

Review of  
*The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation*  
(Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002). Pp. lvi + 515. \$34.95.)

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“Dés le début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle,” observed P. Bonnard several decades ago, “rares sont les années qui ne voient paraître un commentaire ou une étude sur l’épître aux Galates” (*L’Épître de Saint Paul aux Galates* [CNT 9; Neuchâtel/Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, (1972)] 17). While this book adds to the deluge-like go at Galatians, it is exceptionally noteworthy because Nanos uses the volume to mark out the core of a vigorous recent “Galatians debate” that developed from the impact of a methodological turn, about thirty years ago, to rhetorical, epistolary, and sociohistorical tools of analysis. The essays, most previously published (exceptions are noted below), were chosen for their contribution to three “important areas of particular interest” (p. xi) in and for the Galatians debate. Contents are organized around these areas.

In the essays in part 1, authors examine the rhetorical and epistolary genre of Galatians. Contributors to the rhetorical debate are led, appropriately, by Hans Dieter Betz, “The Literary Composition and Function of Paul’s Letter to the Galatians” (pp. 3-28); then follow Robert G. Hall, “The Rhetorical Outline for Galatians: A Reconsideration” (pp. 29-38); Joop Smit, “The Letter of Paul to the Galatians: A Deliberative Speech” (pp. 39-59); Robert M. Berchman, “Galatians (1:1-5): Paul and Greco-Roman Rhetoric” (pp. 60-72); Troy Martin, “Apostasy to Paganism: The Rhetorical Stasis of the Galatian Controversy” (pp. 73-94); and C. Joachim Classen, “St. Paul’s Epistles and Ancient Greek and Roman Rhetoric” (pp. 95-113). At the same time that Betz was outlining the rhetorical argument of Galatians, the late Nils A. Dahl came at the letter with insights from ancient epistolary theory, and his article, “Paul’s Letter to the Galatians: Epistolary Genre, Content, and Structure” (pp. 117-42) is now available for the first time as an extract from a longer unpublished version read in 1973 at the SBL Paul seminar. Dahl is accompanied by G. Walter Hansen, “A Paradigm of the Apocalypse: The Gospel in the Light of Epistolary Analysis” (pp. 143-54).

A second flash point in the debate concerns Paul's autobiographical remarks in Galatians 1 and 2. Not only are they pivotal to how Galatians is interpreted, but, as Nanos points out, "constructions of Paul, Paulinism, and of the early church all draw significantly from this material" (p. xxv). Part 2 offers studies that exemplify the problems and most cogent solutions in the debate on what to make of Galatians 1 and 2, especially concerning the incident in Antioch (2:11-21) and its relation to the letter. These studies are Paul E. Koptak, "Rhetorical Identification in Paul's Autobiographical Narrative: Galatians 1:12—2:14" (pp. 157-68); Johan S. Vos, "Paul's Argumentation in Galatians 1—2" (pp. 169-80); James D. Hester, "Epideictic Rhetoric and Persona in Galatians 1 and 2" (pp. 181-96, first published here); James D. G. Dunn, "The Incident at Antioch (Gal 2:11-18)" (pp. 199-234); Paula Fredriksen, "Judaism, the Circumcision of Gentiles, and Apocalyptic Hope: Another Look at Galatians 1 and 2" (pp. 235-60); Philip E. Esler, "Making and Breaking an Agreement Mediterranean Style: A New Reading of Galatians 2:1-14" (pp. 261-81); and Mark D. Nanos, "What Was at Stake in Peter's 'Eating with Gentiles' at Antioch?" (pp. 282-318, first published here).

Part 3 is a symposium on the situation(s) of the Galatians themselves. Studies here tend to approach the question of the Galatians' identities, interests, and intramural conflicts with a focus on the so-called opponents in Galatia. Participants include A. E. Harvey, "The Opposition to Paul" (pp. 321-33); Robert Jewett, "The Agitators and the Galatian Congregation" (pp. 334-47); J. Louis Martyn, "A Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles" (pp. 348-61); Nikolaus Walter, "Paul and the Opponents of the Christ-Gospel in Galatia" (pp. 362-66), revised and translated from German); John M. G. Barclay, "Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case" (pp. 367-82); B. C. Lategan, "The Argumentative Situation of Galatians" (pp. 383-95); Mark D. Nanos, "The Inter- and Intra-Jewish Political Context of Paul's Letter to the Galatians" (pp. 396-407); Dieter Mitternacht, "Foolish Galatians?—A Recipient-Oriented Assessment of Paul's Letter" (pp. 408-33, previously unpublished).

By force of editorial can-do, Nanos has here constructed a coherent, though by no means consensual, debate that was likely known hitherto only in part and surely only to the most assiduously attentive specialists. Add to the collection N.'s incisive introduction (pp. xi-xli), a glossary of technical rhetorical terms (pp. 435-39), a massive bibliography (pp. 441-90), a set of thoughtful indexes, and the promise that the volume would "help facilitate familiarity with the contemporary issues central to the interpretation of Galatians" (p. xi)—indeed, issues central to

the study of the Pauline letters generally—is superbly fulfilled, both intellectually and pedagogically.