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**Rastoin, Marc**

*Tarse et Jérusalem: La Double Culture de l'Apôtre Paul en Galates 3,6–4,7*

Analecta Biblica

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This book is based on a doctoral dissertation that has been prepared and defended by Marc Rastoin at the Pontificia Università Urbaniana in Rome under the direction of Jean-Noël Aletti from the Pontificio Istituto Biblico in Rome. It is divided up into an introduction and four great chapters, followed by a rich bibliography (313–55) and indexes (357–73).

In the introduction (1–16), Rastoin presents the general tendencies of research on Paul's cultural backgrounds and outlines his own contribution. Research on Paul is often somewhat one-sided in the sense that scholars either emphasize Paul's Pharisaic background that is mirrored in his scriptural arguments or concentrate on the apostle's skills in Greek rhetoric, which he displays throughout his letters, for example, in the disposition of Galatians. Rastoin, however, does not intend to build up an alternative: Tarsus or Jerusalem, that is, Hellenistic culture or Pharisaic learning; he intends to present Paul as a man of what he calls *biculturalité*, shaped by both cultures. This is why he emphasizes the *et* ("and") in the title of his book—anyone who mentions this title should pay attention to the emphasis.

In the first chapter (17–92), Rastoin analyzes the composition of the whole Epistle to the Galatians under the aspect of *biculturalité*, that is, as a manifestation of its author's Greek

and Jewish formation. Yet before engaging in the literary analysis, he takes a closer look at these two dimensions of Paul's formation: rabbinic (or prerabbinic) exegetical methods and Greco-Latin rhetoric.

As to Paul's Pharisaic formation, Rastoin confidently concludes from Acts 22:3 and Phil 3:5 that Paul did receive his higher education in Jerusalem—which by no means excludes the influence of Hellenistic culture and thinking (it is important to note that). He is conscious of the problems of evidence for “rabbinic” exegesis before 70 C.E. and proposes rather to speak of “Pharisaic” exegesis for which Paul is a (maybe the only) witness (20).

As to Paul's Hellenistic training, Rastoin marks the terminological difficulty of the term “rhetoric” being applied to a wide range of phenomena and points out that the art of skillfully expressing oneself played a role at different levels of formation. On pages 25–26 he presents a table that systematizes both Greek and Jewish education on four levels; Paul is to be located on the third level in both areas; that is, he disposed of higher education in either field, but he was neither a professional orator nor a rabbi in the strict sense of the word (26 nn. 29 and 30).

Rastoin's analysis of the composition of Galatians is aimed at presenting the epistle as a document of a double culture, yet the composition itself does not give too much evidence. The significantly bicultural passages such as the letter prescript and postscript with Greek greetings and Jewish blessings surely give evidence of Paul's double culture at the level of micro-composition (33–38), but, for example, the fact that the catalogues of vices and virtues (5:19–24) appeal to Jewish as well as to non-Jewish readers (74–75) is hardly an issue of composition.

In the second chapter (93–167), Rastoin takes a closer look at Paul's scriptural and legal argumentation in Gal 3:6–22. In this passage Paul shows his mastery of the Jewish exegetical technique of *gezerah shawah* as well as that of Roman legal reasoning about the *status scripti et voluntatis*. Paul's attempt to come to terms with different and contradictory biblical texts in Gal 3:10–13 is first analyzed in terms of a *gezerah shawah* in the wider sense, that is, as the interpretation of a biblical text with another text that contains identical or similar expressions, while these texts need not exclusively belong to the Torah and the expressions in question are not strictly identical (111–25). Then Rastoin widens the focus on the use of this exegetical tool in later parts of the Hebrew Bible, in the Qumran writings, and in 4 Maccabees. One may wonder, however, whether the accumulation of biblical references in 4 Macc 18:14–19 (139–42) can really be considered as a *gezerah shawah*, even in the widest sense, since the issue is not to interpret certain texts with the help of other texts but to give cumulative evidence from Scripture that God protects the faithful and gives and restores life. Of course, the texts in

question all contain the term “life,” but there is no attempt to interpret them or to resolve contradictions.

In the second part of this chapter (144–62), Rastoin inquires whether Paul’s argument in Gal 3:6–22 could be understood in terms of Roman legal reasoning about what he calls the *status scripti et voluntatis* (yet without giving direct evidence for use of the term by ancient authors), that is, the interpretation of a given law (the “testament”) with regard to the law-giver’s (God’s) general intention (to give life). His introductory reference to “droit grec” or “droit gréco-romain” (144) is somewhat misleading, since, as he himself later admits (248 n. 218), legal systems in the Greek and Hellenistic world did differ, so that “Greek law” is no equivalent to the rather unified and systematized entity “Roman law.” For the legal systems of Hellenistic states and cities, scholars of ancient law tend to use the term “Hellenistic legal koine” (I owe this information to Claudia Kreuzsaler, Munich).

The third chapter (168–257) focuses on the imagery of Gal 3:15–4:7, particularly to the metaphors of testament, heritage, minor age, and the pedagogue. On pages 174–75 Rastoin gives a survey of the different meanings the term διαθήκη can have: covenant, will, donation, adoption. For Paul’s use of the term in Galatians, he interprets the διαθήκη as meaning both “covenant” and “act of adoption” (with its common legal and biblical implications); thus this very term is a good example of *biculturalité*. The other metaphors are interpreted mainly in terms of everyday experience in the Hellenistic and Roman world. The rabbinic references for the use of “pedagogue,” however, are not convincing, since they rather testify to Hellenistic influence on their rabbinic authors’ culture (cf. p. 213 n. 122). For the situation of the minor heir, instructive parallels from Plato are presented (*Lysis* 207–208; *Nomoi* 11.922a–924a). A subchapter of its own (216–34) is dedicated to the central and often quoted verse Gal 3:28 and to the effects it could have had on Jewish and Greek ears. Rastoin mentions Hellenistic and rabbinic evidence for ways of thinking that are challenged by this verse, but he is rightly reluctant to see direct influence of the androgyne myth here. Galatians 3:28 is again a good example of Paul’s ability to address Greek and Jewish readers as well (or rather, Hellenistic Jews and non-Jews).

Eventually, the fourth chapter (258–304) is dedicated to what is theologically at stake when one considers Paul’s double culture. In the first two parts, Rastoin presents two thinkers who interpreted the key verse Gal 3:28 from a rather philosophical perspective (D. Boyarin and A. Badiou) and exegetes who propose pointed readings of Gal 3:28 (E. Schüssler Fiorenza and W. Meeks). In the third part, Rastoin himself draws theological conclusions from his enquiry on Paul’s double culture: Paul’s plurality of conceptions of the church (as a people and as a family) in Gal 3–4 allows for a plurality of ways of

Christian witness (e.g., celibacy and marriage). Further, a look on Paul's double culture allows today's church to keep the balance between its particular origin and rooting in Israel on the one hand and its universal mission on the other. Consciousness of this dialectic opens a way to a responsible inculturation of the gospel. These final considerations show how well Rastoin's exegetical contribution fits in the framework of the Pontificia Università Urbaniana (under the auspices of the Congregation for the Evangelization of the Peoples), which is traditionally concerned with mission, so that today the issue of inculturation is an important aspect of research and teaching there.

Some general remarks about the book: Rastoin offers quite a lot of instructive tables. These tables often make literary relationships and similarities more evident than a text could; thus they are a helpful means of exegesis, as in Rastoin's detailed analyses of connections between the different parts of Galatians (e.g., 46). In some cases, however, less would have been more: when tables are extended over several pages (e.g., 79–84), or the layout of the tables is executed with little care (e.g., 123–24, 136–37, 172–73), the tables become more confusing than helpful. As to another technical detail, he has fallen victim to his Greek font: when Greek words are hyphenated, the hyphen appears as *spiritus asper + circumflex*, which may puzzle the unprepared reader's eye.

With regard to content, one may doubt whether Hellenistic Judaism is really a counterpart to Greek/Hellenistic culture, so that Paul's double culture was made up of Hellenistic culture on the one hand and Hellenistic-Jewish culture on the other (cf., e.g., 15). Perhaps it is more appropriate to consider Hellenistic Judaism itself more pointedly as a double culture and Paul as one very prominent exponent of it. This would give a different nuance to the assessment of Paul addressing Jews and Greeks in Gal 3:6–4:7. One could see Gal 3:6–14 as an argumentation especially crafted for an audience that profoundly knows and highly values the Bible and Gal 3:15–4:7 as a resumption of the argument for the whole audience, including those who lack this knowledge (a “plus” of Jewish formation) or are otherwise not convinced by Paul's exegesis.

These questions, however, do not diminish the value of Rastoin's book that connects two fields of research on Paul and shows that Paul's argumentative power lies precisely in his *biculturalité* that allows him to become “all things to all people” (1 Cor 9:22). It offers a stimulus to think further about Paul's bicultural biography and his communities, especially on the situation of “Gentile Christians” who entered Christian communities established in their world and became acquainted with a Scripture that, for them, came from another world. Even if one misses a discussion of Paul's early biography or holds a different view on the question whether he really studied in Jerusalem, one will appreciate the *et* (“and”) that is printed in italics on the title. This double perspective is Rastoin's genuine contribution, and it is the strength of his book.