhetorical approaches to my text enabled me to move the discussion away from a purely textual, away from the harmonization of "ideas," away from a traditional theological paradigm thinking only in terms of soteriology and the salvific to a paradigm where the rhetorical, to where the social-cultural and the religio-political contexts has been taken into consideration.

In this dissertation, I have also identified as one of the main problems the fact that interpreters, in their desire to establish the meaning of the text, have given preference to focus on the "what" of the text, neglecting attempts to pay attention to the "why" question. It was therefore also a constitutive part of the dissertation to consider methodological issues. The question "why" shifted the project's focus from the meaning of the text and the implication of ἰλαστήριον to the performativity of the text, which entailed asking different questions. I have found that the socio-rhetorical approach complemented by Traditional Rhetorical Criticism allowed me to locate the interpretation of Romans 3:25-26, and specifically ἰλαστήριον, within an interpretative framework assisting in responding to the question "why."

5.2 A Socio-Rhetorical Approach to ἰλαστήριον

Part of my problem was to shift the focus from the meaning of the text only, that is, the “*what*” to the performativity of the text, namely the question “*why*,” and since the problem of establishing only the meaning of the text can be seen to operate from a linear perspective, taking the text as entity operating on one level only. So it became necessary not only to integrate insights from Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, but also to expand the analysis to Romans 1-4 in order to situate 3:25-26 in an interactional perspective on the text. That is to say, I opted to approach Romans 3:25-26, in particular the lexeme ἰλαστήριον, from broad to narrow in two ways: firstly methodologically by embedding Socio-Rhetorical Criticism within Traditional Rhetorical Criticism and secondly, by expanding the analysis from Romans 3:25-26 to Romans 1-4. In addition to Traditional Rhetorical Criticism, both Robbins (1996a, 1996b) Socio-Rhetorical Criticism and Schüssler Fiorenza’s (1999) rhetorical model of analysis of a rhetorical situation spearheaded this rhetorical critical enquiry. Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore “*why* socio-rhetorically Paul describes Jesus as ἰλαστήριον. Or which rhetorical situation invited the utterance and the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον? Methodologically I have therefore designed a “terministic screen” allowing me to demonstrate how the problem of ἰλαστήριον’s interpretation is intricately interwoven with the rhetorical interaction peculiar to a rhetorical situation. The designed “terministic screen” allowed the asking and the answering of such questions.

The three different complementing approaches were used for various reasons. The use of Traditional Rhetorical Criticism allowed for: one, a demarcation of a rhetorical unit; two, the identification of phases in the rhetorical *dispositio*; three, the flow of the argument; and most important four, the recognition of Romans 3:25-26 as almost pivotal in its summation of the preceding argument and yet anticipating in introductory fashion the *exemplum* of Romans 4. In addition, the Traditional Rhetorical Criticism required that attention be paid to the notion of the Rhetorical Situation with its various constituents, such as author, encoded author versus implied audience and audience. I have again followed the model of Schüssler-Fiorenza, the main reason being that the Rhetorical Situation necessitated a move away from only structural elements on the surface of the text to interactional categories that had to be taken into consideration.

In addition to rhetorical structure, argumentative techniques and the constituents of the rhetorical situation, Traditional Rhetorical Criticism also allowed for the identification of *apostrophe* which has been significantly useful in exposing the degree of Paul's identification with his non-Jewish implied audience and its implications for ἰλαστήριον. I have demonstrated how the *apostrophe* has aligned the encoded author and the implied audience on one side watching the contest or spectacle of encoded author in debate with the Jewish interlocutor. In connection to *apostrophe* in Romans, I have argued that the implied audience had directly been engaged alongside the encoded Paul to witness and confirm that the self-righteous Jew had no shield in himself. Through *apostrophe*, the non-Jewish implied audience realised that Jesus had functioned for them as an ἰλαστήριον with the purpose of enacting their inclusivity into Abraham's dynasty. It had been made clearer to them that without Jesus' sacrificial death they had no chance of being incorporated into the nation of the universal God. For sure faith had eliminated bragging as in the case of Abraham, *exemplum*, a paradigmatic ancestral forebear of both the Jews and the non-Jews.

I have indicated that both Traditional Rhetorical Criticism slanting the argument towards an identification with a non-Jewish implied audience, as well as Socio-Rhetorical Criticism, prompting towards taking particular social matrices as determinative in the performativity of discourse, require that the sacrificial context be seen as the source framework from which the notion of ἰλαστήριον would have made sense. What has often been deliberately by-passed or treated as peripheral as to the interpretation of ἰλαστήριον has emerged as crucial within the parameters of a rhetorical interpretation. To expose the text's performativity, I attempted to answer questions such as: what could be the enactments of ἰλαστήριον in the context of sacrificial brutality of the antiquity? What did the metaphorisation of Jesus' death achieve? I have argued and retained various possibilities as far as ἰλαστήριον's performativity is concerned. Indeed, one can argue that such socio-rhetorical results are important because they lead me to the conclusion that the acceptability of a sacrificial context for the implied audience both in terms of a world where violence was institutionalised, but also in terms of the possibility that they would have regarded the shameful death of Christ as honourable against the background of the conventional noble death. Additionally, in terms of the patron versus client matrix,

this had even been made more acceptable for them being a gift from God. Finally, it is also the socio-rhetorical dimension that has demonstrated to what extent politics was here at the order of the day and that theological interpretations have to take into consideration the politics of this section (Rm 3:21-31).

5.3 Metaphorisation of Jesus' Death as a "Sacrifice" and Performativity of ἱλαστήριον

Up to this point I have more or less focused on the methodological but from here I wish to bring together the lines as far as ἱλαστήριον's performativity within the context of the rhetorical interaction and situation is concerned. The rhetorical *dispositio* offered a tentative demarcation of a working area. The rhetorical position of Romans 3:21-31 within the *dispositio* and its rhetorical role enabled Paul to identify himself with his non-Jewish audience and to redefine the Jewishness. The discussions of the rhetorical *dispositio* have elaborated the ethno-geographical context within which ἱλαστήριον amends the Jews' ethnic privileges with the intention of the "outsiders" becoming "insiders." *Dispositio* has acted as the foreground for impartiality that facilitated the accommodation of the non-Jews in the Abrahamic family which is ἱλαστήριον's performativity. I have also argued that *apostrophe* in service of *stasis* theory had numerous Jewish fundamentals redefined: gospel, Jew, sacrifice, "Jewishness," Abraham, circumcision, God's righteousness, boasting, and ἱλαστήριον itself. Without these redefinitions the notion of ἱλαστήριον would not have been sensible. I have demonstrated also how patron versus client relationship emerged in the depiction of ἱλαστήριον as a gift from God, evidence of his righteousness, and how riposte operated in dislodging the non-Jews from their social position and relocating them within the nation of God. This enabled me to argue that what was at stake was the identification of the implied audience with the notion of ἱλαστήριον.

With regards to the performativity, I have maintained that the presentation of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον performed an act. Jesus' death was portrayed to have enacted. Substantially, framing the notion of **ilasthriion** into the context of *apostrophe* had several functions. The metaphorisation of Jesus' death and his portrayal as ἱλαστήριον had a number of tasks. It served in the politics of race of the Jews verses the non-Jews. It

functioned as a symbol of belief and thus admission of non-Jews as true offspring of Abraham. In such a context, faith in Jesus as **ilasthrion** served to modify the Jews' ethnic privileges to facilitate the accommodation of the non-Jews in the family of Abraham. The interpretation of Jesus as a sacrifice chiefly sanctioned partnership and companionship between the non-Jews and the Jews. As performative act, it effected partnership, it integrated those regarded as "outsiders" to be "insiders." Jesus as ἰλαστήριον effected a social solidarity among the non-Jews and the Jews. It moreover terminated another ritual, namely the blood of Jesus rendered the blood of circumcision fruitless. The blood of Jesus depicted the blood of circumcision unproductive.

To put it differently, as circumcision was a sign of inclusivity and manliness so is the Jesus' ἰλαστήριον. It stands to reason that if circumcision was a mark of absolute maleness, then the flow of Jesus' sacrificial blood is to be regarded as ultimate masculinity. I have argued that as the flow of the blood during circumcision ushered the Jews into the Jewish family tree, so now the flow of Jesus' sacrificial blood authorised the entrance of the non-Jews into Jewish covenantal lineage. I have argued that Paul problematised the physical circumcision as criterion for exclusion, as he metaphorised the death of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον which now signifies inclusion. Ultimately, **ilasthrion** brought about a different genealogy into effect where the non-Jews now have been included within the range of God's righteousness. This implies that they have been integrated into the nation of God and where also the circumcised and the non-circumcised share the same paradigmatic father. This inclusion turned exclusivity of the non-Jews from Abrahamic family into inclusivity and magnified honour. It honourably brought about inclusivity of the "outsiders." Reciprocally Abraham is the ancestral forebear of the Jews and the non-Jews. There are also permanent dislodgements that resulted to this inclusivity.

Metaphorising the death of Jesus as "sacrifice" is part of an argument of comparison and that socio-rhetorical criticism compelled me to a consideration of the exchange of values at work in instances of "self-sacrifice" or instances of familial sacrifices. My methodology elevated the metaphorisation of death as sacrifice as a rhetorical strategy that would work in a world of institutionalised violence and the conventions of noble death. I have maintained that sacrifices in the antiquity entailed

comparisons. In accordance with comparison elements of sacrificing in the antiquity, I have indicated that in Romans 3:25 it was an “object of superior quality” that was sacrificed (Jesus). In that case, the superiority of the superior object sacrificed was to show the extreme superiority of the act to bring the non-Jews into the fold of a “superior” nation. If Jesus tremendously had high values, and then sacrificed with the purpose of ensuring that the non-Jews became part of the Jews, then extreme value was assigned to the non-Jews. Logically then the superiority of the superior object sacrificed confirmed the tremendous superiority of the act that brought the non-Jews into the fold of the Israel nation. It was because God regarded the non-Jews to be precious that he is presented to have sacrificed his valuable son with the aim of integrating them. Considerably, the portrayal of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον served in the ethnic politics, the Jews in comparison with the non-Jews. I have demonstrated that Jesus’ “sacrifice” primarily endorsed partnership. It functioned in the context of Romans’ interpersonal politics of relations between the implied audience, the Jews, the non-Jews, the Christianised non-Jews and the Christianised Jews. As an aspect of social consolidation, it functioned to bind them together (Kruse 2012:193).

To belong to the chosen nation of Israel was cherished ideal with privileged values, the act of purification, rendered via the performativity of sacrifice, restored this position, thereby introducing both a situation of normalcy and hierarchy of values. If these views are conceded, Jesus’ “sacrifice” effected fellowship and companionship between the non-Jews and the Jews. For the endorsement of social solidarity (Bell 1992:216), the interpretation of Jesus as a sacrifice enacted inclusiveness. Jesus’ death, taken as the “mode of initiation” (Weiler 2007:49-51), inaugurated the membership of non-Jews with full rights into Jewish community (Weiler 2007:40-55). It drew non-Jews into Jewish family. It integrated those regarded as “outsiders” to be “insiders.” The interpretation of Jesus as a sacrifice relativised the superiority claims of the Jews.

The presenting of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον was a rhetorical attempt to establish *communio*. As a result, I have argued that what was actually at stake were the political situations, the conflict between the “insiders” and the “outsiders,” which necessitated “purification.” I have displayed that purification was a mechanism to entrench and empower boundaries between “insiders” and “outsiders.” It normalised a situation, it

brought about an alternative situation into existence, it sanctioned the construction of a “new and superior race,” it produced inclusivity, it endorsed social solidarity, it functioned to bind individuals together. It integrated those regarded as foreigners to be natives again while at the same time it confirmed the status and power of latter. If this association and partnership are acknowledgeable, then such a sacrifice entailed elements of comparison. There is comparison between the Jews and the non-Jews, the circumcised and the non-circumcised, between the “insiders” and the “outsiders,” the Christianised non-Jews and the Christianised Jews, and that of the Abrahamic lineage.

I have stressed that ἰλαστήριον simultaneously evoked shame and honour. I have argued that to a Roman, crucifixion, Jesus’ sacrifice, was indeed shameful. Yet, this “scandalous” event, the portrayal of Jesus as ἰλαστήριον, was infused with honour by having it redefined as a “gift,” a precious “gift” that brought about their inclusivity into Abrahamic family. I have argued that the death of Jesus as sacrifice removed shame from his death, then catapults him into a superior position of honour, and then catapults the non-Jewish audience into an even more superior position of honour because the sacrifice of God’s son was on their behalf. Thereby Paul indicated to his non-Jewish implied audience the qualitative extent of the honour bestowed upon them by God’s act, ἰλαστήριον. Otherwise if they were valueless Jesus would not have been sacrificed, but retained. Since they were regarded of such value to God, he was prepared to sacrifice his son for the sake of including the non-Jews into a “superior” nation. In this sense then Jesus’ death was “noble” because it was a death that accomplished something.

Relating to its transforming of a shameful death into an honourable death, I have also argued that the “manliness” of Jesus was associated with the idea of noble death widespread within the Roman Empire during the time of this letter. Although it was an act which may be offensive to contemporary sensitivities owing to the violence attached to it, but since Jesus’ death was seen as a noble death. It was notable that whereas God refrained Abraham from sacrificing Isaac, he has not refrained from doing it himself. He has sacrificed his son owing to the value attached to the non-Jews. Paul represented it as a death that Jesus voluntary endured, regarded it not as scandalous but an honourable deed and it was infused here with the values attached to what was regarded as a noble

death, that is death that acted, enacted, performed, accomplished and that ultimately normalised a situation in terms of a hierarchy of values.

In this study, I have argued that the presentation of Jesus as a sacrifice brought about an exchange of values within Jews-and-non-Jews intersects. The practice of sacrifice was a powerful performative event sanctioned by its institutionalisation as ritual. I have indicated how specific places were allocated and made sacred, how particular regimes were formulated for the implementation of the sacrificial act, how roles were assigned, and persons trained to be experts in order to precisely and accurately enact the ritual and infusing the normal act of slaughtering with power, a power to perform. It was under the ambit of power relations that their rituals had controlled, modelled and moulded them accordingly.

Illustratively, under ambit of the comparative as constitutive rhetorical component of depicting Jesus as a sacrifice, I have maintained that the metaphorisation of Jesus' death had ultimate value. It was not vegetables, animals or any human beings who were sacrificed but Jesus, God's own son, who is unquestionably worth more than all in their hierarchical society. Indeed if the Son of God, who features tremendously high, was sacrificed with the aim of integrating the non-Jews into the Jewish nation, extreme value was assigned to the non-Jews and Jews also were regarded more valuable. To belong to the chosen nation of Israel was cherished ideal and privileged value. As a result, for a superior race to be created, they needed a superior sacrificial victim, Jesus. The performativity of Jesus' sacrifice is that it generated a reality where a precise set of values were given exceptional considerations to be retained rather than the ethnic privileges like circumcision.

5.4 Point of Departure Regarding Easy Theologising of ἱλαστήριον

In this dissertation, however, I have not placed the theological issues concerning ἱλαστήριον such as "propitiation," "expiation," or "mercy-seat" on the table for consideration for an implied audience. Having problematised them, I just promised to pay a brief attention to them in this concluding chapter. The question is what then can a theologian make of the problem of ἱλαστήριον within theological paradigms. Putting it differently, does my socio-rhetorical approach have something to say for theologians? I

will only sketch outlines regarding theological issues because mine was a socio-rhetorical approach with different set of questions. I will not be able to contextualise “propitiation,” “expiation,” and “mercy-seat” within the socio-rhetorical context, because this was not my objective. I have left this task to future theologians to research on. Nevertheless, I will briefly point to theologians a direction and the implication of analysing the meaning of ἱλαστήριον within the socio-rhetorical context. So I will return to the problematisation, so as to illustrate how socio-rhetorical context can enable a theologian to re-appreciate the “*what*” question regarding ἱλαστήριον. As a result, I will be able to demonstrate that the notion like “propitiation” or “expiation,” which is a theological category, needs to be re-appreciated within the context of my socio-rhetorical findings.

As already argued, it was impractical for one to get rid of the notion of a deity from the context of sacrifice. The power thereof turns out to be vast and legitimate if external sources, such as ancestors or deities, endorse sacrifice (Bell 1992:211). Actually, a deity’s approval (an ultimate value) of a sacrifice gave an added effect to the power of the sacrificial act. The metaphorisation of Jesus’ death in the light social principle of a **dwìron** is applicable. According to Kruse (2012:186), Hultgren (2011:157), Keck (2005:110, 193), in Romans 3:25-26, God is not a “spectator” but an “actor.” Verse 25 asserts: **οἱ προεπετο ὁ θεος ἱλαστήριον**. Herein **προεπετο** seems to suggest that **ὁ θεος** himself, and for himself, publicly presented Jesus as sacrifice. The verb **προεπετο** clarifies that God is not merely a recipient of ἱλαστήριον.¹²⁰ He himself is the *initiator*, the *doer* and also the *receiver* of it, which proves his love for the non-Jew transgressors (Kruse 2012:186), but most importantly demonstrates to the non-Jewish implied audience how powerful this act of ἱλαστήριον was. It makes an appeal to the highest value.

God is agent, the sacrifice of his son, agency through which something had to be performed. He is the offerer of Jesus as a sacrificial gift. He is active decision-maker. He

¹²⁰ The Greek term **προεπετο** here is an aorist tense verb which is in middle voice. Dana and Mantey (1994:156-157) lead us to believe that “it is impossible to describe adequately or accurately” a verb in middle voice. They contend that English knows no approximate parallel to express exactly the Greek middle voice. It is, then, a little wonder that Campbell (1992:30) regards **προεπετο** in Romans 3:25a as “another lexical problem.” While the active voice emphasises the *action*, the middle voice stresses the *subject*. The subject, in the middle voice, is both a *doer* and always a *receiver* of the results of the action (Dana & Mantey 1994:157, 158).

Witherington states: “But unless Christ’s death on the cross is both the one necessary and also the sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the world, then God is no sense a loving God” (2004:113).

publicly exposed Jesus as ἱλαστήριον. Twice he is said to demonstrate **dikaioσunh** **autou**. In his forbearance he overlooked previous transgression. And him being the just and the justifier, he justifies the one who has faith of Jesus. All actions, as well as thoughts, flow from him.¹²¹ So, in my view, we are here concerned with *Paul's* presentation, his rhetoric and he is using God as the *doer*, the *agent*, in order to empower his argument. As argued, the deity is *represented* here as giving the endorsement to the sacrifice adds effect to the power of the sacrificial act.

Since it is impractical for one to throw away the notion of a deity from the context of this sacrifice, I have maintained that the fundamental role to the slaying of the Jesus as a sacrificial victim served as the intermediary. Such a “sacrifice” operated as “an intermediary” link between God and non-Jews, the separated spheres of “sacred and profane” (Vernant 1991:292). And by so doing, deities brought about agreement, contract and alliance. Sacrificing Jesus, thus, was meant to draw non-Jews near to God, as sacrifices did in the antiquity (Burkert 1983:2). In other words, it was intended to put “transgressors” in the right relationship with the world yonder (Vernant 1991:282; Kruse 2012:186).¹²² Thus, Romans 3:25-26 does present Jesus as the agency, through whom such alliance has been accomplished. It is through Jesus that the non-Jew transgressors (the needy clients) can now access the Abrahamic family and the “partnership with God” (a patron). But, socio-rhetorically, this partnership with the deity or God stands in service of the rhetorical interaction.

In Romans 3:25c the demonstration focuses on how the portrayal of Jesus as a sacrifice enabled God to *maintain his righteous character* in postponing punishment of “sins,” and v26b shows how it ultimately *preserved his righteous character as the justifier* of those who are of faith. Meaning that, the necessity of such a *demonstration*

¹²¹ God’s name, **qeoj**, appears twice in Romans 3:25a, 26a. However, other terms that refer to Him therein include: **autou** (twice), **auton**, **dikaion**, and **dikaionta**. **qeoj** is the most repeated word, not only in our text but also in this epistle. It appears in Romans 153 times, averagely once in every 46 words (cf. Morris 1988:20; MacArthur 1994:xi-xii). This frequency points out that in Romans one great theme is **qeoj**. Johnson (1997:51) concludes that the Good news therein “is not simply a message from God but a message about God’s work in the world.” Romans is a book about **qeoj**. Romans 3:21-26 is also all about *God* and what God has *done* in order to be true to his promise to Abraham about the non-Jews (Stowers 1994:225).

¹²² In my view, they were transgressors by virtue of being “outsiders,” because being outside the nation of God constituted one *ipso facto* a sinner whatever s/he has done or not done. For that reason, the phrase “because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins” could mean “because in his forbearance he had passed over outsider group transgression.”

arose with the impression that God condoned transgression in his forbearance, the delay and restraint in the execution of his wrath. Within the parameters of my argument, “sins” here actually refer to not being a Jew; that is, simply by being an “outsider” constituted one as “dirt,” as “transgressor.” From a socio-rhetorical perspective, “sin” implies a skewed relationship with God, in the case of the non-Jews, actually no relationship with God. This situation has been mended from God’s initiative to sacrifice his son Jesus. So, by the presenting of Jesus (a man) as sacrifice it demonstrated that God is the ultimate *just* man,¹²³ who was under compulsion to exercise justness.¹²⁴

Consequently, the demonstration of righteousness by Jesus’ death at the close of the long economy of transgression *tolerated*, founded the new epoch, and with the possibility of pardon established the principle of the radical renewal of humanity. Furthermore, if the ultimate *just* man is portrayed to be willing to sacrifice his son so as to enact a normalisation of a situation of “injustice,” then, the notion of justice (righteousness) appears in the background of ἰλαστήριον. The text clearly indicates that ἰλαστήριον is an act performed by God, but an act to prove that he is just, and that “justness” of God is immediately related “who has faith in Jesus” that is in this sacrifice. Additionally, in the light of my discussions, the “atonement” connotation could have

¹²³ The use of “man,” “maleness,” or “manliness” (also son, him, his, he, himself) as reference to God or Jesus is deliberate here (and elsewhere within similar contexts) because the non-Jewish Roman audience was not gender sensitive and thought in masculine terms, that they thought of God in the values and terms that were familiar to them which indeed means that he would have been for them an emblem of the “just man.” I am quite aware of the fact that modern readers may take offense but I am here describing antiquity’s perceptions.

¹²⁴ God is portrayed by Paul as the ultimate “just man.” Anthropological terminology is used to describe God evoking from a non-Jewish implied audience identification with one of the cherished masculine values of Roman society. The focus is on God, the **αὐτοῦ δικαιοῦ** (v26). This God is portrayed as being under an obligation to his own system of justice to exert justness. In addition to courage, wisdom and manliness, justice was one of the main masculine virtues in the Roman Empire. In other words, there is a strong inclination to link God with **αὐτοῦ δικαιοῦ** who was seen to be the epitome of masculinity as well as justness. This renders **οὐρανόθεν** in absolute self-control, manliness. It is worth to note that what would have been ultimate values for an implied Roman audience is here projected on to the level of God, anthropology determines theology. As a result the crucified Jesus, another man, becomes a manifestation of God’s justness. Since victorious manliness for a Roman citizen was extremely important, and crucifixion was a matter of shame and scandal, it explains why Paul right from the beginning of this letter quite out-rightly puts his perspective that the gospel is no matter of shame (1:16-17). In other words, Paul is here profitably persuading a Roman audience of the superiority of the *just* God he is proclaiming, despite the dishonour that may be associated with crucifixion. Him being the just and the justifier, he justifies the one who has faith of Jesus. Also, justice in antiquity was unavoidably linked with brutality. Justice and violence often worked jointly. Meaning that, there was a link between sacrifice, aggression, justness and “the just man” who was under the obligation to exert justice.

been a component of sacrifice, but in some way or the other, that is not what is exploited here by Paul. Paul again brings the sacrifice into relationship with the integration into the covenant of God. As a result, the notion of atonement needs not be rejected, but it is kept in ambiguity.

It stands to reason that the notion of ἱλαστήριον to a certain extent leaves the question “*what*” open and/or ambiguous. The *meaning* of ἱλαστήριον appears to be not retrievable, but its performativity on the one hand suggests a conciliatory act that entailed conciliation between God and the non-Jews. On the other hand, this performs to integrate the non-Jews into the nation of Israel, but even further to perform also in the interaction between Paul and his implied audience. Thus, establishing yet another opportunity for their identification with the message he was to bring to the non-Jews. My appeal is that theologians who are interested in the *meaning* of ἱλαστήριον ought to contextualise “propitiation,” “expiation,” or “mercy-seat” as interpretational models for ἱλαστήριον within a socio-rhetorical context. Although multiple interpretations of ἱλαστήριον will always remain, in the light of a socio-rhetorical appraisal, these theologians are “challenged” to contextualise their views.

Illustratively, second thoughts are required about “expiation,” because from a socio-rhetorical perspective this is to perpetuate the “individual salvation” which was not at stake in Romans 3:25-26. These theologians should also have second thoughts on “propitiation.” “Propitiation” constructs a wrathful, vengeful God fully immersed within the thought patterns of antiquity, because it may not be applicable here. In my view, Romans 3:25-26 deals with a completely different situation in which violence was institutionalised and completely accepted, which makes it impossible just to decontextualise ἱλαστήριον and make it universally applicable. That implies that a theological interpretation will have to acknowledge that we cannot operate with the concept of ἱλαστήριον, at least not with one of the meanings suggested by contemporary research. What should be taken as avenue is its performativity. The performativity of ἱλαστήριον suggests conciliation, it suggests a theology that places value on inclusion, and as a matter of fact, that requires such a valuation of inclusivity that extremely high sacrifices should be made in order to achieve that. For that reason, those theological paradigms are problematised when a rhetorical critical approach is adopted. The task of

contemporary theologians is not only to echo the New Testament, as a matter of fact, it cannot be echoed in the same manner. Rather their task has become to appropriate it in a different context, contextualisation. Theological interpretations must not downplay sacrificial dimensions of ἰλαστήριον, a thing that socio-rhetorical interpretation cannot bypass.

In conclusion, following a socio-rhetorical approach my dissertation has problematised decontextualised theologising, easy theologising. Against the background of my research, one is left enquiring: how legitimate is the type of theologising that focuses attention on “propitiation,” “expiation,” or “mercy-seat” taking into consideration how those concepts were permeated by a culture that institutionalised violence. Putting it in another way, how appropriate to our contemporary context can a theology be that perpetuates a discourse in which an extreme, brutal violent act had the performative power to persuade of its ethnic integrative capacity. Saturated with the sentiments of a culture that found in violence nobility and honour, that allowed for a positive valorisation of violent acts, the portrayal and metaphorisation of Jesus’ death as ἰλαστήριον, as a sacrifice by his own father would have been appropriate and hailed as honourable, indeed a demonstration, a proof of his ultimate manliness, of being an absolutisation of virtue. And indeed such an act would have been seen as to have the performative power to transgress historically hardened ethnic boundaries would likewise have been seen and accepted as gift, as beneficial.

But that was the first century, what about the contemporary situation where a theologian’s most prominent forms of accountability should be to propagate non-violence? Should it not be the function of contemporary theologians within the Christian tradition, their obligatory accountability, to condemn the violence that sprouted a notion such as ἰλαστήριον? Should they keep on attempting to establish continuity with semantic redefinitions of this term? Or should they opt for a reading against the grain problematisation of the notion that conflict should be resolved by any form of violence?

Consequently, I have maintained that the use of ἰλαστήριον should be understood socio-rhetorically. That is, the interaction between an encoded author and an implied audience within a setting of a rhetorical situation, which has been embedded within a social world particular pertaining to that of the discursive practices concerned

with sacrifice and its performativity. The approach I have adopted has exposed the politics involved and that the values used to solve the politics among early Christians cannot always be the values that have to solve the politics of contemporary theologians. However, I did not intend to pave the way for theologians, but my objective was simply to problematise and to demonstrate that a socio-rhetorical appraisal of ἰλαστήριον requires theologians to contextualise and re-contextualise the categories they operate with.

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