

# Aramaic-Speaking Gentiles?

## “Abba” Metaphor as Spiritual Experience of the Jesus Tradition

(An abstract)

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This study uses the “Abba” metaphor to demonstrate the New Rhetoric model of metaphor as a tool to understand Paul’s rhetorical purpose of metaphors. By looking closely at the theme (i.e., the idea the author tries to convey) and *phoros* (i.e. the picture the author uses to convey the idea), this study shows the following results. Paul’s historical concerns link the “Abba” metaphor in Gal. 4.6 to Palestinian origin. By the date of the letter to the Galatians, “Abba” had been ingrained firmly within the Galatian Christian community. Paul used the metaphor to attack the agitators by excluding them from the spiritual *familia* of Jesus. In this recipient-oriented reading, the use of the metaphor exhorts with great urgency those on the fringe to return to the fold. By using the structure of the New Rhetoric to describe a metaphor, the interpreter can raise questions on both the understandings of the author and readers in the communication process of the text.