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Leveling the Playing Field: Egalitarian Veils and Athletic Metaphors in 1 Corinthians

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Abstract

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In this dissertation, I argue that Paul's use of citizenship motifs throughout 1 Corinthians indicates the apostle's attempt to provide an egalitarian apparatus that deconstructs Corinthian concern with socioeconomic status. Part One contends that Paul fashions a citizen body in both civic and individual aspects in 1 Corinthians. Building off the legacy of the Jewish *politeuma*, Paul envisions the "churches of God" as a polity distinct from those of the cities in which the house-churches found themselves. He accomplishes this by means of references to *paideia*, law courts, and Greek athletic games. Just as Jewish *gymnasia* replicated the features of the Greek gymnasium while maintaining Jewish regulations such as halakhic oil, Paul presents the Christian gymnasium as one that reproduces the features of the Greek games but with results more durable than those of the temporally bound and perishable *polis*. This political construction of citizenship serves as Paul's response to the schisms in the community that are reproducing social inequalities in Roman Corinth. Part Two explores Paul's construction of the Christian *politeuma* and the Christian citizen through his athletic imagery in 1 Corinthians. Part Three of the work addresses the manner in which Paul's veiling instructions intersected with Roman imperial ideology concerned with the visual display of status. In Chapter Six, I discuss how Paul's justification for Christian veiling practices by means of the Genesis creation accounts parallels the imperial ideology that supported veiling customs with the creation accounts. Chapter Seven situates Paul's concluding appeal to the social customs of the "churches of God" within the context of veiling customs in the early imperial period.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my godson and nephew, Evan Carl Salvador. It is not every day that one may flout canon law while remaining in the Vatican's favor. Such a state of affairs, however, revitalizes the checks and balances between the life of the mind and the life of the Church that allows scholarship to remain in service to both the human and divine spirit.

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Introduction:

The Authoritative Body

While Paul is often thought to have abandoned his nationalistic past when he left his project as a zealous Pharisaic policer of Judaism, stamping out the Jewish heresy of Christianity, I will argue that 1 Corinthians shows that Paul's engagement with nationalism continues in 1 Corinthians. Paul's use of words conceptually related to the notion of a *politeuma* in Philippians is not a product of Paul's correspondence with the Christian community at Philippi; it is a persistent feature of Paul's thought.¹ Paul introduces a number of elements concerning the body's relation to the state that do not appear to have been issues raised by the Corinthians themselves: the imagery of pedagogues (4:15), the metaphor of the spectacle (4:9, 15:32), the metaphor of athletic events including boxing (9:24–27), and the metaphor of the body as a temple (6:19). Moreover, Paul includes instruction on religious attire, a category of individual comportment that imperial legislation and programs sought to control. The connection between symbols of clothing and the body politic runs rife throughout Roman political discourse. Cicero, for instance, pinned his consular self-fashioning on his adherence to the saying “let arms yield to the toga” in the hopes that he might appear as the complementary *imperator togatus* to Pompey's *imperator armatus*.² 1 Corinthians, though it does not feature vocabulary related to the political governance structure of the

¹ The concerns of Philippians with the *politeuma* and honor are usually taken as particular to the community. See Markus Bockmuehl, *Epistle to the Philippians* (London: A & C Black, 1997): 194; Joseph H. Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005): 116.

² *Pis.* 73. See John Dugan, “How to Make (and Break) a Cicero: *Epideixis*, Textuality, and Self-Fashioning in the *Pro Archia* and *In Pisonem*,” *Classical Antiquity* 20 (2001): 35–77, here 66–67.

politeuma, is a letter informed by and interfacing with the implements of statecraft. Such an interpretation is borne out by the convergence of Paul's rhetoric with speeches of concord and with the principle in political discourse of *emulatio*.³

I will argue that 1 Corinthians marks Paul's attempt to interface with the existing Roman Greek system of *paideia* and its enculturation of wealthy citizens into the social hierarchy displayed at sacred games and spectacles. To this end, Paul accuses the Corinthian Christians of having many instructors and royal pretensions. He presents himself rhetorically as being exhibited in the arena as one condemned to die and thus as one being judged by the very class to which the Corinthians are said to aspire. Playing into the Corinthians' conceit, Paul's letter eschews the Roman spectacle in favor of the classic models of Greek athletics popular among the elite classes in Roman Greece.

However, as in Roman cultural discourse, Paul's use of the violent event of boxing

³ Though scholars such as Elizabeth Castelli have argued that Paul's call to imitation is inherently a power play, as Paul puts himself in a position structurally similar to that of Christ, Raymond Collins observes that Paul himself is not the model but his example of "being for others" (cf. 11:24) is. Raymond Collins, *First Corinthians* (Collegeville: Order of St. Benedict, 1999): 391; Elizabeth Ann Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991): 112. Yet, it is precisely this model of an authoritative cultural figure pointing younger listeners to his own model that is based on the model of an even more ancient antecedent that predominates Roman political discourse. Pliny, for example, takes Cicero as his model and yet commends himself as a model for youth to follow (*Ep.* 6.6.5, 6.11.2–4, 7.11.7). Without his emulation of Cicero, Pliny would not have a precedent for instructing mimesis and because he has chosen the model of a dead person Pliny has. See Andrew M. Riggsby, "Pliny on Cicero and Oratory: Self-fashioning in the Public Eye," *American Journal of Philology* 116 (1995): 123–135. Margaret Mitchell finds that Paul's self-references, which are spread consistently throughout the letter, not only offer proof that 1 Corinthians is a unified composition but also that 1 Corinthians is deliberative. Paul's self-referential presentation in 1 Corinthians is "outstanding." See Margaret M. Mitchell, *Rhetoric of Reconciliation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991): 59–60. Russell B. Sisson, in his dissertation a few years later, found that Paul inhabited the structures of Stoic discourse in order to give an apostolic apology that "affirms Paul's function as a moral leader." Russell B. Sisson, *The Apostle as Athlete: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 9* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Emory University, 1994): 170.

assumes the negative connotations of gladiatorial combat while the event of running plays off the historical accessibility of the sport to both men and women. The prospect of Paul's disqualification assures even slaves, who lack financial and social resources, that they may strive to gain cultural capital in the form of the pursuit of the heavenly crown, which is modeled on the terrestrial crown that is out of their reach. According to Paul, the egalitarian ethos established by his athletic imagery is to manifest itself in the physical gathering of the Body of Christ in the Corinthian church. Paul prescribes norms for ritual attire that encourage the Corinthians to identify with one another in terms of gender rather than socioeconomic status as they had been doing. I will contend that Paul is leveraging the difference in subsystems within the Roman Corinthian cultural apparatus.⁴

Most studies on 1 Corinthians consider Paul's athletic metaphors as a whiff of "local color" inspired by the nearby Isthmian Games, one of the panhellenic games, or as a spiritual struggle along with the aggregate of Paul's athletic references throughout his correspondence that together comprise an *agon* motif.⁵ Classicists have long neglected ancient athletics in favor of either rhetorical culture or warfare. In the slowly expanding field of Roman period athletics, studies tend to fall into one of two categories. Some studies take athletics to be part of the *paideia* that prepared citizens for cultural and militaristic service to the state.⁶ Others set athletics in cultural competition with

⁴ For the concept of the cultural apparatus, see Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, ed. Louis Althusser (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971): 127–86.

⁵ This has been the consensus since Philipp Bachmann, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1905).

⁶ This approach has much in common with the work of Foucault, who sees the state as disciplining the individual bodies of denizens into a bio-power for state interests. In

intellectualism.⁷ However, as Zahra Newby has suggested, athletics played an important role in shaping the image of the Empire and the emperor, with historians attributing the success of an emperor to his comportment at athletic events. Good emperors, such as Augustus, took an interest in the games and in the response of the audience.⁸ Lighter athletic games persist in being identified as Greek from the early to late imperial periods.

Traditionally, Paul's athletic metaphors have been divided into two components: the events of boxing and running and the imperishable crown.⁹ That the imperishable crown so central to the attainment of both civic and immortal status in early imperial Roman Greece features in 1 Corinthians is another indication that Paul is constructing a new citizen body with its identity in Christ, retooling older Greek ideals to fashion a new

Pauline scholarship, Dale Martin draws on Foucault and Roman elite practices to shape the body without explicitly analyzing Paul's athletic metaphors.

⁷ This position is more profitably analyzed with the theories of Althusser and Bourdieu, who take an interest in how the state reproduces ideology and how cultural capital is constructed and distributed in a social system, respectively. For the position that interest in athletics waned in the Roman period as elite favor turned to intellectualism, see Henri I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (Madison: Wisconsin, 1956); Maud Gleason, *Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome* (Princeton: Princeton, 1995); and T. Schmitz, *Bildung und Macht: Zur sozialen und politischen Funktion der zweiten Sophistik in der griechischen Welt der Kaiserzeit* (Munich: Beck, 1997). For athletics as part of a matrix of elite activities that mutually informed one another and occasionally led to rhetorical rivalry and borrowing, see Simon Goldhill, *Being Greek Under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic, and the Development of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2001); Jason König, *Athletics and Literature in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005); and Zahra Newby, *Greek Athletics in the Roman World: Victory and Virtue* (Oxford: Oxford, 2005). For athletics as a means of wealthy families to display their prestige through the powerful bodies of their sons, see Onno Van Nijf, "Athletes, Artists and Citizens in the Imperial Greek City," *Patrie d'origine et patries electives: les citoyennetés multiples dans le monde grec d'époque romaine*, ed. Anna Heller and Anne Valérie Pont (Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2012): 175–94.

⁸ Zahra Newby, *Greek Athletics in the Roman World: Victory and Virtue* (Oxford: Oxford, 2005).

⁹ Victor C. Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agon Motif: Traditional Athletic Imagery in the Pauline Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1967); Martin Brändl, *Der Agon Bei Paulus: Herkunft Und Profil Paulinischer Agonmetaphorik* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

Christian self-understanding. The crowns were awarded in the most prestigious event and the sport in which women were most likely to compete, signaling that the ideal Christian for the Corinthians is an honored community member, male or female, free or slave. In Roman Corinth, those who could not win a vegetal crown in the successful completion of an athletic competition could, if they belonged to the upper classes, essentially purchase an imperishable one through patronage. Yet, in the Christian community at Corinth, Paul democratizes the crown, making it available to all who are willing to discipline themselves.

Shortly thereafter, in 1 Corinthians 11, he inverts the status of the practice of veiling, building solidarity on the basis of gender rather than socioeconomic status. Paul's appeal to creation subverts Roman imperial creation accounts privileging marriage, which was being promoted by the *imperium* among the upper classes to continue elite bloodlines. His insistence on gender differences means that women win the crown of immortality as women, a sharp departure from early Christian traditions that promised women admission into heaven only after becoming men.¹⁰ Not only did this male transvestism on the part of women imply that women were the second sex, but it participated in the economy of Greek mythology evinced by priestly authors such as Plutarch that saw the transvestism of the paradigmatic athlete-hero, Herakles, and certain cultic priests and priestesses as an aberration.¹¹

Whereas Paul's discussions on idol meat and baptism are occasioned by pragmatic events in the everyday religious experience of the Corinthian Christians and

¹⁰ Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew* (Berkeley: California, 1994): 196.

¹¹ Nicole Loraux, "Herakles: The Super-Male and the Feminine," *Before Sexuality: the Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World*, ed. David M. Halperin and John J. Winkler (Princeton: Princeton, 1990): 21–52.

are explained in simple philosophical terms, the athletic metaphors of 9:24–27 and the metaphorical language of the veiling instructions represent moments of linguistic and theological freedom for Paul. Here, Paul is not bound to a teaching handed down from Jesus, such as the words of institution at the Eucharistic meal and the need to repeat the meal to replenish what Kristeva has called the “lapsing subject.”¹² Paul explains the veils in terms of creational imagery and the binary between citizen and foreign captive, concluding with a notation of the social custom established by the churches of God. This elides the imperial prerogative that is often cited by scholars as the logic behind veiling at Corinth, that is, the imperial legislation that prescribed marriage veils for chaste matrons. What the Corinthian Christians are being asked to do in 1 Corinthians 11 is to create a connection between veils and the Genesis creation narratives that seems to naturalize the representation, so that one effortlessly says, with Aristotle, “this is that,” *houtos ekeinos* (*Poet.* 4, 1448b8–19). No longer does the veil connote socioeconomic status; rather, the veil at the worship meal possesses religious capital beyond the Roman one that the Corinthians are to attribute to whatever “authority” may be perceived by the earthly or heavenly *angeloi* Paul mentions. Such a connection intends to move the Corinthian Christians away from identifying with the imperial construction of creation and its implications for societal and human bodies in favor of the Pauline Christian construction of creation and its implications for civic and personal bodies.

1. The Christian Community at Corinth

¹² Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia, 1982): 119.

When Paul writes 1 Corinthians, he is ministering in Ephesus (54 C.E.), a situation that inspires him to send greetings from the “churches of Asia” (16:5–8, 19).¹³ 1 Corinthians is a letter that must address three sociological dimensions. First, there is the relationship of the local church to the pan-Mediterranean churches of God and the Jerusalem church helmed by the apostles who knew the living Jesus. Paul expects his correspondents at Corinth to conform to the customs of the “churches of God,” specifically, the veiling customs. However, he also assumes that the community will want to take a tribute to the leading ecclesial body in Jerusalem, and he would like the opportunity to go with them as their leader. Second, there is the relationship of social classes within Corinth with one another. Paul gives instructions to all strata of society, assuring slaves they need not be concerned about their status as called. Yet, the form of his letter, a deliberative letter urging concord, is one common in politics and must be meant to resonate with the members of the house-churches drawn from Corinth’s social

¹³ According to the Book of Acts, the Corinthian church is established by Paul between 50 and 52 C.E. during his second of three missionary journeys. Paul arrived directly from Athens, where he argued with Stoic and Epicurean philosophers on the Areopagus. He stays with a fellow tentmaker, a Jew named Aquila from Pontus who had recently come from Rome with his wife Priscilla because Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome (18:2–3). In Corinth, the synagogue rejects Paul, but he finds support from Titius Justus, a God-fearer who lives next to the synagogue, and Crispus, an official at the synagogue (18:8). A dream oracle from the Lord instructs Paul to continue preaching (18:9). The Jews attempt to take Paul before the tribunal, but Gallio does not even need to hear a response from Paul before dismissing the motion; Sosthenes, another official of the synagogue, is then beaten in front of the tribunal (18:12–17). After a “year and six months” (18:11), Paul departs from Corinth and travels to Antioch in Syria (18:22). Paul then sets out on his third missionary journey (18:23), remaining in Ephesus for three years (19:1, 20:31). In 1 Corinthians, Paul indicates that he is writing from Ephesus and that he plans to stay there until Pentecost (16:8). Presumably, it is during this third missionary journey that Paul is writing 1 Corinthians.

elite.¹⁴ These members appear to have had familiarity with the gymnastic system of ephebic inscription, invitations to dine at a number of *collegia*, and sufficient means to provide a large amount of food and drink for themselves at the eucharistic meal.¹⁵ Third, there is the ongoing distribution and negotiation of spiritual status in the house-churches as members accrue spiritual capital based on their perceived charisma within the community at Corinth. This may be seen in the disputes over baptism and glossolalia.

Just as the body was a common *topos* of political writing, Paul is particularly concerned with the body in 1 Corinthians.¹⁶ He uses the term “Body of Christ” in the letter more than in any of his other authentic letters. Welborn argues that “Paul’s goal in 1 Corinthians 1–4 is not refutation of heresy but what Plutarch describes as the object of the art of politics—the prevention of *stasis*.”¹⁷ Paul’s rhetorical goal is to effect harmony in a worshipping community split among factions. Dale Martin observes that Paul overturns the traditional use of the body analogy “to solidify an unquestioned status hierarchy. Paul rhetorically identifies with the position of the Strong and then calls on them to give up their own interests for the sake of the Weak. In discussing whether idol

¹⁴ 1 Clement, which is the first post-Pauline correspondence we have for the Corinthian house-churches and dated to the mid-second century, is also a letter concerned with *ὁμολοία* (cf. 11.2). Jaeger and Van Unnik have classified 1 Clement in the genre of *sumbouleutikon*. W. Jaeger, “Echo eines unbekannten Tragikerfragmentes in Clemens’ Brief an die Korintherbrief,” *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 102 (1959): 330–40; W.C. van Unnik, *Studies over de zogenaamde Eerst Brief van Clemens* (Amsterdam: N. V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1970), reprinted as “Studies on the so-called First Epistle of Clement,” *Encounters with Hellenism: Studies on the First Letter of Clement*, ed. C. Breytenbach and L.L. Welborn (Leiden: Brill, 2004): 116–81.

¹⁵ Gerd Theissen, “Die Starken und Schwachen in Korinth: Soziologische Analyse eines theologische Streites,” *Evangelische Theologie* 35 (1975): 155–72.

¹⁶ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.83.2; Mitchell, *Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 49. Chrysostom called the body metaphor in 1 Corinthians a *koinon paradeigma*. See *Hom. in 1 Cor.* 30.1.

¹⁷ L. L. Welborn, “On the Discord of Corinth: 1 Corinthians 1–4 and Ancient Politics,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106 (1987): 89–90.

meat is permissible to eat, Paul advocates for the Weak by claiming that the Strong should abstain so as not to shatter the lesser faith of the Weak (14:18–19). Although demons do not exist, the superior epistemology allows for the doubt of the Weak. Paul makes the same argument in his ordering of prophecy by devaluing the glossolalia in which he himself is so adept that he speaks with the tongues of angels. As Martin rightly characterizes these passages, Paul offers a hermeneutic of renunciation rather than one of triumph. The disenfranchised do not overcome the powerful. Rather, the powerful voluntarily renounce their status: spirit yields to mind, head to genitals, Strong to Weak, and those of higher status to those of lower status “in order that there be no schism in the body” (12:25; cf. 1:10).¹⁸

The model of political and theological leadership that Paul himself models veers toward the apophatic. Margaret Mitchell convincingly demonstrates that Paul’s presentation of himself as a “paradigm of self-effacement” in 1 Corinthians 1 sets the tone for the rest of the letter.¹⁹ As in the athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9, Paul attempts to counteract the pride and boastfulness of the factions in the Corinthian community by his own exemplary humility. We infer from the Corinthians’ participation in the table-fellowship of Greco-Roman deities that the Corinthian Christians, though familiar with the Temple (1 Cor. 9:13–14), were not the most stringent practitioners of Second Temple Judaism, at least if the reticence of the Jerusalem church to eat unclean foods is any indication of the standards of the nascent Christian community. Paul’s

¹⁸ Martin 103.

¹⁹ Margaret M. Mitchell, “Rhetorical Shorthand in Pauline Argumentation: The Functions of ‘The Gospel’ in the Corinthian Correspondence,” *Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker*, ed. L. A. Jervis and P. Richardson (Sheffield: Sheffield, 1994): 63–88, here 70.

invocation of philosophical slogans only confirms our suspicions that the form of the letter reflects the Pauline house-churches' thoroughgoing enculturation to the Roman colony of Corinth, insofar as discursive practices are intertwined with culture more generally. The Corinthian Christians are much closer to Paul in outlook than they are to the Jerusalem apostles, whom some of them occasionally visit. Unlike the Galatian Christians, the Corinthian Christians are more drawn to apostasy than heresy; it is they who are the cultural ones, and it is Paul who is the theologian. Paul adopts the role of the Greek leader who presents himself as a servant, as Dale Martin has so masterfully illustrated.²⁰ However, he inhabits the role merely to vacate it.

The unsavory visions of Paul in the arena—first as a display and then as a beast fighter—are invoked by Paul to persuade the Corinthians of the error of their perspective.²¹ These negative images are meant to demonstrate to the Corinthians that the Christian experience is one of vulnerability in the Roman cultural marketplace, not one of honor.²² Paul's invocation of battlefield and athletic imagery is meant to quell competitions for status within the Corinthian house-churches by redirecting their agonistic displays over who possesses the most charisma for baptism and prophecy to

²⁰ Dale Martin, *Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale, 1990): 67–83. John Byron is correct in observing that Paul never uses the term “slave of Christ” in 1 Corinthians. See John Byron, *Slavery Metaphors in Early Judaism and Pauline Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005): 242. However, this does not mean that Paul does not present himself as abased. I think that Paul is meaning not to assert his authority as the “managerial slave,” the traditional subservient—and-yet-exalted cupbearer role traditionally available to colonized and captive Jews (ranging from Joseph to Daniel to Nehemiah), but to empty the apostolic role both out of example to those Christians in higher social positions and to promulgate the egalitarian impulse inherent in the baptismal slogan that permeates his letters in direct reference and in allusions.

²¹ Mitchell, “Rhetorical Shorthand,” 80.

²² Jennifer Larson, “Paul’s Masculinity,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123 (2004): 85–97.

models of competition recognized extramurally to be the most honorable. By pushing the Corinthian Christians toward an imperishable crown that is not completely fathomable in the present and that he himself might not receive, Paul eviscerates his own prophetic authority, setting the stage for his rupture with the status-obsessed Corinthians who want immediately knowable spiritual rankings.

What I will explore, then, is how the athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 both resist the more exploitative forms of entertainment in the Roman Empire and encourage the Corinthian Christians to situate themselves in the Body of Christ and the civic body of Corinth with older Greek ideals of democracy and participation in the agonistic discussions of the agora. Unlike the democracy of the Classical period, though, this new democracy is open to all socioeconomic brackets. While Paul uses the elite Roman Greek model to style himself as the community's father and to envision their employment of many athletic trainers, he voluntarily renounces the prestige and power associated with such roles in order to disperse that power to all members of the Body of Christ.

2. Building the Body and Body Building

Paul's construction of a Body of Christ that is comprised of all believers, as scholars have uniformly recognized, interfaces with contemporary political discourse about individuals belonging to a social body. Like his Roman predecessors, Paul uses an image of the body as a metaphor for the construction of the Christian *politeuma*. Belonging to the body of Christ disrupts the Roman elite political discourse in which each citizen

belongs to the body of the empire, figuratively “headed” by the emperor.²³ Seneca, for example, presumes that Nero is the animating principle to the state’s body in his address of the emperor in *Clem.* 1.5.1: “*animus reipublicae tuae es, illa corpus tuum*” (you are the soul of the state, and the state your body).²⁴ In the purview of Velleius Paterculus, the Roman people are the body of the state, and this collective body is born, experiences childhood, becomes old, and is rejuvenated. Such a “blossoming” (*florere*) and “breakdown” (*concidere*) of the collective body were followed by its “resurrection” (*resurgere*, 1.7).²⁵

Paul adds individuality to such practices in thinking that the individual believer can occasionally possess the *nous* or the *pneuma* of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 6:15–20, Paul tells the Corinthians to flee from *porneia* and glorify God in their individual bodies, which are temples of the holy *pneuma*. 1 Corinthians 12:12–13 makes the singular nature of the Corinthian Body of Christ and its indwelling *pneuma* explicit: “For we were all

²³ Others who have held similar views include: Traugott Schmidt, *Der Leib Christi* (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1919): 193–248; W.L. Knox, *Paul and the Church of the Gentiles* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1961): 160–65; G. Johnston, *The Doctrine of the Church in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1943): 85–99; C.K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1968): 287; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, trans. J.W. Leitch (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975): 210–216; Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale, 1984): 89–90; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987): 600–603; Robert M. Grant, “Hellenistic Elements in 1 Corinthians,” *Early Christian Origins*, ed. Allen Wikgren (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1961): 63; A. Wikenhauser, *Die Kirche als der mystische Leib Christi nach dem Apostel Paulus* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1949): 130–43.

²⁴ According to Dio Chrysostom, a city with concord had “a single soul for so great and populous a city” (*Nicaeen.* 39.5; see also *3 Regn.* 3.108); Michelle Vidle Lee, *Paul, the Stoics, and the Body of Christ* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2008): 42.

²⁵ Hubert Cancik, “The End of the World, of History, of the Individual in Greek and Roman Antiquity” in: *The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity*, Volume 1, ed. John J. Collins (New York: Continuum, 2006): 84–128, here 107.

baptized in a single *pneuma* into a single body—whether Jews or Greeks or slaves or free—and we were all given a single *pneuma* to drink.”²⁶

What Pauline scholars have left unexplored is the connection of the building of the body and the building of civic defense infrastructure in Roman cultural discourse. This connection is found both in Roman literature and Roman Greek literature of the early imperial period. Virgil tells us that during the time Ascanius was “surrounding Alba Longa with walls” brought back to Rome the *lusus Troiae* in which the boys perform a militaristic dance (5.596–602). Their prowess contrasts with the dance that ends the Phaeacian games in *Odyssey* 8, where the youths are graceful but not battle-worthy. The idea is that the military prowess of Roman youths is equivalent to a city fortification.²⁷ Likewise, Plutarch indicates that the victor of athletic games was permitted to tear down a portion of the city wall, demonstrating the lack of need for such fortification with the presence of biopower.

3. *Gender and Politeuma*

Due to the alterity of subgroups such as Jews, foreigners, and slaves, these subgroups were liable to being socially constructed as less masculine and more feminine. Moreover, these groups’ own social constructions often replicated the sorting mechanisms of the dominant group so that, as Foucault has argued, the state convinced its subjects to discipline themselves.²⁸ It is just this problem that the pre-Pauline baptismal

²⁶ Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and the Self in the Apostle Paul* (Oxford: Oxford, 2010): 170–171.

²⁷ On this episode, see Helen Lovatt, *Statius and Epic Games* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005): 175–176.

²⁸ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* (New York: Pantheon, 1978).

formula found in Galatians and interspersed throughout 1 Corinthians seeks to (even literally) redress by means of the new baptismal garment one receives in Christ to indicate one's new social standing. In Corinth, as in the other cities with churches of God, there will be neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, and neither married nor single. The peculiar thing about Paul's instructions to the Corinthians is that, unlike his instruction to the Galatians, Paul does not explicitly abolish gender distinctions. While this is certainly a distressing interpretative move on Paul's part at first glance, I will contend that Paul does not intend simply to distinguish the Christ-believing woman from the Roman new woman flouting new imperial "blue laws." 1 Corinthians contains a number of references to the gymnasium, a prestigious training venue, and exhorts the Christ-believers to exercise diligently. Because of the elision of sociological categories to privilege the male native citizen, most Roman elevations of particular women such as Lucretia or Perpetua resulted in the abrogation of their femininity in favor of a new masculine identity. Cloelia, the athletic wartime heroine, demonstrates her virtue by asking the enemy leader for the young *male* hostages, who Livy tell us are the most vulnerable.²⁹ Paul affirms women's status *qua* women by distinguishing them at the moment of creation. His eschatological vision imagines all the Corinthians attaining imperishable crowns—which he directly compares to state-given crowns—by excelling at the sport most open to women in real-life practice and in mythology: running.

Thus, we can see that the questions of gender, self-fashioning, discipline, and statehood are inextricably intertwined in modern anthropological and sociological theory

²⁹ Livy 2.13. 5–11. The memory of Cloelia's heroism continues to be commemorated in later times, as on Filarete's bronze doors on St. Peter's Basilica. See Helen Roeder, "The Borders of Filarete's Bronze Doors to St. Peter's," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 10 (1947): 150–153.

and its analysis of ancient texts. In 1 Corinthians 9–11, we quite obviously have an articulation of Christian discipline and gendering. I want to argue that Paul is subverting the cultural constructions of the Roman imperial colony at Corinth. Paul asks the Corinthian Christians to relinquish their imperially derived worldview for citizenship in a heavenly *politeuma*, which operates both in the worship meals of Greco-Roman associations and in the eschatological heaven.³⁰ The Corinthians are to situate their bodies in the Body of Christ.

The Corinthians, if they were not actually submitting their bodies to the rigors of gymnastic education, were fully immersed in the language of the Greek ephebic system. We know this from Paul's references to the elite Greek athletics and the many pedagogues employed by Corinthian patriarchs. Access to ephebic education had become increasingly restricted by the associated costs since the third century B.C.E.³¹ Such training would have introduced young citizens to physical training, philosophical education, and acquaintance with the religious sites of the *polis*.³² The Roman conquest of Greece did nothing to overturn the ephebic tradition. To the contrary, it strengthened

³⁰ Laura Nasrallah makes a similar claim for the book of Acts, asserting that “Acts, embedded in a world negotiating Greco–Roman ‘barbarian’ relations, creates a story of the origins of a Christian city league that might be comprehensible and attractive to Rome, and in its logic offers seeds for a Christian empire that resembles the Roman Empire.” See Laura Nasrallah, “The Acts of the Apostles, Greek Cities, and Hadrian’s Panhellenion,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 27 (2008): 533–66, here 536. In 1 Corinthians, however, Paul is not concerned with interacting with diverse ethnic backgrounds as much as he is in envisioning the Corinthians as *citizens* in the classic model that Greek elites sought to preserve in the face of Roman colonization. Paul’s primary distinction is between Jew and Greek; the pairing *Ioudaios/Hellenes* encompasses Paul’s vision of the civic sphere in several Pauline letters (e.g. Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 1:22–24, 10:32, 12:13; Rom. 1:16, 3:9).

³¹ Elena Muniz Grijalvo, “Elites and Religious Change in Roman Athens,” *Numen* 52 (2005): 255–82, here 264–5.

³² Zahra Newby, *Greek Athletics in the Roman World. Victory and Virtue* (Oxford: Oxford, 2005).

the conservatism of the elite native families, who were entrusted with the task of maintaining the veneer of continuity of the Greek customs through cultural observances while the Romans assumed complete political control. Athletics was a primary means of the representation of the continuity between the Greek and Roman periods.

4. *Politeumata and Democratization*

I think that Paul's concern for the athletic metaphors and veiling norms used to construct the Corinthian *habitus* demonstrates a participation in the democratization occurring in Second Temple Judaism. The athletic metaphors and veiling instructions encourage universal individual participation in an honor system compared to, but not synonymous with, the Greco-Roman social system. As in Second Temple Jewish *Mitzvoth*, the individual practitioner is responsible for his or her own achievement of religious excellence and its accompanying reward of an imperishable crown. It is possible for the high status official, Paul himself, to be disqualified in the race of faith while his followers advance without him. Thus, Paul trains his body. Corinthian Christian fathers, like Paul, must relinquish the Roman practice of the *pater familias* sacrificing *capite velato*. However, women of all classes, presumably even slaves, are permitted to wear the veil as a sign of piety. The seriousness of this permission contrasts with the mocking veils given by mistresses to slave girls in stagings of sham rituals that we find in Roman satire. I think that this pushes against the homogenizing voice Paul uses to convey received tradition, create tradition with his own example, and erect hierarchies to prevent an excess of inspired performance that might lead outsiders to think the community barbaric. Paul essentially opens up a space for all members of the community to pursue citizenship, as was possible in earlier centuries in Greece, simply

moving that citizenship from the pagan and terrestrially bound to the Christ-believing and transcendent.

5. *Program*

Part One of this work examines Paul's ideation of a citizen body in both its civic and individual aspects. I suggest that Paul, like other figures in Second Temple Judaism, construes the churches of God as a *politeuma* distinct from the Greco-Roman one. The churches of God constitute no mere *collegium*, one of many in the Roman colony of Corinth. Participating in the Pauline house-churches confers a citizenship in a new ethnic group with independent civic structures, features which have the attraction of an eternal aspect. The Corinthians evince a preoccupation with status that affects most of the activity of their house-churches: baptisms are assigned varying spiritual weight, food is distributed unevenly at worship meals, and lawsuits are being brought against fellow worshippers. Paul's response to the schisms in the community that are reproducing social inequalities in Roman Corinth is to use political discourse that creates an alternate body both conceptually (e.g., imperishable crown) and practically (e.g., law courts) in which Christians may fashion themselves and understand their relationships with others.

Part Two explores the way in which Paul constructs the Christian *politeuma* and the Christian citizen through his athletic imagery in 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 is the most extensive use of the *agon* motif in the Pauline correspondence, yet studies on the pericope neither focus on it individually nor in the context of the rich agonistic material in 1 Corinthians as a whole. Earlier scholarship classified the Pauline athletic metaphors as part of Hellenistic Jewish imagery, arising naturally out of the Greek

speaking synagogue, that included Maccabean martyrs and philosophical life.³³ Under this rubric, Paul's athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians became emblematic of a moral struggle in scholarship performed through much of the twentieth century.³⁴ Some scholars such as Ramsay framed this in terms of a military engagement between bodily and spiritual urges.³⁵ Others, like Conzelmann, cited the consensus that the general collection of metaphors functioned as a rhetoric of "ethical transformation" in terms of individual spiritual struggle on the order of Jacob's struggle with the angel.³⁶ Such a motif is found in Hebrews 12:1–2 and Josephus, which both claim that God exercises and reproves the community of faith in the wilderness. A more recent study by Brändl is helpful in that it suggests that the most important parallels for Paul's athletic references in 1 Corinthians are Jewish polemical texts against Gentiles. Brändl observes that being sentenced to death in the Roman amphitheater is an ever-present danger to Paul (4:9, 15:32). Paul the athlete, according to Brändl, promotes solidarity among the community ("so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified").

Recent scholarship has questioned the availability of athletics to women that earlier studies had elliptically claimed. Wayne Meeks has suggested that "even

³³ A. Schlatter, *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments. Vol. 2: Die Lehre der Apostel* (Calw: Verlag, 1935): 255; A. Juncker, *Die Ethik des Apostels Paulus, Vol. 2* (Halle: Alfred Niemeyer, 1919): 127.

³⁴ William Wrede, *Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1907): 21; William A. Beardslee, *Human Achievement and Divine Vocation in the Message of Paul* (London: SCM, 1961): 68; Johannes Weiss, *Das Urchristentum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoe & Ruprecht, 1917): 577; W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London: S.P.C.K., 1955): 112.

³⁵ William M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen* (London: Hodder and Stouton, 1895): 354; R.H. Pfeiffer, *History of New Testament Times with an Introduction to the Apocrypha* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949): 141.

³⁶ Conzelmann, 111. Cf. C. Spicq, "Gymnastique et Morale, d'après 1 Tim 4:7–8," *Revue Biblique* 54 (1947): 229; "L'image sportive de 1 Cor 4:7–9," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 14 (1937): 209.

professional athletes were opened to women in the first century B.C.”³⁷ Jerome Murphy-O'Connor briefly speculates that the entry of women into professional sports may explain the empowered attitude found among the female prophets at Corinth, but he does not venture into a reconstruction of the effect on the attitude of Paul toward female athletes. Uta Poplutz has looked at Pauline metaphors in the context of a progression of metaphors in earlier and later Jewish and Greco-Roman literature. Pauline athletic metaphors, for her, reflect the masculine-oriented society in which they were written. Poplutz dismisses the possibility of females winning athletic prizes and social recognition. Developing the latent preference for the masculine, she concludes that “Frauensport existierte, wie ein Blick in die Siegerlisten zeigt.”³⁸ She cites the dismissive opinion of Juvenal.³⁹ Though her study encompasses the entirety of the authentic Pauline corpus, she focuses on the athletic metaphors of 9:24–27, imputing them to Paul as the “athlete of the gospel” who is fighting and running his way through the Mediterranean. Meeks and Murphy-O'Connor note that the presence of professional athletics may have empowered the women prophets in Paul's Corinthian community, but they do not deal with Paul's response in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 in detail.⁴⁰ Castelli's and Martin's more recent significant studies on Paul's construction of the Corinthian body do not even reference the athletic metaphors, which seems unusual given the importance of athletics.⁴¹

³⁷ Wayne A. Meeks, “The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity,” *History of Religions* 13 (1974): 165–208, here 168.

³⁸ Uta Poplutz, *Athlet Des Evangeliums. Eine motivgeschichtliche Studie zur Wettkampfmetaphorik bei Paulus* (Freiburg: Herder, 2004).

³⁹ Cf. Juv., *Sat.*, VI 252–4.

⁴⁰ Meeks, “Image of the Androgyne,” 165–208; Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth: Text and Archaeology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2002).

⁴¹ Elizabeth Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991); Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale, 1995).

In Chapter Two, I make an argument that Roman Greek cultural discourse in Corinth differentiated between the competition of the Greek games, in which all citizens competed for honor, and the voyeurism of the Roman games, in which citizens watched blood sport.⁴² Recent work has shown that the ephebic system was nostalgically continued by Greek elites in the Roman period to extend a sense of national identity under Roman colonization. Paul's accusation that the Corinthians would fashion themselves as kings and reminder that they have many pedagogues but only one father point to participation in this cultural milieu in which the Greek ephebic system operated under the auspices of the Roman Empire. As Girard has argued in sociological terms, civic structures must participate together in order to provide the signification necessary for the psychological mechanisms of scapegoating and sacrifice to be cognitively efficacious.⁴³ Paul anticipates this argument by pointing out that the logic of kingship in the Roman Greek religious economy necessitates the dishonor that befalls apostles, whose alterity transcends merely belonging to a different *politeuma* to belonging to a foreign political order.

In Chapter Three, I discuss Paul's ideation of athleticism, which formed the basis for ephebic inscription and thus citizenship. In 1 Corinthians, Paul interfaces with the hierarchies and factions of 1 Corinthians based on outside social position. The Corinthians are depicted as being active in acquiring expensive *paideia* and engaging in civil lawsuits. Paul engages with all aspects of the *agon* in Greco-Roman culture in 1 Corinthians. He places himself in dishonor in the spectacle on an eschatological

⁴² Pfizner 17.

⁴³ René Girard, *Battling to the End*, trans. Mary Baker (East Lansing: Michigan State, 2009): 193.

timeframe, anticipating judging angels and not having fought animals in Ephesus in vain. However, he encourages a communal ethic of individual physical discipline in his athletic metaphors in 9:24–27. This reproduces the cultural capital accorded to participation in the gymnasium system in Greco-Roman culture.

Chapter Four claims that Paul uses the analogy of the athletic event of running in order to disperse status throughout the community in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. I identify the programmatic place of the athletic metaphors in Paul’s thought through a comparison of 1 Corinthians 9 and 10 with Philippians 3:12–21 and Romans 9:16–33. Interpreters have understood Paul to be speaking generally of an *agon* in an official set of athletic competitions such as those at the Isthmian Games. However, the cultural commonplace metaphor of the “race of life” appears in both Romans 9:16 and Galatians 5:7.

Accordingly, I argue that Paul invokes running as a discrete image in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. Confirmation of the importance of the separate nature of the apostolic boxing and the communal race comes in 1 Corinthians 10, where Paul presents a variation of the Jewish image found in Philo and others of the Exodus.

In Chapter Five, I suggest that the coronal reward Paul promises to the victor of the race involves a democratization of status distribution. While scholarship has seen the “imperishable crown” in 1 Corinthians 9 to be a mere symbol of the eternal, I contend that Paul’s distinction between a perishable and imperishable crown in 1 Corinthians plays off several coronic associations in Roman political culture.⁴⁴ As Ascough has

⁴⁴ Erwin Goodenough notes that the adoption of the crown as a symbol by both Judaism and Christianity was marked by enculturation: “Such is the process of assimilation: the crown seems to have become Jewish, as it became Christian, by shedding completely its pagan mythology but keeping its basic value unchanged.” See Erwin Goodenough, “The Crown of Victory in Judaism,” *The Art Bulletin* 28.3 (1946): 139–159.

demonstrated for Philippians, Paul's mention of a crown would have recalled the civic crown for benefactions.⁴⁵ Coronal honors would have been particularly appealing to the audience Paul believes has claimed royal status. Paul makes the civic imperishable crown and the athletic crown accessible to each believer, regardless of social status and economic resources. In Paul's gymnasium, each individual may be fully trained for and enrolled into the Body of Christ, just as the wealthiest Corinthians trained for inscription as citizens.

Having made the case for the high status "fictive citizenship" of each believer in 1 Corinthians, which is achieved using the high status route of inscription as an ephebe rather than military service or manumission, we can turn to the actual practices within the community that Paul prescribes to give weight to his ideology in Part Three. As in the Roman Empire, apparel at worship in the Christian house-churches is regulated. Imperial clothing programs would have been prevalent in empire—Augustus' legislation was already heralded in such elite cultural programs as Horace's *Secular Hymn*. Many scholars, most cogently Bruce Winter, have identified Paul's veiling prescriptions as a concession to Augustan moral legislation so that outsiders, the messengers Paul mentions, will not construe the Corinthian women as sexually libertine New Women.⁴⁶ However, given Paul's extensive use of creational imagery in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16, I think Paul's argument carries real theological force in addition to its political expediency. Paul's justification for the practice of female-only veils during the worship meal is grounded in the Genesis creation, differentiating Christian veiling during worship from

⁴⁵ Richard S. Ascough, *Paul's Macedonian Associations: The Social Context of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003): 153.

⁴⁶ Winter, *Roman Wives*; Winter, *When Paul Left Corinth*.

Roman social and ecclesial veiling. In the new creation, male and female bodies exhibit physical differences that are mimicked by their attire. However, this focus on the gendered aspect of veiling subverts the imperial legislation's intent of maintaining socioeconomic distinctions and elite bloodlines.

Part Three of the work addresses the manner in which Paul's veiling instructions intersected with Roman imperial ideology based on creational imagery and social customs. The veils of chapter 11 have received an inordinate amount of scrutiny.⁴⁷ The

⁴⁷ Marlis Gielen, "Beten und Prophezeien mit unverhülltem Kopf? Die Kontroverse zwischen Paulus und der korinthischen Gemeinde um die Wahrung der Geschlechtsrollensymbolik in 1 Kor 11,2–16," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 90 (1999): 220–49; Judith M. Gundry Volf, "Gender and Creation in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16: A Study in Paul's Theological Method," *Evangelium–Schriftauslegung–Kirche: Festschrift für Peter Stuhlmacher zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Jostein Adna et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997): 151–171; L. Ann Jervis, "'But I Want You to Know...' Paul's Midrashic Intertextual Response to the Corinthian Worshipers (1 Cor 11:2–16)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 112 (1993): 231–46; David W.J. Gill, "The Importance of Roman Portraiture for Head-Coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *Tyndale Bulletin* 41 (1990): 245–60; Richard Ostler, "When Men Wore Veils to Worship: The Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11.4," *New Testament Studies* 34 (1988): 481–505; Cynthia L. Thompson, "Hairstyles, Head-Coverings, and St. Paul: Portraits from Roman Corinth," *Biblical Archaeology* 51 (1988): 99–115; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987): 491–530; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983): 226–30; Wayne A. Meeks, "The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity," *History of Religions* 13 (1974): 165–208; Robin Scroggs, "Paul and the Eschatological Woman: Revisited," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 42 (1974): 532–49; idem, "Paul and the Eschatological Woman," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 40 (1972): 283–303; Annie Jaubert, "Le voile des femmes (1 Cor. XI.2–16)," *New Testament Studies* 18 (1971/72): 419–30; Morna D. Hooker, "Authority on Her Head: An Examination of 1 Cor. XI.10," *New Testament Studies* 10 (1963/64): 410–16; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "A Feature of Qumran Angelology and the Angels of 1 Cor. XI.10," *New Testament Studies* 4 (1957/58): 48–58.

passage is universally thought to be confused and confusing.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, it is expected to perform a good deal of exegetical work in the reconstruction of the hierarchical discourses occurring within the Corinthian worship assembly.⁴⁹ Part of the reason for this is that the passage is so dense in allusions: headship language, creation, natural condition of the body, hairstyles, and veils.

More recent scholarship has shifted away from the emphasis placed on prayer and prophecy at the eucharistic meal by Else Kähler and Morna Hooker and toward an analysis of the larger social environment of the Roman colony of Corinth.⁵⁰ In opposition to H. Lietzmann and Gordon Fee, who thought the practice of male veiling would not have been known at Corinth, Richard Oster attributed great significance to male veils.⁵¹ Oster thinks the Roman practice of wearing male head-coverings gave rise to the reference of men covering their heads in 11:7.⁵² Gill concludes that Corinthians leading families were jostling for power. Paul is attempting to quell this rivalry,

⁴⁸ Joel Delobel, "1 Cor 11,2–16: Towards a Coherent Interpretation," *L'Apôtre Paul: personnalité, style et conception du ministère*, ed. A. Vanhoye (Leuven: Leuven and Peeters, 1986): 369–89; Troels Engberg-Pederson, "1 Corinthians 11:16 and the Character of Pauline Exhortation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 110 (1991): 679–89.

⁴⁹ Gail Patterson Corrington, "The 'Headless Woman': Paul and the Language of the Body in 1 Cor 11:2–16," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 18 (1991): 223–31; Antoinette Clark Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul's Rhetoric* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990): 116–34.

⁵⁰ Else Kähler, *Die Frau in den paulinischen Briefen* (Zurich: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1960): 66; Hooker 414.

⁵¹ Lietzmann acknowledges the Roman custom, but he objects because Paul gives assigns different gender roles and the Corinthian context is one of prayer and not sacrifice, *An die Korinther I–II* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1949): 53. Fee simply states: "There is almost no evidence (paintings, reliefs, statuary, etc.) that men in any of the cultures (Greek, Roman, Jew) covered their heads." See Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987): 507–8.

⁵² Richard Oster, "When Men Wore Veils to Worship: The Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11.4," *NTS* 34 (1988): 481–405, here 494.

including any possible desire for honor at acquiring *Romanitas*.⁵³ According to Gill, Paul denies men privilege by denying them the veil. Women, on the other hand, “should not flout social conventions in the church meeting purely for the sake of being contentious.”⁵⁴ Winter translates *angeloi* as messengers rather than angels, meaning that part of the reason women are under compulsion to wear the veil is not because of opposing communal attitudes but the presence of outside observers.⁵⁵

Following interpreters who argued from the absence of *kalumma* that Paul’s argument does not refer to veils,⁵⁶ Jerome Murphy-O’Connor argues that Paul was most concerned with women’s unkempt hair. Male head-coverings would not have been an issue to Paul, because Jewish men wore turbans.⁵⁷ With reference to the phrase *kata kephales exon* in v. 4, Murphy-O’Connor suggests that it would be an “unusual circumlocution” for “veil” and it should be understood as long hair instead. He also proposes a different translation for the term *peribolaion* in v. 4, which is a *hapax legomenon* in Paul and only occurs elsewhere in a citation of Ps 102:26 in Heb 1:12. Rather than meaning “uncovered head,” *peribolaion* should mean “untended hair” as a reference to the bun of hair, in which hair is wrapped, on a woman’s head.⁵⁸ Besides employing the connotation of the prefix *peri* (“around”) that a covering is thrown around

⁵³ Shaye Cohen notes that there would have been few visual cues to distinguish a Jewish individual from a non-Jewish individual in antiquity. See Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: California, 1991): 67.

⁵⁴ Gill, 260; cf. Winter, 82–83. Engberg-Pedersen has argued that Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer was correct in 1856 to insist that the habit to which Paul refers is not the habit of covering one’s head but the habit of being contentious, 684.

⁵⁵ Winter 89.

⁵⁶ Cf. Alan Padgett, “Paul on Women in the Church. The Contradictions of Coiffure in 1 Corinthians 11.2–16,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 20 (1984): 70.

⁵⁷ Murphy-O’Connor, “Sex and Logic in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 42 (1980): 482–500, here 484–485.

⁵⁸ “Sex and Logic,” 414.

something or someone, Murphy-O'Connor draws on Apuleius' description of the cult of Isis in Corinth: "The women had their hair anointed and the heads covered with light linen, but the men had their crowns shaven and shining bright."⁵⁹ The comparison with the cult of Isis would seem to indicate that women's heads *should* be covered, especially as for Isis female initiates having shorn heads would be unseemly. As the cult of Isis was relatively progressive in terms of gender, with the female being the more pious and the male being the ass in Apuleius' account, even an injunction to have a controlled hairstyle should not be necessarily construed as misogynistic.

Several scholars have taken a more anthropological approach, giving more credence to issues of boundary maintenance and abrogation. Using the anthropological theory of Mary Douglas, Jerome Neyrey has seen the regulation of orifices as a paramount concern of 1 Corinthians. These regulatory practices include veiling—and thus implicitly only female heads—with glossolalia and feasting commensality.⁶⁰ The idea of the top of the head as an orifice gets pushed to its logical conclusions by Dale Martin and Troy Martin. Dale Martin contends that Paul is concerned about the Corinthian women for three reasons: first, because women are sexually vulnerable; second, because "a woman's unveiled head (at least in public) constitutes a bodily defect"; and third, because "female sexuality endangers the social order." This results in the function of the "prophylactic veils" that Paul prescribes women being to protect the orifice of their heads from "the angelic phallus."⁶¹ Troy Martin argues that philological readings of *peribolaion* indicate that the correct semantic range of the term should

⁵⁹ Murphy-O'Connor, *Again*, 267; Apuleius, *Meta*. 11,10.

⁶⁰ Jerome Neyrey, "Body Language in 1 Corinthians: The Use of Anthropological Models for Understanding Paul and His Opponents," *Semeia* 35 (1986):129–70.

⁶¹ Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 245; cf. 299, n. 66.

include “testicles,” which should be seen as the preferred reading of 1 Cor.11:15b.

Women, for Martin, must cover the sexual organ of their heads.⁶²

I take my cues not from the single referent to angels at 11:10 but Paul’s protracted discussion. In Chapter Six, I consider the creational themes that Paul invokes in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16. Paul, I suggest, situates the creational motifs in 1 Corinthians 11 within the Roman imperial discourses on cosmogony to legitimate imperial rule. The civic body was understood to have legitimacy through imperial claims to have renewed creation and brought about the return of the fecundity and prosperity of the Golden Age. Paul’s body goes against these principles by advocating celibacy, a construction of the body as a temple that sees sex as an outside concession rather than as an act intrinsic to the religious experience (6:19–20). It is merely better to marry than to burn (7:9). Yet, in 1 Corinthians 11, Paul returns to the notion of biological interdependence and reproduction that necessitates sex in order to argue for an egalitarian relationship between men and women. The hierarchies of the Roman imperial order are illogical because men come from women and vice versa.

Chapter Seven focuses on the practice of veiling in the social context of Roman Corinth. The Roman imperial custom was for the *pater familias* to veil during worship, and the emperor stood in statue form in the center of Corinth with his head covered in his role as *pontifex maximus* and patriarch of the Roman Empire. If Paul’s Corinthian house-church members cannot eat at idol table-fellowships without succumbing to pagan, “less knowledgeable” understandings of their participation, then they cannot subvert prophetic

⁶² Troy W. Martin, “Paul’s Argument from Nature for the Veil in 1 Corinthians 11:13–15: A Testicle Instead of a Head Covering,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* (2004): 75–84, here 77.

veiling practice without experiencing the same perception of echoes from their outside participation in the religious cults of Corinth. Women will be honored, because the honorific connotations of veiling during sacrifice will linger. Paul refers to women as having the “authority” (*exousia*) to veil. While scholars have suggested that the veil may serve as a prophylactic against visual penetration of evil angels or men and that it may have been interpreted as a marriage veil, what is uniformly missed is that women are invited to veil as a function of their gender rather than as a privilege of their socioeconomic class. The veil does in fact give women an *exousia* that lends women status. Conversely, slave men are to visually adopt the attitude of a high status citizen male.

1. The Citizen Body of the Corinthians

The centrality of the body in 1 Corinthians has long been a scholarly consensus, particularly in the past three decades. Scholarly discussions of the body Paul constructs for the Corinthian Christians have arrived at various permutations of the Pauline body's connection of the physical, metaphysical, and sociopolitical. They may be characterized as taking one of two approaches to the many manifestations of the body in 1 Corinthians: 1) religious ordering of the physical bodies of the Corinthian Christians through practices, and 2) engagement with the political and philosophical rhetorical commonplace of the "body" metaphor to describe a political assembly of people.

Interpretations that focus on the physical nature of the Christian body center on Paul's regulation of the body through religious practices, particularly head-covering (1 Cor. 11:1–16). Paul's adjudication of the quotidian disputes of the members of the house-churches at Corinth has led Jerome Neyrey to interpret 1 Corinthians through the anthropological framework of Mary Douglas. According to Neyrey, Paul's regulation of orifices inscribes boundaries on the group's identity.⁶³ Dale Martin has expanded Neyrey's sociological reading of the practices of physical bodies to analyze the physical body itself. Martin sees the Pauline body as a vulnerable body, a physical site susceptible to attack by supernatural forces. Those Corinthians of higher social standing ("the Strong") wish to use a model of the body that construes disease as the result of imbalance

⁶³ Jerome H. Neyrey, "Body Language in 1 Corinthians: The Use of Anthropological Models for Understanding Paul and his Opponents," *Semeia* 35 (1986): 129–70. Cf. Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Function of 'Excommunication' in Paul," *Harvard Theological Review* 73 (1980): 251–263, 263 n. 35.

of hierarchical order.⁶⁴ Paul, for Martin, “operates by a logic of invasion, with its anxieties about purity and firm boundaries.”⁶⁵ Martin attributes to Paul a desire for prophylaxis by having the Corinthians physically abstain from eating idol meat and by having Corinthian women physically veil their heads. Mere *gnosis*, sympathetic to philosophical principles, is not sufficient. The philosophical body was simply subject to the ravages of time, not malevolent forces.⁶⁶ In Martin’s estimation, “Paul’s view of *gnosis* in 1 Corinthians 8–10 reflects the logic of prophylaxis revealed in the magical papyri far more than that taught by the philosophers.”⁶⁷ Scholars such as Troy Martin have tried to tie Paul’s insistence on the importance of somatic experience to ancient medical discourse instead of magical ones, but this merely results in replacing a magical *Mentalität* with a medical worldview in which angels are attracted by the energy emitted

⁶⁴ Like Martin, the majority of scholars construe the opposition of the “Strong” and the “Weak” in 1 Corinthians as Paul’s attempt to reconcile real factions in the Corinthian house-churches. See Mitchell, *Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 68–80, 197–200; Fotopoulos, *Food Offered*, 9–10; Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Freedom or the Ghetto,” in *Freedom and Love* (Rome: St. Paul’s Abbey, 1981): 9–20; Theissen, “Strong and Weak,” 121–140; Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 186–230. Those who maintain that the “Strong” and the “Weak” are not real constituents among the Corinthian house-churches include: Hurd, *Origin*, 117–125; Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 64–72.

⁶⁵ Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale, 1995): 163.

⁶⁶ The Greek philosophical tradition on the body begins with Empedocles, Plato, and Aristotle. From Aristotle, we learn that to be in the world is to have a body or at least the possibility of a body. *De Caelo* 279a11–18 “Outside the heavens there is neither place, nor void, nor time.” (*De Caelo* I.9 279a11–12). Plato envisages the body as a series of cloaks.

⁶⁷ Martin 187. Martin’s advocacy of demonology over abstract philosophy seems to break down in critical parts of his argument, though. In his discussion on Paul’s opinion that it is better “to marry than burn,” Martin concludes that Paul and the Strong at Corinth are familiar with the body ideology found in Roman period elite medical writers. Both hold that “submission of a person to sexual intercourse signifies that the person has already submitted to desire.” Paul therefore, according to Martin, allows a concession to asceticism not to prevent promiscuity but to avert desire itself. Martin 217. This argument seems to privilege a philosophical perspective over a more pastoral engagement with the lived experience at Corinth that would have included daily encounters with a demonological prophylaxis of *invidia* by various apotropaic household items.

from the semen atop women's heads.⁶⁸ Scholars who posit simply an honor-shame model operating at Corinth, such as Finney, contend that men in the group disapprove of the uncovered heads of neophyte women who are presuming their kinship in Christ to give the worship assembly a *private* character; rather, Paul affirms the *public* nature of the worship meal and the need to respect imperial customs.⁶⁹

Scholars favoring sociopolitical interpretation of the Pauline body have focused on rhetoric. Following Robert Jewett, Michelle Vidle Lee has revived Schweitzer's thesis that participation in the Body of Christ would have meant shared corporeity of the Corinthian Christians' bodies with Christ's body in a pre-Cartesian, Stoic sense.⁷⁰ Anna Miller, noting the prevalence of *ekklēsia* more in 1 Corinthians than in any other letter, finds that the preferred discursive model for the Corinthian Christian community in 1 Corinthians 1–4 is a democratic one rather than the imperial one suggested by scholars such as Richard Horsley.⁷¹ Margaret Mitchell has firmly connected the commonplace

⁶⁸ Troy W. Martin, "Paul's Argument from Nature for the Veil in 1 Corinthians 11:13–15: A Testicle Instead of a Head Covering," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123.1 (2004): 75–84. Mark Goodacre rejects Troy Martin's argument on linguistic evidence. See Mark Goodacre, "Does περιβόλαιον Mean 'Testicle' in 1 Corinthians 11:15?," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130.2 (2011): 391–396. Troy W. Martin, "περιβόλαιον as Testicle in 1 Corinthians 11:15: A Response to Mark Goodacre," *Journal of Biblical Literature* (2013): 453–465.

⁶⁹ Mark Finney, "Honour, Head-coverings and Headship: 1 Corinthians 11.2–16 in its Social Context," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 33 (2010): 31–58, 49.

⁷⁰ Schweitzer saw bodily unity with Christ as permeating the epistle, not only in explicit formulations of the commonplace body metaphor of 1 Cor. 12 but also in Paul's discussion in 1 Cor. 6. Albert Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (New York: MacMillan, 1956); Robert Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms: A Study of Their Use in Conflict Settings* (Leiden: Brill, 1971): 215; Michelle Vidle Lee, *Paul, the Stoics, and the Body of Christ* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005): 6.

⁷¹ Anna C. Miller searches for Paul's implied reader in the first section of 1 Corinthians, chapters 1–4. She presumes that the corporate body is under discussion in order to prove her thesis that the Corinthian concern for *logos* and wisdom in 1 Corinthians 1–4 is centered in democratic discourse rather than imperial discourse. Miller finds that the first

body metaphor of political discourse with the deliberative purpose of the letter to urge unity and concord among a fractious church body. She sees Paul's body as his letter of recommendation to the Corinthians.⁷² In this line of Pauline interpretation, body is text, sometimes quite literally.⁷³

I argue that the body Paul constructs in 1 Corinthians is a thoroughgoing citizen body, a citizen body which is constructed by Paul's self-abnegation of his apostolic body. Paul's own real-life body has citizenship, but his rhetoric envisions his apostolic body in situations, such as the spectacle, that typically entail a loss of citizenship status.⁷⁴ Paul reckons himself as an apostle, but to apostle he applies metaphors of serving in the military, tilling the soil, and tending sheep. By such metaphorical language, Paul envisions himself as someone who is earning his status in a second tier educational

chapters of Paul's epistle present the "Corinthian church as a democratic assembly—where all participants share a right to leadership through deliberative speech, and all listeners share a claim to judgment." Her analysis excludes issues of gender and class, which become increasingly prevalent and practical in the rest of the epistle, with Paul having to legislate with whom the Corinthian Christians may eat, how the Corinthian Christians should distribute food at their own worship meals, and which sex in the Corinthian house—churches should veil. See Anna C. Miller, "Not with Eloquent Wisdom: Democratic *Ekklesia* Discourse in 1 Corinthians 1–4," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 35 (2013): 323–354, here 347. See also her 2008 dissertation at Harvard entitled "*Ekklesia*: 1 Corinthians in the Context of Ancient Democratic Discourse."

⁷² Margaret Mitchell, *Rhetoric of Reconciliation*; cf. Elizabeth Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power*.

⁷³ Mitchell claims that the "heart of Paul's strategy for self-defence in this letter is his claim that his very person serves as a 'rhetorical abbreviation' of the gospel." Rather than disqualify him as a *diakonos christou*, his bruised body serves as a synecdoche for his authority in the Corinthian correspondence. Margaret M. Mitchell, "Rhetorical Shorthand in Pauline Argumentation: The Functions of 'The Gospel' in the Corinthian Correspondence," *Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans. Festschrift Richard N. Longenecker*, ed. L. Ann Jervis and Peter Richardson (Sheffield: Sheffield, 1994): 63–88, here 78–79.

⁷⁴ Jennifer Larson, "Paul's Masculinity," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123 (2004): 85–97, 94.

system (cf. Rom. 5:12–6:23).⁷⁵ Until the second century CE, the Roman military was a way in which the Roman Empire educated barbarians and non-citizens and incorporated them into the citizen body. Shifted around the Empire, the men adopted the homes of their live-in lovers, acquiring diplomas that demonstrated their newfound citizenship and listed the children fathered during the time of cohabitation with local women they had not been permitted to marry during their time of service.⁷⁶ The hold the state had on the body of the soldier was similar to that it held over the body of a gladiator or beast fighter, an occupation Paul attributes to himself in 1 Corinthians 15.⁷⁷ Such *infames* could receive their liberty for valiant service, but social humiliation preceded the elevation. Citizenship attained through military service was perceived as less honorable due to the military's potential for social mobility.

The Corinthian Christians, in contrast to Paul, are exhorted in terms of the more prestigious route to citizenship, the one in which inscription as an *ephebe* resulted after a period of *paideia* in the gymnasium. Although the Roman period meant that the *ephebeia* was largely ceremonial, the connections between military and agonistic victory remained prominent in Corinth. The *ephebeia* had become an expression of the

⁷⁵ Note that the male and female shepherds in *Daphnis and Chloe* are depicted as receiving an education befitting their ostensible upper class origins, being foundlings left with expensive tokens of recognition. City slaves could be taught to write, but it was less likely that they would need extensive education. Members of the Roman military received a high level of education, and, thus, it was a route of social advancement. Romans 5:12–6:23 equates the soldier and slave. See John Pairman Brown, "Inversion of Social Roles in Paul's Letters," *Novum Testamentum* 33 (1991): 303–325, 318–19.

⁷⁶ James Russell, "A Roman Military Diploma from Eastern Pamphylia," *American Journal of Archaeology* 95 (1991): 469–488.

⁷⁷ The move to restrict financing of armies by private citizens, which inadvertently removed a social mechanism Archaic and Classical women for influencing political and military outcomes, was a move toward centralizing power and suppressing the power of local elites. On the effects on women, see Pasi Loman, "No Woman No War: Women's Participation in Ancient Greek Warfare," *Greece & Rome* 51 (2004): 34–54.

continuation of Greek national autonomy, even after the Greek city-states had been colonized by Rome.⁷⁸ It also retained the liturgical component that clearly competed with Augustus' combination of the Secular Games and Secular Hymn, which celebrated his moral legislation and clothing regulations.⁷⁹ Paul's first invocation of this elite educational model comes in his claim that the Corinthians have many pedagogues, but that he is their only father. In the athletic metaphors of 9:24–27, the Corinthians are not described as participating in Paul's pugilism. Rather, they partake of the more elite athletic event according to Greek thought as exemplified by such descriptions as those of the Olympic Games: the footrace. Unlike Philo's pejorative depiction of running, which envisions some Israelites returning to Egypt rather than remaining in the ascetic struggle of the desert, the Corinthians run together as a community. Running, a familiar trope from civic participation in Corinth, is the model for the Christian collective.

Just as the educational system formed the Roman Greek body in Corinth, then, the educational system formed the Christian citizen body in Paul's rhetoric. Such a rhetorical model makes sense in that it would have resonated with the Corinthians Christians, who had multiple commitments in terms of citizenship in cities and the Roman Empire and who would have likely been involved in a number of *collegia*.⁸⁰ Typically, Jewish

⁷⁸ S. Lepinski, "Roman Wall Paintings from Panayia Field, Corinth, Greece: A Contextual Study," Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr College, 2008.

⁷⁹ For the liturgical component of the gymnasiarchate in Greece and its political entwinement, see Nigel Kennel, "Who Were the *Neoi*?" in: *Epigraphical Approaches to the Post-Classical Polis: Fourth Century BC to Second Century AD*, ed. Paraskevi Martazavou and Nikolaos Papazarkadas (Oxford: Oxford, 2013): 227.

⁸⁰ See Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale, 2003): 24–35. The importance that these associations could play in the civic context can be seen in Tacitus' discussion of the riot between inhabitants from Nuceria and those of Pompeii during a gladiatorial show at Pompeii in 59 C.E. Some *collegia* played a pivotal role in instigating the intercity battle (Tacitus, *Annals*

communities did not feel their religious customs prevented them from participation in the gymnastic system tied to citizenship and status in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds. The problems experienced by the first Jews participating in the gymnastic system, 2 Maccabees, indicate that the perceived threat was the national underpinnings of the gymnasium and not the athletic events or nudity of the gymnasium.⁸¹ So too Paul holds that the Corinthian Christians are competing in Greek-style athletic events, but that the honor system of those events is heavenly based and not terrestrially situated. According to Paul, adherence to Christ is not one of multiple social and religious commitments held; an individual's participation in the Christian community takes precedence over other memberships and directs involvement in those other associations or governments.⁸² In this sense, Paul retains the notion of the churches of God forming a *politeuma* in much the same way that the Jewish *politeuma* had been trying to find its identity in the Greek

14.17). That this event involved a conflation of gladiatorial and military themes may be seen in a graffito engraved by a Pompeian that describes a gladiator with a palm of victory in regional terms: "Men of the Campanian region, you were destroyed by us in the victory with the Nuceria." For a recent discussion, see Philip A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Mediterranean Society* (Chico: Scholars, 1982): 166. Note, though, that women are not involved in this description, and they played a significant role in the patronage and leadership of Roman associations. Women also held leadership positions in ancient synagogues. See Bernadette J. Brooten, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue: Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues* (Chico: Scholars, 1982). Thus, the association seems to have lent itself to a national identity insofar as a nation is a discrete group that defends itself militarily, but the Roman association *de facto*, under the jurisdiction of the Roman state, would have had to have concentrated on non-military aspects of group identity.

⁸¹ Martha Himmelfarb, "Judaism and Hellenism in 2 Maccabees," *Poetics Today* 19 (1998): 19–40. Erich S. Gruen argues that the Greek gymnasium and ephebate was introduced in the second century BCE by the Jewish High Priest in order to Hellenize Judaism. Other Jewish priests began to use the palaestra for exercise and networking (2 Macc 4:9). Gruen notes that Herod the Great built at least three gymnasia in Palestine (Jos., *Ant.* 15.268–271, 15.341, 17.194). Gruen 101–102.

⁸² Philip A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003).

politeuma.⁸³ Although Paul does not use the word *politeuma*, which only occurs in Philippians 3:20 (cf. 1:27), there is nonetheless a sense of belonging to a group with internal sovereignty.⁸⁴ This is reflected throughout the Corinthian correspondence in Paul's attempts to persuade the Corinthians to resolve disputes through internal negotiations rather than external law courts and to encourage the Corinthians to generously support the Jerusalem church in visitation and through financial collection, even to the point of entering into a rivalry with the Macedonian house-churches.

I will trace the development of the body in 1 Corinthians as having three conceptual components: Paul's apostolic body, the Corinthians' bodies as citizens of their *polis*, and the Corinthians' bodies as ethnic members of Israel. This schema of the body parallels those of Second Temple period Pharisaic Judaism in the diaspora in that Paul of

⁸³ The older scholarly model defined a *politeuma* as an ethnic group. For the classic statement, see Victor Tcherikover, *CPJ* 1:6 n. 16. Scholars nonetheless persist in seeing the idea of belonging to an ethnic group as important to Second Temple Judaism. See Shaye J.D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: California, 1991): 74. This is also seen as holding true for Paul, who constructs the Christian identity as a "metaphorical ethnicity," see Dennis C. Duling, "2 Corinthians 11:22: Historical Context, Rhetoric, and Ethnic Identity," *The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in the Greco-Roman Context*, ed. John Fotopoulos (Leiden: Brill, 2006): 89; S. Scott Bartchy, "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy: The Apostle Paul's Vision of a Society of Siblings," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 29 (1999): 68–78. However, the definition of *politeuma* can vary widely, being applied to the group of women meeting for the Heraia to voluntary associations to Jewish groups. See especially the work of Gert Lüderitz, "What Is The *Politeuma*," in *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy*, ed. Jan Willem van Henten and Pieter Willem van der Horst (Leiden: Brill, 1994): 183–225; C. Zuckerman, "Hellenistic Politeumata and the Jews—a Reconsideration," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 8–9 (1985–1988): 171–185.

⁸⁴ The word, however, is found in *1 Clement*, which specifically cites the authority of 1 Corinthians and compares the contemporary community at Corinth to it, more than other early apostolic writings. As in the Maccabean corpus, where some form of *politeuesthai* occurs seven times, the word has a technical aspect to denote the law of God (or Christ) (2 Macc 6:1; 3 Macc. 3:4; 4 Macc. 5:16; 4 Macc 2:8; 4:23; 21:23; 2 Macc 11:25; cf. *Letter of Aristeas* 31). See Raymond R. Brewer, "The Meaning of *Politeuesthai* in Philippians 1:27," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 73 (1954): 78–79.

Tarsus still assumes a leadership position analogous to that for which he had received training “at the feet of Gamaliel” (Acts 22:3), the Corinthian Christians’ bodies expect to be trained in the gymnasium like the bodies of other Jewish citizens in the Roman Empire, and the Corinthian Christians are to identify with the nation of Israel while still distinguishing themselves from the “madness” of the barbaric. I contend that Paul constructs his apostolic body in a way that inverts hierarchical authority. Similar to his parody of a revelation in 2 Corinthians 12, Paul diminishes his prophetic authority in order to establish prophecy as an activity in which the entire community is engaged. Paul’s regulation of “orifices,” to use the terminology of Neyrey, indicates that all bodies must treat other bodies in the house-churches and in the community as prospective citizen bodies—thus, Paul instructs the Corinthian men visiting prostitutes that to sleep with a prostitute is to “become one flesh” with her, that is, to take her in marriage (6:16). If the Corinthian men are opposed to treating the prostitute as a citizen, they are not permitted to sleep with her. Orifice regulation also means that the Corinthian Christians are to veil their heads in the manner of citizens and to control their speech—both political (1 Cor. 4) and prophetic (1 Cor. 12–14) within the assembly—in the manner of citizens, presenting themselves as those enculturated in the language patterns of the *polis* and not those who insist on speaking in tongues foreign to the community (presumably those not found in Greece, Rome, or Israel).

1.1 Paul’s Apostolic Body

Paul’s own body, as many commentators have noted, plays a central role in the Corinthian correspondence. Paul’s body inverts the citizen body, appearing in the guise

of a slave's body: bruised, beaten, and subjected to the gaze of others.⁸⁵ His presentation of his body is as intricately woven as the self-fashioning of other would-be Greek philosophers entering Roman Greece from elsewhere in the empire, such as Favorinus. In the Corinthian Oration, one of two speeches by Favorinus related by Dio Chrysostom (no. 37; *On Fortune* in no. 64), Favorinus defends the continued display of a statue commemorating him in Corinth. In a prosopopeia (22–36), he assumes the identity of the statue as he claims that his identity has become sufficiently Greek enough to justify being displayed as a prominent citizen of the *polis*, despite being a Roman equestrian born in the West, having “emulated not only the voice but also the mind-set, life-style and style of the Greeks” (25).⁸⁶ Paul alters the original state of his identity: he subjects his own body, bruising and beating it lest he be disqualified (9:24–27). Yet, Paul sets his body up as being disciplined—in the Foucauldian sense of beaten by the “archons of this world”—rather than self-fashioned.⁸⁷ The entire engagement of Paul with his own body concerns its outward manifestation of weakness vis-à-vis the gymnasium (4:15, 9:24–27) and spectacle (4:9–13, 15:32). While he wishes that the Corinthians would follow his own celibate example (7:8), and despite his repeated calls for complete mimesis, these

⁸⁵ Jennifer A. Glancy, “Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11:23–25),” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123 (2004): 99–135; Jennifer Larson, “Paul’s Masculinity,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123 (2004): 85–97.

⁸⁶ As Tim Whitmarsh has noted, Favorinus uses the literary-critical term emulation (*zêlosis*), indicating emulation by means of imitation of canonical models Tim Whitmarsh, “‘Greece is the World’: exile and identity in the Second Sophistic,” *Being Greek Under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic, and the Development of Empire*, ed. Simon Goldhill, (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2001): 269–305, here 295.

⁸⁷ Favorinus’ liminal status and need for self-construction of identity is a major preoccupation of his personality. Philostratus relates Favorinus’ claim to embody three paradoxes: 1) he fought with the emperor but “suffered nothing”; 2) he was a eunuch convicted of adultery; 3) he was a Gaul who Hellenized (*Lives of the Sophists* 489). For a general summary of Favorinus’ significance, see Tim Whitmarsh, *The Second Sophistic* (Oxford: Oxford, 2005): 36–37.

are in no way binding upon them. In fact, Paul overrides their initial statement to him that “it is well for a man not to touch a woman” (7:1). The literary focus of Paul’s letter remains on the pedagogical system at Corinth.

Paul’s presentation of his body begins in 1 Cor. 2, where he announces that the body he brings to Corinth is none other than the body of “Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” Rather than embodying the poise of a rhetorician with a robust presence, Paul comes to the Corinthians “in weakness and in fear and in much trembling” (2:3). Paradoxically, his visible weakness constitutes a “demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (2:4). Here, Paul explicitly contrasts this wisdom with the “wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age” (2:6). We can only assume that the “wisdom of this age” denotes philosophy as practiced by the Roman Greek elite and that of the “rulers of this age” denotes Roman imperial rule. It is safe to say that the Roman cultural apparatus as realized in Roman Corinth was multifaceted in Paul’s estimation. As in 2 Corinthians, where Paul’s visible wounds speak to counter the accusations by Paul’s opponents that Paul’s speech is veiled, Paul’s very body oozes with the integrity of his message over against the Roman Greek cultural apparatus under hegemonic collusion of Greek elites and Roman managers.⁸⁸ Paul’s apostolic body is vulnerable like the bodies of those not so privileged by the socioeconomic forces shaping the Roman colony of Corinth.

To the Corinthian Christians, though Paul eschews philosophy, this call to attend to his physical body would have been recognizable from the physiognomic presentations in Greco-Roman philosophy, particularly those of Stoicism. The Roman body could experience physiognomic change based upon its philosophical character. Pompeia

⁸⁸ Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2010): 72.

Paulina, according to Tacitus, was forbidden by her husband, Seneca, to join him in suicide, and so she performed her own living suicide “in the praiseworthy memory of her husband, and with a face and limbs white with a degree of pallor that showed how much vital spirit (*vitalis spiritus*) she had lost” (15:64).⁸⁹ Himerius similarly taught that a soul “shapes its body, bringing it into conformity with its nature.”⁹⁰ The manly philosophical rigor and determination displays itself in the bodily performance and inscribes itself into the body, permanently shaping its appearance. Because of the virility proved by this endurance, Stoics described the philosopher’s struggle with fortune as a spectacle (*spectaculum*) for the divine and human realms.⁹¹ Paul dashes the expectation of an account of his endurance by focusing on the conditions by which this has become the (mis)fortune of apostles: God’s ordination that the apostles should be considered the last and like those condemned to die in the spectacle.⁹²

In 1 Corinthians 4, Paul continues the inversion of the philosophical model begun in 1 Corinthians 2 by envisioning himself as a “spectacle/drama (θέατρον) to the world and angels and human beings” (1 Cor 4:9). Paul’s use of the first person plural ἡμεῖς throughout 4:9-13 is congruent with Paul’s invocation of the experience of “us apostles” (4:9). Thus, it is not Paul particularly but apostles generally who are fools, weak, and dishonored in Christ. This apostolic condition constitutes the polar opposite of the Corinthians’ privileged position as wise, strong, and honored.

⁸⁹ Holt Parker, “Loyal Slaves and Loyal Wives: The Crisis of the Outsider–Within and Roman *Exemplum* Literature,” *Women and Slaves in Greco–Roman Context* (London: Routledge, 1998): 158–178, here 172.

⁹⁰ *Declamations et orationes* 48.13.

⁹¹ Seneca, *De providentia* 2.9; *Ep.* 64.4–6.

⁹² Fitzmyer 219. Cf. Ps. 69:12, for a Jewish mode of expressing the same idea.

Of central concern for Paul in 1 Corinthians 4 is the nature of the educational system that the Corinthians have adopted in a manner consonant with both Jewish and non-Jewish groups seeking citizen status in the Greek East.⁹³ Implicit in Paul's instruction that the Corinthians learn that one should not be "puffed up" (φυσιοῦσθε, v. 6) against each other is the idea that the Corinthians have apprehended the wrong set of intellectual material. This is reinforced by Paul's use of the verb again at v. 18 to declare that some are "puffed up" as if he would not come. Paul denigrates the myriad pedagogues (μυρίους παιδαγωγούς) that the Corinthians may have and positions himself as their father, the ultimate arbiter of household epistemology. Despite the Corinthians' reception of the gospel tradition, they are behaving in the manner of the cultured elite of Roman Greece. Paul's question at v. 7, "For who distinguishes you?" (τίς γάρ σε διακρίνει;), signals both the Corinthians' love of status and possible allegiance to cultural authorities outside the Pauline house-churches.

⁹³ The connection with the gymnasium to education and citizenship in the Greek East meant that Jewish acculturation to the gymnastic system, while initially contested in events described by books such as 1 Maccabees, began quite early. Herod founded the Greek city of Caesarea with Greek elements such as an amphitheater, gymnasia, statues, and temples. Josephus records an incident (*Ant.* 12.20) where, after granting citizenship rights (*politeia*) to the Jewish mercenaries in Asia, Lower Syria, and Antioch, Seleucus Nicator (ruled 312–281 BCE) made provisions for Jewish training in the gymnasium for Antiochene citizenship to be done with halakhic oil rather than the general oil distributed by the gymnasiarchs. While Rutgers follows the chronology of Josephus, Barclay and Gruen doubt the early date Josephus ascribes to these gymnastic privileges. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 280; Leonard Victor Rutgers, "Archaeological Evidence for the Interaction of Jews and Non-Jews in Late Antiquity," *American Journal of Archaeology* 96 (1992): 101–18, 102–3. Jewish participation in the gymnasium nonetheless appears to have reinforced Jewish identity in the centuries preceding Josephus. There is a late second century inscription from Hypaepa on "the Jewish neoterói" (*CIJ* 755) that indicates an association of Jewish young men who have completed ephebe training. In Sardis, the synagogue was within the gymnasium. Regardless of the accuracy of Josephus' dating, the statement indicates the established connection between participation in the gymnasium on the route to citizenship and Jewish identity that existed in the first century C.E.

While Paul castigates the Corinthian's claims to knowledge and status among the cultural elite, Paul presents a critique of the epistemology underlying the particular regime of knowledge functioning at Corinth as a Roman colony in 1 Cor. 4. Paul's question "Who distinguishes you?" (τίς γάρ σε διακρίνει, 4:7) uses a verb with lexical meanings that range from juridical decision to distinguishing among opponents on the battlefield.⁹⁴ It is followed by an example of the perils of the epistemology of which the Corinthians would become tradents: the Roman spectacle, where apostles themselves were imperiled. Those executed in the Roman arena were supposed to enact myths in order to prove the truth of the religious mythological apparatus and to confirm their own guilt by visibly assimilating into the roles of the evil figures. In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, which features the Isis cult at Corinth, even Lucius the ass looks pejoratively at the woman condemned to play the role of Pasiphae and dreads the infamy of being publicly exhibited, much less the prospect of death (10.35). Significantly, the prospective spectacle is inverted when the Queen of Heaven reveals herself to Lucius at the shores of Cenchrae after he escapes from the arena in Corinth (11.3). The opprobrium led Martial to criticize even those condemned to play good roles, such as Mucius Scaevola. While first praising the heroism of Mucius' stoic response to burning his right hand in the fire (8.30), Martial concludes that as the act is only being reenacted in the arena the braver course of action is to refuse to stick one's hand in the flames upon command (10.25). For Paul, his fighting with beasts at Ephesus proves that believers in the name of Christ have more than "human hopes" (1 Cor. 15:32). Paul anticipates Apuleius' use of the Roman spectacle as a reason to disentangle oneself from the Roman

⁹⁴ Theoc. 25.46; LXX Jl. 3(4).2.

religious apparatus and to pledge oneself to new ideals. The attention he draws to his physique in 1 Corinthians 4 is forensic; his body is Exhibit A.

Further support for the pericope's concern with the Roman cultural apparatus itself can be found in comparing Paul's metaphors of the pedagogue in 1 Corinthians and Galatians. In Galatians 4.1–3, Paul uses the image of the pedagogue to illustrate Israel's confinement under the curse of the Law prior to the coming of Christ.⁹⁵ By invoking the figure of the pedagogue, Paul reminds the Corinthians that the Law is not a mediator of the gospel. Instead, the Law is a pedagogue guiding the young child toward the adulthood, which arrives with Christ. As the pedagogue is still present, the Galatians are still minors and do not have access to their inheritance. The Law, in its correspondence to the pedagogue, serves the function of a household slave in Gal. 4.1–3. With the coming of faith (3.23), the Law and everything else in the world have been disentangled from sin (3.22). The transitory and yet hegemonic power of the Law is reinforced in the analogy of 4:1–2 that compares the Galatians to infant heirs placed under tutors (ἐπίτροπος, οἰκόνομος).⁹⁶ Thus, we can see that the pedagogue metaphor corresponds to epistemological inquiry in Paul's theology in both 1 Corinthians and Galatians. Like a household slave, the pedagogue stands lower in the hierarchy of the knowledge economy than the theology that Paul attempts to promulgate.

⁹⁵ For a discussion of the scholarship on this passage, see Todd A. Wilson, *The Curse of the Law and the Crisis in Galatia* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007): 39.

⁹⁶ The specification of multiple hierarchical titles is unusual and discussed by John K. Goodrich, "As long as the heir is a child," *Novum Testamentum* 55 (2013): 61–76. For a classic discussion on guardian and succession in these verses, see Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979) 202–203. Nonetheless, Paul again uses different administrative titles (ὑπηρέτας, οἰκόνομος) in 1 Cor. 4:1–2 to describe how Christians should act as servants in the household of God.

When Paul resumes the gymnastic model a few lines later, his body has morphed from being exhibited in the spectacle in dishonor to being endowed with the power to discipline the bodies of others. Paul differentiates the bodies of the Corinthian community from the bodies of those in the spectacle by changing his own body from exhibited condemned to paternal pedagogue. Contrasting the cultural economy of words operating at Corinth with true governmental power, Paul accurately hints at the state of the cultural elite in the Roman colony of Corinth, where the Greek philosophical displays and nostalgic gymnastic military training disguised the loss of sovereignty after the Roman conquest. The spectacle was the emblem of the Roman prerogative to discipline and punish, shaping the body in non-Greek ways. Paul steps into this authority by assuming the image of traditional Greek pedagogue at 4:21, asking, “How should I come to you, with a rod (ῥάβδῳ) or in love (ἀγάπῃ) and gentleness of spirit (πνεύματι πραΰτητος)?” In this way, Paul simultaneously vitiates the Roman colonizer of the power it held over Greek bodies, a desideratum of elite Greek culture, and restores the Corinthians to the place of prestige to which he accused them of wishing to be placed. The Corinthians retain their elite, free status in Paul’s rhetoric; they merely become child heirs rather than adults who have assumed the mantle of their parents’ authority. Meanwhile, Paul elevates the apostolic status from slave condemned to die to paternal figure, introducing equality through fictive kinship.

1.2 The Citizen Body

Having examined the ways in which Paul uses his own body to demonstrate the perils of too enthusiastic adherence on the part of individuals to the Roman apparatus at

Corinth, I will situate the construction of a corporate identity of the Corinthian house-churches by Paul. As a letter of concord, 1 Corinthians attempts to move its recipients from pursuing their own self-interests to establishing harmonious unity. In this section, I will outline the ways in which the structures of the Greek cultural apparatus in Roman Corinth influenced the development of the Pauline house-churches. I will focus particularly on Paul's contrast of *paideia* and the *agon* in 1 Corinthians 2 and 4, his explication of the relevance of the body metaphor from political discourse in the Christian setting in chapter 12, and his etiology of disease connected to the body metaphor in 1 Corinthians 11.

1.2.1 Ephebic Education in Roman Greece

The religious and political landscape the Corinthians would have inhabited was one of Greek conservatism even as the Roman Empire retained control of its conquered territory.⁹⁷ Citizenship continued to have prestigious valences of good birth and education in Greece. For the Corinthians, an ephebic education, which would have enrolled them in the *boule* and the *demos*, was becoming an increasingly rarefied honor. In the fourth century BCE in nearby Athens, for example, every young free man was educated as an ephebe and gained access to the *boule*. Beginning in the Hellenistic period and continuing in the Roman period, fewer and fewer people could afford an ephebic education in Greece. Moreover, the actual power wielded by those successfully completing their ephebic education greatly diminished, particularly after the Roman conquest.

⁹⁷ Elena Muniz Grijalvo, "Elites and Religious Change in Roman Athens," *Numen* 52 (2005): 255–82, here 264–5.

Nonetheless, the ideal of ephebic instruction and the cultural capital it conferred remained prestigious, not only in Greece but in Hellenized cities like Jerusalem throughout the Roman Empire.⁹⁸ In his *Oration* 31, Dio Chrysostom complains that the practice of renaming statues is a travesty because no citizen would strive for excellence if he knew that his name would be so quickly replaced, drawing a direct comparison to the statues for Olympic victors. The Roman period *ephēbeia* could convey a city's continued pride in its historical glory during the Classical period, negotiating against the Roman occupation of Greece.⁹⁹ Many competitions continued to preserve the memory of the military training that accompanies an independent state. Sparta's brutal endurance contests, for instance, were a way of highlighting its military dominance of earlier periods. Likewise, Athens displayed ephebic *stelae* decorated with images from its glorious naval history in the Persian wars. Yet, many specific military events in competitions, such as archery and javelin-throwing, had virtually disappeared, presumably because of the change in military training tactics that occurred after the Romans had conquered Greece with their own method of warfare.¹⁰⁰ Thus, the *ephēbeia*

⁹⁸ V.A. Tcherikover, "Was Jerusalem a 'Polis'?", *Israel Exploration Journal* 14 (1964): 61–78.

⁹⁹ For the development of *paideia* and education in the Roman period, see Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison: Wisconsin, 1992); T. Barton, *Power and Knowledge: Astrology, Physiognomics and Medicine under the Roman Empire* (Ann Arbor: Michigan, 1994); and R. A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: California, 1998).

¹⁰⁰ N.M. Kennell, "The Greek Ephebeia in the Roman Period," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 26 (2009): 323–342, here 331–332.

conveyed a very literal “pride of place” for civic honors even as citizens inevitably pursued the advancement opportunities that came with Roman acculturation.¹⁰¹

Ephebic education during the Roman period enculturated youths into the *polis*, and thus it represented the values held by the Greek cultural elite in colonized Greece. As part of their education, ephebes would have trained in the gymnasium. They would have been introduced to the mythology behind the important cultic sites of the city. Athenian ephebes, for instance, sacrificed to “those who died on behalf of freedom” at the tomb at Marathon.¹⁰² They also ran a race in armor from the military tomb in the Ceraeicus in honor of those fallen in warfare.¹⁰³ The preference in the Roman period for statues of the youthful beardless athlete models found in the fourth and fifth centuries BCE, as Newby has argued, suggests that the statues were meant to evoke the entire process of education and cultural excellence.¹⁰⁴ Such statues were erected as much for civic organizers as for the victors. All in all, the very principles of citizenship and their accompanying host of virtues, including athleticism, would have been physically manifest to the Corinthians.

The Corinthians would have been familiar with the concept of multiple citizenships and overlapping civic and political loyalties. In Acts, Paul claims to be a citizen of the Roman Empire (16:37–38) and a citizen of the city of Tarsus of Cilicia (21:39). Although dual citizenship had not always been permitted in Greco-Roman antiquity, by the time of Augustus, it was possible to be a citizen of both the Roman

¹⁰¹ Jason König, *Athletics and Literature in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005): 66.

¹⁰² *IG ii²*.1006, ll. 26–30; 1008, l. 21. See Newby 188.

¹⁰³ *IG ii²*.1006, ll. 22–3; Aristotle, *Athenian Constitution* 58; Diodorus 11.33.

¹⁰⁴ Zahra Newby, *Greek Athletics in the Roman World: Victory and Virtue* (Oxford: Oxford, 2005): 254.

Empire and of another city within the Empire's confines. Moreover, Jewish communities throughout the Mediterranean had long enjoyed local organization in the juridical category of the *politeuma*.¹⁰⁵

According to Paul, the Corinthians saw themselves as fully immersed in the culture of Roman Corinth, assuming that it was an equally important cultural identification. The Corinthians perceive themselves as full participants in the Roman Greek plutocracy. Paul chides the Corinthians: "Already you are full (κεκορεσμένοι ἐστέ)! Already you are rich (ἐπλουτήσατε)! Without us you reign (ἐβασιλεύσατε)!" (1 Cor. 4:8). The hyperbole of kingship aside, Paul makes it clear that the Corinthians covet high status roles within the city. Paul capitulates to that desire in 1 Corinthians. When Paul notes that the Corinthians have many pedagogues but that they do not have many fathers, he is conforming to a notion that the Corinthians have of themselves as possessing high status while simultaneously challenging them to endure his fatherly discipline.¹⁰⁶

1.2.2 *Pedagogues and Gymnasia*

Just as the state inculcated citizens in its values through educating and inscribing them as ephebes, Paul reminds the Corinthians of their being guided by pedagogues to and from the gymnasium: "For though you might have ten thousand pedagogues (μυρίους παιδαγωγούς) in Christ, you do not have many fathers" (1 Cor. 4:15). While Joop Smit

¹⁰⁵ Aryeh Kasher, "No longer a historiographic legend: New papyri from a forgotten Jewish *politeuma* in Ptolemaic Egypt," *Trbys* 72 (2002–2003): 5–36. Gert Lüderitz argues that the *politeuma* as a *terminus technicus* applied to an elite Jewish governing body similar to a *boule*.

¹⁰⁶ The picture that Paul paints is similar to the one Seneca depicts in *de Providentia*.

has identified in Paul's words here an implicit polemic against rival teacher Apollos, we should note that Galatians 4:1–7 also uses the language of education and citizenship:

My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property; but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Throughout the churches of God, Paul upheld the forms of citizenship while shifting the values those forms attempted to instill and promote.¹⁰⁷ It is only in this letter to Corinth, written from Ephesus, that we see Paul's overarching language of traditional Greek citizenship crystallize into gymnastic imagery. And rival teachers like Apollos are included in the pedagogical establishment that Paul wants the Corinthians to see that they are rejecting; Paul's "without us" indicts the Corinthians not simply for preferring a different charismatic authority to his, but for rejecting outside Christian authority

¹⁰⁷ Paul is all too often characterized as completely differentiating the Roman Greek political sphere of Corinth from the Christian community. Welborn, in departing from earlier interpreters who held a conflict with gnosis was the key to understanding Paul's motives, identifies Paul as being concerned with the politics of the age in order to distinguish the Corinthian Christians from the secular political realm: "It is Paul's intention in 1 Corinthians 1–4 not merely to put an end to dissension but to transform the Corinthians' understanding of the conflict. The strife of the factions is no petty quarrel, no *Cliquestreit*, but a mirror of the cosmic conflict between the rulers of the age and the power of God. The theological interpretation that the apostle gives to the struggle is obviously designed to turn the Corinthian Christians away from politics. The fate of the community does not rest upon precepts of statecraft, but upon the word of the cross. Thus, its members need not look to political leaders, but can await redemption from God." L. L. Welborn, "On the Discord in Corinth: 1 Corinthians 1–4 and Ancient Politics," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106 (1987): 85–111, 109. I agree that Paul's concern is more political than abstractly theological, but I see Paul as essentially validating the structures of the *polis* as manifested during the Roman period. Paul does not revise contemporary political theory and create his own utopian society in the manner of Plato's *Republic*.

altogether. This is reaffirmed by the presence of socioeconomic motifs such as banquets and veiling in the remainder of the letter.

We have a picture of God's gymnasium in the phrase "pedagogues in Christ"—the Corinthians are still being led to the gymnasium to become citizens, but their citizenship is now a heavenly one. Instead of envisioning themselves training to be part of the upper elite in the Roman colony of Corinth, the Corinthians in the Pauline house-churches train their bodies to be patrician sons of Christ and build biopower for the heavenly *politeuma*.¹⁰⁸ If we were to consider this innovation in postcolonial terms, we might draw upon the observation of Althusser that the "reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of skills, but also at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression, so that they, too, will provide for the domination of the ruling class 'in and by words' (*par la parole*)."¹⁰⁹ Paul has replicated the symbology and the structure of the Corinthians' social and religious worldview, and yet he has tampered with the colonizer's ability to manipulate the ruling ideology. Not only do the Corinthians have a new ideology but

¹⁰⁸ Paul seems not to mind the Corinthian Christians' participation in the gymnasium as he did their ingestion of idol meat. This is despite the position of the gymnasium (Cic. *Tusc.* 4.70; Tac. *Ann.* 14.20) and palaestra as the primary site of homoerotic procurement according to early imperial authors. The palaestra is singled out in Achilles Tatius' *Clitophon and Leucippe* (2.38.4) as a place to meet boys. On the homoerotic cultural associations of the gymnasium, see S.L. Mohler, "Slave Education in the Roman Empire." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 71 (1940): 262–280, here 269–270; Elizabeth Bartman, "Eros's Flame: Images of Sexy Boys in Roman Ideal Sculpture," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 1 (2002): 249–271, here 269.

¹⁰⁹ Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: New Left Books, 1971): 127–188.

they have an ideology that mimics the existing Greco-Roman imperial one as practiced in the Roman colony of Corinth.

Paul's reorientation of the civic honor arrangement becomes evident in the athletic metaphors of 9:24–27. What we find is that Paul, who chided the Corinthian Christians that they have many pedagogues but only one father in 1 Corinthians 4, has relinquished the traditional supervisory role. This is consistent with his renunciation of his apostolic rights throughout 1 Corinthians 9. Paul insists that he is a competitor in boxing and that disqualification would be grounds for disappointment of eschatological hopes. The Corinthian Christians, by contrast, have been elevated from child charges to be admonished to trained athletes in a footrace, striving to attain a singular crown. Paul's vision for the Corinthian Christians thus corresponds to Corinthian visual representations of Herakles crowning himself and not to the traditional ephebic reliefs that depicts the *ephebes* honoring their *cosmetes* by crowning him. As the letter has progressed, the Corinthian Christians have increased in stature through the epistolary framework from disenfranchised children to inscription and full participation in the Christian *politeuma*.

Paul envisions himself as being responsible for the entire education of the Corinthians. This is important because *paideia* was connected with citizenship. Mere athletic distinction was not sufficient to earn the esteem of a city, as foreigner Favorinus tells us when he laments that the athletic statues were all of native Greek athletes. Accordingly, child development is a pervasive theme of 1 Corinthians. The Corinthian Christians are reminded of the distinction between men, *teleioi*, and babies, *nepioi* (2:6,

3:1).¹¹⁰ This distinction can also be found in Hellenistic and Roman philosophy (Philo, *Agr.* 9; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 2.16.39). In 1 Cor. 4:15, Paul claims the Corinthians have many pedagogues, personnel charged with guiding young ephebes to and from the gymnasium, but that he is their father. While there is a certain level of condescension in Paul's comparison of adult Corinthians to much younger citizens, the underlying idea of shaping the elite citizen is highly complimentary. Moreover, sponsors of the ephebes identified with earlier periods of their education in order to affirm their commitment to ideals of the state.¹¹¹ The Corinthian house-churches are presented by Paul as enculturating and forming the young citizen.

1.2.3 Being a Citizen in the Roman Colony of Corinth

In Roman Corinth, where most Corinthians ostensibly spent the majority of their time, citizenship would have meant negotiation of multiple national identities. First and foremost, of course, the cults in the forum were closely connected with those in Rome and would have commanded Corinthian attention. Scheid has outlined the consumption of the sacrifice in imperial Rome, and, given Corinth's status as a Roman colony, it is probable that similar patterns of food distribution occurred.¹¹² While facilities for dining have not been found within the *temene* that have been fully excavated, it is possible that a

¹¹⁰ Lee notes that the emphasis is on maturity, beyond the distinction between the secular Corinthian, the unspiritual person (*psykichos*, 2:14), and the Christian Corinthian. See Lee 164.

¹¹¹ Zahra Newby makes this point with respect to Spartan eugertism, but it is broadly applicable. Newby, *Greek Athletics in the Roman World*, 167.

¹¹² See J. Scheid, "Sacrifice et banquet à Rome: Quelques problèmes," *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome* 97 (1985): 193–206; J.H. D'Arms, "P. Lucilius Gamala's Feasts for the Ostians and Their Roman Models," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 13 (2000): 192–200.

room with an atrium at the northwest corner of the *temenos* of Temple E could have held a small group of celebrants. As the temples at the west end lacked *temene* and significant space between them, Bookidis posits that sacrifices took place on small altars on the steps in front of the buildings, without public attendance. Larger *temene* suggest that larger public gatherings were held within them, together with more elaborate sacrifices and processions. At the same time, elaborate spectacles and games were also sponsored in the theater, in the amphitheater at the east end of the city, and possibly in the forum, and at these assemblies food may have been distributed to the *populus*.¹¹³ These activities were more or less part of daily life, and abstention from them would have entailed a withdrawal from the life of the *polis*.

Yet, even though the Corinthians seem to have been participating in normal civic activities—the consumption of idol meat, gymnastic participation, frequenting of prostitutes—they were orienting themselves away from Corinth and toward another city: Jerusalem.¹¹⁴ Both 1 Corinthians 1:26 and 12:1 call attention to the Corinthians' former lack of standing in the pagan culture in which they participated. Paul's discussion of Christ as the spiritual rock following Moses assures the Corinthians that all of the community's ancestors belonged to Israel, which perhaps would have even been ritually possible through the proxy baptism mentioned in chapter 15. The community has a strong connection to Jerusalem and the ethnically Jewish church in that chapter 16

¹¹³ Nancy Bookidis and Ronald S. Stroud, *The Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore: Topography and Architecture* (Athens: ASCSA, 1997): 158.

¹¹⁴ Martha Himmelfarb has argued that the rabbis adopted a genealogical definition of the people of Israel largely in response to Christian attempts to appropriate the title Israel by claiming descent from Abraham according to the promise. This Christian move precluded descent from Abraham according to the flesh. See Himmelfarb, *Kingdom of Priests*, 160–85.

describes a collection for the Jerusalem church. In chapter 15:1–9, Paul’s recounting of the transmission of the gospel from Christ to a number of figures centered in Jerusalem (Cephas, the Twelve, and five hundred brothers), and finally Paul underscores the geographical importance of Jerusalem. The aggregation of comments about ethnicity and belonging in 1 Corinthians suggests that the Corinthians are assuming a new ethnicity, insofar as ethnicity is performative. Hence Paul calls the Corinthians’ attention to the practice of the Galatian churches and the other “churches of God.” The Corinthians are striving to be included in an association whose most authoritative members are in Jerusalem. The collection they take for Jerusalem is essentially a tribute, similar to the tributes Athens used to collect from its fellow Greek city-states in the Classical period and to the tribute to the Jerusalem Temple that high-ranking convert Fulvia thought she was making in 19 C.E.

1.2.4 The Body Metaphor

Paul’s rhetoric invites the Corinthians to participate in a different civic body than the one of Roman Corinth in which they enjoyed idol meat and prostitutes. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul expands on the “Body of Christ” image that he has introduced at 6:15 (cf. 1:13, 11:29). It seems as though the Corinthians must have already been familiar with the image because Paul is able to introduce it elliptically at 6:15 in order to substantiate his argument against prostitution: “Do you not know that your bodies (τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν) are members of Christ (μέλη Χριστοῦ)? Shall I take the members of Christ (τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ) and make them members of a prostitute (πόρνης μέλη)?” Scholars agree that the metaphor of the body found in ancient political literature stands

behind Paul's formulation and serves the same purpose as the other common *paradeigmata* for concord in 1 Corinthians (e.g., the building, the ship, common sacrifices).¹¹⁵ The scope, as indicated by the rejection of the prostitute from the body metaphor in which he or she was normally included, is that of the religious body assembled for worship rather than the civic body of all Corinth. Such a limited scope is borne out by the reappearance of the body metaphor in 1 Corinthians 12, which concludes in 12:28–30 with Paul setting out “a hierarchical governance structure as another response to the divisions within the church, especially as manifested when they come together in worship.”¹¹⁶

In ancient Greco-Roman political and philosophical discourse, the political body was conceived in terms of the individual body, developing earlier political discourse such as that found in the Hebrew Bible and Classical Greece that identified the “head” with the ruler and the “foot” with a slave or enemy. In sexualized metonymic references, the point of penetration, the buttocks, was emphasized for men, while the area of gestation, the womb, was emphasized for women.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Heinrici, *Sendschreiben*, 396–7, n. 1; Sanders, *Hellénisme*, 78–93; Lietzmann–Kümmel 62–63; E. Best *One Body in Christ. A Study of the Relationship of the Church to Christ in the Apostle Paul* (London: S.P.C.K., 1955) 83–114, 215–25; Wolff, 110–12; Klauck, *Herrenmahl*, 337–43. J. Hainz, *Ekklesia. Strukturen paulinischer Gemeinde—Theologie und Gemeinde—Ordnung* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1972), 260 n. 2; Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 201–87. J.N. Sevenster, *Paul and Seneca* (Leiden: Brill, 1961) 167–74; Vollenweider 58–60; Mitchell, 49, 157.

¹¹⁶ Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 163–4.

¹¹⁷ In Judges 5:30, women are envisioned as wombs to be spoils “per head, per hero” (5:30). See the discussion of Carol Ann Newsom, *Women's Bible Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998): 76. For male sexualized metonymies during times of war, see Ada Cohen, “The Self as Other: Performing Humor in Ancient Greek Art,” *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Erich S. Gruen (Los Angeles: Getty, 2011): 465–409, here 470–471.

Probably the most enduring “source” is the political/philosophical image of the cosmos or state as a body.¹¹⁸ The image was widespread in antiquity, with its best-known form that of the Menenius Agrippa fable, in which Agrippa is said to have persuaded the plebeians to cease their rebellion against the senate by arguing that since the state, like a body, is made up of a number of diverse parts, all of the parts perform a necessary function, including the senators, for the good of the whole.¹¹⁹ Polyaeus compares the army to a human body in that the general was vital to the operations of the army, while extremities were less necessary.¹²⁰ In exemplary individuals, individual body parts could metonymize the individual to whom they belonged and be invoked for making a case for the state, as we see when Cicero considers whether Anthony’s attempt to crown Caesar king was justified: “No, by the rods of Valerius and the law of Porcius. No, by the leg of Horatius and the hand of Mucius. No, by the spear of Decius and the

¹¹⁸ Others who have held similar views include: Traugott Schmidt, *Der Leib Christi* (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1919): 193–248; W.L. Knox, *Paul and the Church of the Gentiles* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1961): 160–65; G. Johnston, *The Doctrine of the Church in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1943): 85–99; C.K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1968): 287; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975): 210–216; Meeks, *Urban Christians*, 89–90; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 600–603; Witherington, *Corinth*, 258–59; Robert M. Grant, “Hellenistic Elements in 1 Corinthians,” in *Early Christian Origins*, ed. Allen Wikgren (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961): 63; Wikenhauser, *Kirche*, 130–43. A modern example of this anthropomorphism of the state is the romantic Hellenism that cast Macedonia as the “lung of Greece” and any “loss” of it as a mutilation. See John Agnew, “No Borders, No Nations: Making Greece in Macedonia,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97.2 (2007): 398–422, 406.

¹¹⁹ Livy 2.32.12–33.1; cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.86; 6.54.2; Plut. *Cor.* 6.2–4.

¹²⁰ Polyaeus in *Strategems of War* states, “Iphicrates used to resemble an army marshaled for action to the human body. The phalanx he called the breast, the light armed troops the hands, the cavalry the feet, and the general the head. If any of the inferior parts were wanting, the army was defective; but if it wanted a general it wanted everything.” (3.9.2; Dale Martin, *Body*, 93–94).

sword of Brutus.”¹²¹ Cicero marshals together a body of exemplary statesmen whose hybridity testifies to the excessiveness of crowning Caesar king.

The body was a common metaphor to express the traditional hierarchical order. This occurs in the Hebrew Bible, with the head referring to the position of honor and the feet referring to the position of shame. In Roman law, the distinction between free and slave was expressed by the human body, with the head serving as a metonymic function to denote freedom: the free person is a *caput liberum* (a free head), and a person whose civil status has been diminished has undergone *deminutio capitis*, “lessening of the head.”¹²² In Stoic thought, the virtuous leader was the head of the state, and all others shared in the life-force of that one person. Philo says this principle is based on the head being the first and best part of the animal (*Praem.* 135). The emperor was thought to supply the spirit for the entire nation, so that the populace was animated by his breath. Seneca, in his address of Nero in *Clem.* 1.5.1, advocates the penetration of the spirit as an ideal that could be sought by citizens: “*animus reipublicae tuae es, illa corpus tuum*” (you are the soul of the state, and the state your body).¹²³ Likewise, in his letter of consolation to Polybius, Seneca exhorts Polybius to forget the pain of the loss of a loved

¹²¹ Bruce Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice: Studies in Ideology and Practice* (Chicago: Chicago, 1991): 248.

¹²² Slaves’ heads exist physically but have no ideational status, as Paulus indicates (*Digest* 4.5.3.1): *servile caput nullum ius habet ideoque nec minui potest*, “a slave’s head has no rights and so cannot be diminished.” Slaves who gain status are so indicated by reference to their heads: Hermeros in Petronius’ *Satyricon*, *mille denarius pro capite solvi*, “I paid a thousand denarii for my head/freedom” (57.6).

¹²³ Friends were said to share a single soul: “In our friendship’s consonance and harmony there must be no element unlike, uneven, or unequal, but all must be alike to engender agreement in words, counsels, opinions, and feelings, and it must be as if one soul were apportioned among two or more bodies” (Plutarch, *Amic. mult.* 96E). A city with concord had “a single soul for so great and populous a city” (Dio Chrysostom, *Nicaeen.* 39.5; see also 3 Regn 3.108). See Lee 42.

one by focusing on the emperor: “So long as he is alive, your dear ones are alive—you have lost nothing. Your eyes ought to be not only dry, but even happy; in him you have all things, he takes the place of all (*in hoc tibi omnia sunt, hic pro omnibus est*).”¹²⁴

The physical parameters of the body metaphors are explained in 1 Corinthians 6:12–20 as Paul forbids the common Roman elite male patronage of prostitutes. Prior to reminding the Corinthians that they are members of Christ, Paul posits a fundamental collusion among members of the body by drawing a parallelism between excessive gastronomic desires (i.e., meat consumption) and excessive sexual desires (i.e., fornication) (6:19; cf. 3:16–17). At 6:15, just as the members of one’s own body are in sympathetic relation to one another, with the belly and the genitalia limiting excessive consumption, Paul encourages the Corinthians to think of themselves as members of the body of Christ. As members of Christ, Paul insinuates, the Corinthians are to comport themselves in the manner of Christ, because they perambulate the brothels bearing Christ’s form. A sexual encounter with a prostitute for Christ would entail marriage and thus frequenting prostitutes is becoming one flesh with them and joining them to the Body of Christ, the Christian community. The prostitute becomes holy through this transaction; the client becomes debased. Paul’s emphasis on the individual bodies of believers in addition to the corporate bodies of believers is clearer when Paul constructs the body as a temple to complement the image of the Body of Christ.¹²⁵ The body as an image for political unity is a *topos* in ancient political literature.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ *To Polybius, On Consolation* 7.4.

¹²⁵ Lanci situates the Corinthian Christian “body as temple” within the economy of temples in Roman Corinth. See John R. Lanci, *A New Temple for Corinth: Rhetorical and Archaeological Approaches to Pauline Imagery* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997).

¹²⁶ Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 119.

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul introduces the body as a metaphor in vv. 12–16 and applies it to the Corinthian church in vv. 27–32 in order to explain the different graces and ministries in vv. 1–11. Paul defines participation in the Body of Christ as being contingent upon baptism and, possibly, participation in Eucharist. Like other allusions to the baptismal formula in 1 Corinthians, the baptismal formula presents only two binaries that are resolved in the sacrament—Jew/Greek and slave/free—omitting the male/female binary found in Galatians. Yet, Paul and the Corinthians have been baptized into one body (ἐν σῶμα) and imbibed one spirit (ἐν πνεῦμα). It is not clear whether this drink is a metaphorical association with baptism or the Blood of Christ at the Eucharistic meal. What is apparent is that all Corinthians have been equalized through their participation in the Body of Christ. The stronger members have not lost their status, but the weaker members have been clothed with additional honor in order to compensate for their deficiencies (καὶ τὰ ἀσχήμονα ἡμῶν εὐσχημοσύνην περισσοτέραν ἔχει). This differentiates it from the other models of the body floating about Paul’s cultural environment, where interdependence precluded equal honor. As Käsemann observes, the term “body of Christ” defines the Corinthians’ identity through the genitive “of Christ.” This is not simply an invocation of the body as a collective group but a discernment of and belonging to the Body of Jesus.¹²⁷

1.2.5 *Etiology of Disease*

The political nature of 1 Corinthians can also be seen in the connection between Paul’s metaphorical and real-life prognostic physiognomies during his critique of food

¹²⁷ Käsemann, *Paul*, 102–21.

distribution at the Corinthian worship meal. Paul's phrase "not discerning the body" (μὴ διακρίνων τὸ σῶμα, 11:29) is a word play on the sacramental body of Christ and the ecclesiastical body of Christ, the church.¹²⁸ When the Corinthians assemble to take the Eucharist, they partake of Christ's body and blood as individuals and cliques rather than as a unified community with concern for all members. Another pun συνερχόμενοι at 11:17 plays off the meanings "to assemble" and "to be united."¹²⁹ When it appears again at 11:33, it retains both valences because the Corinthians must "wait for one another." This is reinforced in the next verse, when Paul instructs those who must eat more to eat at home that they might not assemble into judgment (εἰς κρίμα).

Because the bodies of individuals and communities are intimately interwoven, disease arises from the dissensions of the corporate body. Illness manifests itself in the bodies of individuals in the community as a result of this collective *miasma*. Sandwiched in between the words of institution that are traditions received from Jesus and the instructions to wait for one another and to eat at home is the etiology of disease at Corinth. Members of the community are literally becoming weak, sick, and even dying. The interdependence of the members of the body that Paul will develop in 1 Corinthians 12 is apparent here in 1 Corinthians 11:17–32, as the actions of one member of the body affect the health of another member of the body just as they would in a real life body.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Klauck, "Eucharistie," 7, argues that v. 29 gives a clue as to the community as the Body of Christ. Cf. Barton, 241–42.

¹²⁹ Mitchell, *Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 156.

¹³⁰ The theological construction of the etiology of disease at Corinth is further evidenced by the Corinthian Christians' counteraccusation that in 2 Corinthians 10–13 (10:10; 11:30; 12:5, 9, 10; 13:4) that Paul is weak and that his ministry is therefore equally defective. This is typically interpreted along somatic lines (e.g., Glancy, Larson), but there is moral import as well. See Paul B. Duff, "Transformed 'From Glory to Glory':

Paul needs to convince the Corinthians to see themselves as parts of the same body, using the *homonoia* motif to encourage unity that runs throughout the letter. Thus, Paul's discourse of sickness and disease does not focus on individual parts as would happen at the Askleion, but on collective *miasma*.¹³¹ As Martha Nussbaum has shown, philosophy and medicine were connected in Hellenistic and Roman thought, because both provided a *therapeia*, a cure. Both cures for the body and the soul were necessary for true healing of the individual. And since these cures operated under a more or less unified intellectual system, they cured the body politic, run by the political system, as well.¹³²

1.3 The Body of Christ: The Ecclesial Body in 1 Corinthians

1.3.1 The Nationality of the Pauline House-Churches

Paul positions the Corinthian house-churches within the national identity of Israel. Despite the conflict between Paul and the synagogue reported by Acts, 1 Corinthians presents a perceived continuity between the Israelite *cultus* and the Corinthian one. In 1 Corinthians, Paul echoes Jeremiah 9:22–3 to remind the members of the house-churches that only a few of them were considered elite in Corinth as established by education, social office, and birth into the nobility.¹³³ However, through the church meetings, the Corinthians under Paul's care were to see themselves as highly empowered in terms of

Paul's Appeal to the Experience of His Readers in 2 Corinthians 3:8," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127 (2008): 759–780, here 763.

¹³¹ It is likely, as Ramelli has recently argued, that Paul is not positing a direct causal relationship between sin and sickness, but a metaphorical correlation. The primary sickness is spiritual. See Ilaria Ramelli, "Spiritual Weakness, Illness, and Death in 1 Corinthians 11:30," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130.1 (2011): 145–163.

¹³² Martha Nussbaum, *Therapy of Desire* (Princeton: Princeton, 1994): 341. This argument is basically congruent with Mary Douglas' anthropological argument that bodies are shaped by belief system.

¹³³ Gordon Fee, *First Corinthians*, 80.

philosophical education and power through physical strength or political office so that all capacity to boast before God might be obliterated.¹³⁴ The use of the term “stumbling block,” with its echoing of the passages in the Jewish scriptures, implies that some of the Corinthians might be persuaded with language that evoked Jewish contexts, particularly food practices. The phrase “baptized into Moses” in 1 Cor. 10:1–4, though it constitutes the singular and peculiar usage of Moses/Messiah typology in the Pauline corpus, evokes the idea that the harrowing experience of passing through the Red Sea is quintessentially Jewish.¹³⁵ It still builds the community for which Moses provides a typology elsewhere in Paul’s letters.¹³⁶ “All” the Israelites shared in eating and drinking spiritual food and drink (1 Cor. 10:3–4), and the Corinthians “all” partake of the one bread (10:17). Thus, the Israelites and the Corinthians share an ethnic marker derived from national commensal traditions. The quotation of Numbers 11 “desiring evil things” in 1 Cor. 10:6 further support the pervasiveness of the Jewish scriptures in understanding the covenant of Christ.¹³⁷ In 1 Corinthians 11:25, the “blood of my covenant” recalls Moses’ sprinkling of the people with sacrificial blood in Exodus 25.¹³⁸ Indeed, *I Clement*,

¹³⁴ Gail O’Day, “Jeremiah 9:22–23 and 1 Corinthians 1:26–31: A Study in Intertextuality,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1990): 259–267, here 264.

¹³⁵ John Lierman, *The New Testament Moses: Christian Perceptions of Moses and Israel in the Setting of Jewish Religion* (Tübingen: MohrSiebeck, 2004): 176–177.

¹³⁶ Joachim Jeremias, “Μωϋσῆς,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 4, A–N (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967): 869–70; “Paulus als Hillelit,” in *Neotestamentica et Semitica: Studies in Honour of Matthew Black*, ed. E. Earle Ellis and Max Wilcox (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1969): 96.

¹³⁷ Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991): 138–39 n. 43.

¹³⁸ Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 199; Jean Héring, *The First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* (trans. A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock; London: Epworth, 1962) 116–17; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New

written decades later to Christian house-churches in Corinth, continues the emphasis on the covenant of blood.¹³⁹ Jesus' body and blood are meant to represent the body and blood of the sacrificial animal.

The overall effect supports the thesis that both Paul and the Corinthians perceive themselves to be part of Israel on an ongoing cultic basis and not simply by means of historical tradition. On the one hand, we might expect the Corinthians to identify with Israel, given that they are collecting funds for Jerusalem and sending steward pilgrims whom Paul is going to accompany to Jerusalem. On the other hand, a significant portion of the community sees no harm in eating meat sacrificed to idols, which differs greatly from the continuing desire of the Jerusalem church to maintain food purity laws. Paul disagrees with the Jerusalem establishment on the issue of clean foods and circumcision, major impediments to acculturation to civic activities in the diaspora. Idol meat is the next logical step to full participation in the life of the polis, and Paul discourages this, though he does not forbid it. Paul's use of Israel in his ecclesiology, in my opinion, seems to be designed to encourage the Corinthians to identify with Israel as an ethnic-religious entity, a *politeuma* if not a *natio*, over against Roman cultural practices.

1.3.2 *Politeuma*

Such an understanding of the identification of the Corinthian church with Israel facilitates an understanding of the community's orientation toward their heavenly citizenship. While Paul does not explicitly use the word *politeuma* as he does at

York: Harper & Row, 1968) 268–69; Hans Lietzmann, *An die Korinther I–II* (HNT 9; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1949) 57.

¹³⁹ Edmund W. Fisher, “Let Us look upon the Blood-of-Christ” (1 Clement 7:4),” *Vigiliae Christianae* 34.3 (1980): 218–236.

Philippians 3:20 (cf. cognate *politeuesthai*, 1:27) the notion of citizenship comes through the comparison of the athlete's perishable crown with the Christian's imperishable crown. I contend that the persisting idea of the *politeuma* is a major influence on 1 Corinthians and prefer, with Troels Engberg-Pedersen, to use this term instead of commonly used *collegium*, the Greco-Roman association. First, Jewish identity in the diaspora had largely been shaped by the notion of the *politeumata* in Egypt and associated understandings throughout the Hellenistic world. When the Roman period began, the *politeumata*, which had originally attained rights through military service, were stripped of their military aspect, leaving gymnasia to train Jews and other ethnic groups only for gymnastic and educational service. However, the idea of the *politeuma* remained (Philo, *Flacc.* 172). Augustus began early imperial Roman policy by honoring the rights the Jews had acquired throughout the empire through such juridically and socially recognized groups as *politeumata*. Second, *politeuma* was a term used in Greece for civic bodies like the free and slave women in attendance at the Heraia, indicating a temporary governance structure created during ritual time.

Politeuma is a word familiar to Jewish Studies that suffers neglect in Pauline scholarship. Mommsen, one of the venerable forefathers of modern historiography, argued that Jews became *dediticii* after the destruction of Jerusalem and that their communities (*politeumata*) in the diaspora were mere *collegia*. *Pace* Mommsen, Juster established the consensus view that the privileges given to Jews were granted only to individuals who belonged to the Jewish people as a *natio*, *gens*, *populus*, or *ethnos*, and these individuals lived in communities whose boundaries were unaffected by the sack of

Jerusalem in 70.¹⁴⁰ On the other hand, New Testament scholars like Ascough and Harland have argued that the definition of *collegia* should be expanded beyond the normal funerary and occupational union functions that the Greco-Roman associations typically served in communities that had lost a governance structure like a *boule* in the Roman conquest.¹⁴¹ The problem conceptually with assigning the term *collegium* to the set of communities that Paul himself calls a *politeuma* at Philippians 3:20, in my opinion, is that the term *collegium* usually did not denote the same ethnic, foreign identity that the term *politeuma* did.¹⁴² The early Christian house-churches were founded by Jews, saw themselves having had the Jewish Law as a placeholder and pedagogue until the arrival of Christ, and had an ongoing tribute to the Jerusalem church. Two of the *archisynagogoi* found in Acts are in Corinth, and one of them becomes Christian. As there was no official Christian designation at this time and the house-churches had significant Jewish involved, it should not surprise us if they thought of themselves as a

¹⁴⁰ Angelo Segré, “Antisemitism in Hellenistic Alexandria,” *Jewish Social Studies*, 127–136, 130–1. An independent Jewish identity expressed itself in Jews having their own archive (*CPJ* II 143, l. 7). Josephus mentions a stele erected by Augustus that likely refers to the rights established for Jews (*AJ* 4.188; *C. Ap.* 2.37). Augustus permitted the unified Jewish community to retain the status of *katoikoi epitimoi* (Philo, *Flacc.* 172). In the inscriptions of Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor, *katoikos* often refers to a person with right of residence derived from membership in a previous military colony. Sandra Gambetti, *The Alexandrian Riots of 38 C.E. and the Persecution of the Jews: A Historical Reconstruction* (Leiden: Brill, 2009): 58–60.

¹⁴¹ Tasks ideally performed by such organizations as the *boule* or the *gerousia* were sometimes performed by *collegia*. See Van Nijf 66; Richard S. Ascough, “Forms of Commensality in Greco–Roman Associations,” *Classical World* 102.1 (2008): 33–45.

¹⁴² Shaye Cohen defines *politeuma* as an independent ethnic governance, *From Maccabees to Mishnah*, 109. This is not quite the independence denoted by the translation “commonwealth” which is preferred by Aletti, Lincoln, and others. See A.T. Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet: Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension in Paul’s Thought with Special Reference to His Eschatology* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1981): 99; Jean–Noël Aletti, *Saint Paul Épître aux Philippiens* (Paris: Gabalda, 2005): 275.

politeuma rather than a *collegium*. That Paul refers in Philippians to a *politeuma* that is opposed to the present world order is perfectly understandable in the sense of traditional Jewish rights and governance structures within Hellenistic kingdoms and the Roman Empire. In 1 Corinthians, Paul's statement that the believer's body is a "temple of God" perhaps reflects the Augustan emphasis of the theocratic, Temple-centered character of the Jewish state, which was "probably more than the Jews of the diaspora had themselves wished." Moreover, by restricting the Jews to a kind of moral ghetto, the policy of Augustus, in the writer's opinion, influenced the evolution of the ancient world.¹⁴³

In Paul's letters, the concept of the *politeuma* is explicitly invoked in Philippians. At 1:27, Paul instructs the Philippians: "Only be citizens in a way worthy of the gospel" (Μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε). That this is not an imperative for earthly honors but for heavenly status becomes clear at 3:20 where Paul claims that the Christians' civic participation is in heaven (τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς).¹⁴⁴ As laid out in 1:27–30, the *politeuma* should be expressed in three ways: they should standfast, they should engage together in the *agon*, and they should not be intimidated in any way. John Reumann observes that, in Philippians, the eschatological aspect of 3:20–21 "pushes away involvement now in the public sphere in the *colonia* and an ecclesial sense of communal aspects of the house churches" found in 1:27–30.¹⁴⁵ As in 1:27–30, the *agon* motif functions in 3:20–21, with Paul concluding at 3:21 that Christ will subdue all things

¹⁴³ Angelo Segré, *Antisemitism in Hellenistic Alexandria*, 130.

¹⁴⁴ R. R. Brewer, "The Meaning of *Politeuesthe* in Philippians 1:27," *JBL* 73 (1954); E. C. Miller, "πολιτεύεσθε in Philippians 1:27: Some Philological and Thematic Observations," *JSNT* 15 (1982). Miller traces the term in the LXX (Esth. 8:12; 2 Macc. 6:1; 11:25; 3 Macc. 3:4; 4 Macc. 2:8, 23; 4:23; 5:16) and Josephus (*Vita* 12; *Letter of Aristeas* 31)

¹⁴⁵ John Reumann, *Philippians* (New Haven: Yale, 2008): 295.

unto himself (ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα). Yet, Paul’s use of the term *politeuma* suggests that the Corinthians need take an active approach to citizenship as opposed to a passive role in which the emperor has all of the triumphs and governance.¹⁴⁶ Troels Engberg-Pedersen has argued that the Philippians must “live in a *politeuma*” in the proper way on earth in preparation for the *politeuma* that waits for the Philippians in their heavenly futures. He sees no epistemological gap between 1:27–30 and 3:20–21, finding “Paul more or less explicitly refers back in 3:21 to the earlier idea of self-abasement when he speaks of the change that will happen to ‘our lowly body’: to everything in our individual, bodily being that needs to be left behind.”¹⁴⁷

1.3.3 *Taxonomies and Hierarchies*

The ethic of the ecclesial body permeates the passages before and after the body metaphor in chapter 12. After Paul has commended the Corinthians for their attempt to follow the correct veiling practices in 11:1–16, he does not commend them—in fact, he excoriates them—for humiliating those with nothing in the worship meal. Here, according to Klinghardt, we have the Hellenistic meal’s defining value of “community.”¹⁴⁸ Gradually, though, as Paul progresses to and past the body metaphor, we begin to see more thoroughgoing status inversion. In the body metaphor, Paul comments that we clothe the more shameful members with greater status to compensate

¹⁴⁶ In his analysis of the diagramma of Cyrene, for example, Aristotle had allowed everyone born of Cyrenian parents to be *politai*, but he reserved the right of participation in the city government to a *politeuma* composed only of citizens selected according to timocratic criteria (*SEC IX 1*). See C. Mossé, “Citoyens actifs et citoyens passifs dans les cités grecques; une approche théorique du problème,” *REG* 81 (1979): 241–249, for the definition of active and passive citizens.

¹⁴⁷ Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul: The Material Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford, 2010): 125.

¹⁴⁸ Matthias Klinghardt, *Gemeinschaftsmahl und Mahlgemeinschaft: Soziologie und Liturgie Frühchristlicher Mahlfeiern* (Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 1996): 155.

for their lack of privilege. Then, he deals more specifically with the status hierarchies in the church: “first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then, mighty deeds; then, gifts of healing; assistance, administration, and varieties of tongues” (12:28). Paul urges the Corinthians to strive for the greatest spiritual gifts, which would be prophecy, since only Paul has been grafted into the apostolic line of succession (15:8–9).

1.3.4 The Prophet-Citizen

In 1 Corinthians, Paul taxonomizes spiritual gifts according to the good those gifts perform within the community. The scholarly consensus attributes this taxonomy to Paul’s advocacy of strong group control and unity. Some scholars, notably Wire, have sought to find egalitarian practices in the worship praxis of the Corinthian house-churches, particularly with respect to prophecy, that Paul overturns in favor of worship guidelines that circumscribe the role of women in the worship assembly.¹⁴⁹ I argue that Paul is not dismissing the prophecy of women. Indeed, if speaking in tongues is performed by low status women, insisting on an interpreter assures them that they will be included in a disorderly worship meal, which Paul characterizes as a place where some—presumably the elite—leave drunk. Restricting food and drink to equal portions also assures glossolaliacs of an audience sober enough to understand their pronouncements. As much as Paul’s preference for strong group control constrains the prophecies and tongues of men and women, it broadcasts them. The text gives us no indication of gendered restrictions on prophecy until the later interpolation of Chapter 14 silencing the

¹⁴⁹ Antoinette Clark Wire, *Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul’s Rhetoric* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990): 73; cf. Daniel Boyarin, “Paul and the Genealogy of Gender,” *Representations* 41 (1993): 1–33.

women, and, as DeMaris has observed, Paul retains customs such as “baptism for the dead” that would have culturally privileged the participation of women, who were traditionally fore-fronted in grieving the dead.¹⁵⁰

Instead, I think that Paul is continuing to address the concern evinced earlier in the letter by the Corinthians for social status derived from cultural knowledge. Paul implies that glossolalia is equivalent to being a foreigner, and he explicitly states that it will cause outside observers to consider the Corinthians to have gone mad.¹⁵¹ The criterion for madness is thus the lack of rationality according to the dictates of the epistemology of the dominant culture in Roman Corinth. Paul encourages the Corinthians to have intelligible prophecies just as one would hope that the bugle (σάλπιγξ) gives a distinct sound to prepare the troops for battle, choosing the more elite bugle to the infantryman’s tuba.¹⁵² As in Paul’s references to pedagogues and athletic

¹⁵⁰ Richard E. DeMaris, “Corinthian Religion and Baptism for the Dead (1 Corinthians 15:29): Insights from Archaeology and Anthropology,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114.4 (1995): 661–682.

¹⁵¹ Such an anxiety is another reason to translate *politeuma* as an organization within the political system of the Roman Empire or the heavenly sphere rather than as a “commonwealth,” as I have argued above.

¹⁵² This must demonstrate Paul’s contemporary military knowledge. The bucina, which was a late addition to the Roman military’s musical instruments, only gained real tactical importance in the first century C.E. Its use was most prominent among the cavalry, as evidenced by the funerary inscriptions of the equestrian *bucinatores* (*CIL* III.3352; VI.3179). However, it appears that there were three official categories of players: *tubicines*, infantry buglers; *bucinatores*, cavalry buglers; *cornicines*, players of the horns (Ioannes Lydus, *mag.* 1.46). See Renato Meucci, “Roman Military Instruments and the Lituus,” *Galpin Society Journal* 42 (1989): 85–97, here 89. In contemporary South African society, the vuvuzela explicitly serves a similar function to Paul’s bugle or a trumpet, an association that is ritually developed by a procession in which Christians take a discolored pilgrimage to Mount Nhlankakazi. Tinyiko Maluleke, president of South Africa’s council of churches, called the vuvuzela “the last of our cultural weaponry.” However, horns also have had tactical significance for modern armies in their function of organizing troops and sending communication to enemy armies. The Mexican army, for example, used the horn to announce the commencement of a military engagement.

laurels, participation in the Corinthian house-churches by means of prophecy is being construed as an activity with the capacity to endow honor. Yet, at the same time, intelligible prophecy and glossolalia are subordinated in the hierarchical economy of spiritual gifts by having the former be equivalent to military service and the latter barely native. The actual act of democratic leadership of the church body remains the most valorized spiritual condition, represented by the most prestigious gymnastic training and competition.

Margaret Mitchell has argued something similar about what she has called the “language controversy” at Corinth. She finds that the disagreement over tongues resembles the political discourse applying the solution of a common language to the problem of achieving concord. Paul encourages the Corinthians to “build up the church” (14:4–5, 12, 26). In 14:22–25, Mitchell sees insiders being prioritized over outsiders, with the passage ending in a declaration that the outsider will become an insider after the “secrets of the unbeliever’s heart (τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ) are disclosed (φανερὰ).” At 14:26, another *topos* of discord, all speaking at the same time and not listening to one another, is added to the discordant instruments at 14:7–8.¹⁵³ Paul concludes at 14:33 that their God is not a “god of disorder (ἀκαταστασίας ὁ θεός) but of peace (ἀλλὰ εἰρήνης),” implying that God surpasses the Roman spiritual system in establishing the Pax Romana.

The taxonomy of spiritual gifts modeled on the ideals of elite Greek culture further illustrates a concern that the activity of the Roman Corinthian house-churches should be within Roman Corinthian culture and outside the barbaric and foreign and that

¹⁵³ Mitchell 172.

tongues might fall toward the foreign.¹⁵⁴ In Paul's taxonomic vision, there are apostles in the first rank (πρῶτον ἀποστόλους), prophets in the second position (δεύτερον προφήτας), and, in the third rank, teachers (τρίτον διδασκάλους). Conveniently, the Corinthians thus fall between Paul, an apostle, and rival teachers like Apollos. After the spiritual positions with ordinals, Paul ranks the remaining *charismata* in a list that begins with miracles (δυνάμεις) and acts of healing (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων). At the end of this list are γένη γλωσσῶν, "classes of speech." Paul's use of γένος here in 12:28 seems to invoke the definition of γένος as "race." γένος implies that the tongues belong to different nations, indicating a foreign element about them.¹⁵⁵ From other Pauline house-

¹⁵⁴ This is not the worldview of Hebrews, presumably from a post-Revolt context, which characterizes the followers of Jesus as outside the Jerusalem Temple economy and sacred space and beyond the city gates. Hebrews 13:14 indicates that the Christian community is an encampment traveling to its own city, one that has not yet been reached: οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν ὧδε μένουσαν πόλιν, ἀλλὰ τὴν μέλλουσαν ἐπιζητοῦμεν.

¹⁵⁵ Denise Kimber Buell notes: "although ancient authors frequently refer to membership in a *genos*, *ethnos*, *laos*, and *phylos* as a matter of one's birth and descent, ethnicity was nonetheless seen to be mutable. Early Christians adapted both of these points in their projects of self-definition. In combination, these Roman-period ways of thinking about race and ethnicity allowed Christians to define themselves as a race that one can join, a race characterized especially by religious practices." See Denise Kimber Buell, "Rethinking the Relevance of Race for Early Christian Self-Definition," *Harvard Theological Review* 94.4 (2001): 449–476, 451. Here, the tongues seem to indicate that the language marks a "race." Such a notion is consonant with the "tongues of angels" found in the *Testament of Job* and the discussion of divine language given by Dio Chrysostom. In contrast with Job's seven sons, Job's daughters receive cords as their inheritance. The *dialéktos* that these cords enable Job's daughters to speak in heavenly tongues that set them apart from humans and from each other: "the angelic dialect" (48:2); "the dialect of the archons" (49:2); "her mouth spoke ecstatically in the dialect of those on high" (50:1); "the dialect of the cherubim" (50:2); "each one in her own distinctive dialect" (52:7). Dio observes that the gods spoke neither Doric nor Attic (*Discourses* 10.23 and 11.22). Dale Martin argues that the tongues would have given their speakers a high status that Paul was asking them to renounce in favor of social equality. See Dale B. Martin, "Tongues of Angels and Other Status Indicators," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59.3 (1991): 547–589, 559–560. Paul, I suggest, equalizes social status by vitiating the high status tongues of even their claim to citizenship, implying that tongues mark a race that is barbaric. According to Paul, claims

churches, we know that Paul holds that the revelation must be tested (1 Thess. 5:21). Paul's subsequent correspondence with the Corinthians subverts the importance of the prophet by having Paul relate an apocalyptic revelation of an anonymous *anthropos* who encounters an *angelus interpretes*, an interpreting angel. Not only does Paul refuse to participate in the contemporary apocalyptic trend of attributing the vision to a notable figure in Jewish and Christian history, but the mediating figure is "of Satan" and not "of God."¹⁵⁶

Despite the apparent ubiquity of the practice in the Corinthian house-churches, Paul's denigration of unmoderated ecstasy as indicative of either madness or barbarism makes sense.¹⁵⁷ While most modern interpreters have wanted to see the Corinthians' ecstatic speech as empowering in and of itself, like the potential power of the Pythia to concoct prophecies outside of divine inspiration in order to validate particular political actions (and, vice versa, to be coerced into giving favorable prophecies), the actual passive act of being possessed, from a crosscultural perspective, does not seem to be that empowering. In the Jewish Scriptures, Saul's receptivity to being possessed progresses in 1 Samuel 10–16 from participation in the ecstatic glossolalia of a wandering band of

to citizenship and high social status must be predicated on a language held in common with those outside the Christian house-churches.

¹⁵⁶ Edith M. Humphrey has succinctly written on how these elements form a "kind of inverse stigmata": "Those conversant with the formal features of the apocalypse expect an interpretation. The surprising interpretation given through Paul's inverse angel is that these mysteries are not meant to elate but that rather weakness means strength. Whatever the identity of the 'thorn,' it serves as a memorial to the visions, a kind of inverse stigmata, over against the resultant 'glory' of seers like Moses. It is permanent rather than fading, a seeming shame, but a sign that points to true glory." Edith M. Humphrey, "Ambivalent Apocalypse: Apocalyptic Rhetoric and Intertextuality in 2 Corinthians," *The Intertexture of Apocalyptic Discourse in the New Testament*, ed. Duane F. Watson (Leiden: Brill, 2002): 113–136, 132.

¹⁵⁷ Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003): 195.

prophets to possession as part of a series of signs envisioned by the prophet Samuel to possession by an evil spirit, a state ameliorated but not permanently cured by the lyre-playing of David. Acts 11:26 presents the exorcism of a slave-girl by Paul and Silas as an act whose spiritual importance overrides the importance of the revenue her possession earns her owner.¹⁵⁸ Tertullian, while arguing for ecstatic revelations in the forms of dreams and prophecies, nonetheless admits that the soul is without mastery over the visions produced by an external force and must process the memory later: “that... which memory supplies is a sound mind; and that which a sound mind experiences while the memory remains unchecked, is a kind of madness.”¹⁵⁹ The porosity of the human spirit that happens in possession is precarious, because the mantic is a “different person” from having lost the identity that comes from his or her rational mind.¹⁶⁰

Paul reminds the Corinthians that the more desirable position is actually to be in the interpretative role, not the role of medium. “Make love your aim,” Paul tells the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 14:1, “and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.” Paul devotes his argument in 1 Corinthians 13 and 14 to the devaluation of tongues in favor of prophecy.¹⁶¹

What is at stake in this shift from tongues to mother tongue is participation in the Greek cultural apparatus. This is illustrated by an example from the contemporary Isis

¹⁵⁸ Klauck, *Magic and Paganism*, 70.

¹⁵⁹ Tertullian, *On the Soul*, 45.6: “*Igitur quod memoria suppetit, sanitas mentis est; quod sanitas mentis salva memoria stupet, amentiae genus est*” (Tertullian *Opera* 2:850). In the history of angeloglossy, this is one of the reasons that Jeanne des Anges initially had a priest as an interpreter even though at a later juncture she was able to maintain a following on her own as she learned to control her charisma—the imprimatur of the religious activity came from having a priest in a supervising role. See Michel De Certeau, *The Possession at Loudun* (Chicago: Chicago, 2000): 213–226.

¹⁶⁰ 1 Samuel 10:6.

¹⁶¹ Nasrallah, *An Ecstasy*, 85.

cult that flourished at Corinth and around the Mediterranean. In the Maroneia aretology to Isis, Isis' claims to the creation of equality are in part based on her creation of languages: "And so that they may live with one another and communicate, not simply men with women but everyone with everyone else, she instituted language, foreign languages for foreigners, Greek for the Greeks."¹⁶² Certainly, culturally, Paul does not have to draw a distinction between glossolalia and divination, as evidenced by the myths surrounding the wandering Greek seer Melampous. Having raised snakes that licked his ears, he was able to understand the language of animals and has thus acquired the gift of divination.¹⁶³

On the one hand, Paul's insistence that glossolalia and prophecy are not high-status activities stands in stark contrast to the cultural and material capital afforded those ritual practices in other early Jewish and Christian groups. According to *Didache* 13, a community should tithe to its prophet. Paul renounces his right to receive payment for his services in 1 Corinthians 9. In the *Testament of Job*, Job's daughters receive priestly cords that enable them to speak in angelic tongues in lieu of an inheritance, and they are the only ones able to join their father in seeing the fiery chariots of the angelic psychopomps.¹⁶⁴ Paul devalues charismatic speech in favor of interpretation and will go

¹⁶² Jaime Alvar, *Romanising Oriental Gods. Myth, Salvation and Ethics in the Cults of Cybele, Isis and Mithras* (Leiden: Brill, 2008):189.

¹⁶³ For Melampous' knowledge of the language of animals in later periods, see Pherecydes *FGrH* 3 F 33 = F 33 Fowler; Pliny, *NH* 10.137; Apollod. 1.9.11; *schol. Theocr.* 3.43–5; Eust. on *Od.* 11.292. For the development of the myth, see Jan N. Bremmer, *Greek Religion and Culture, the Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Leiden: Brill, 2008): 144.

¹⁶⁴ Dale B. Martin, "Tongues of Angels and Other Status Indicators," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59 (1991): 547–589; John C. Poirier, *The Tongues of Angels: The Concept of Angelic Languages in Classical Jewish and Christian Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010): 68.

on, in receiving the humbling thorn of an angel of Satan in 2 Corinthians, to deflate the importance of heavenly journeys and angelic visions.

On the other hand, Paul's preference for controlled, comprehensible speech that closely follows the previously given gospel closely parallels the Gospel of Matthew's prohibition of long-winded prayer. The Gospel of Matthew discourages βατταλογέω, which probably refers to a "repetition of syllables which are in themselves senseless."¹⁶⁵ The piety of Matthew repeatedly enjoins believers to not be ostentatious like the hypocrites and Pharisees with their faith. This is similar to Paul's insistence that, without the primary virtue of love, the gifts of prophecy and tongues are empty sounds like those of a cymbal or gong. Moreover, the comprehensiveness of the powers that Paul associates with the proper expression of prophecy regulated by love resonate more with the Jewish Scriptures, which envision dramatic landscape change in music-inspired prophecy sessions (2 Kings 3), than they do with the less far-reaching oracles of the Greco-Roman religious milieu in Corinth. Paul implicitly promises that prophecy performed in love can move mountains, a monumental topographic change that bespeaks prophetic power far more supernatural than any Roman imperially sanctioned oracular mode, particularly those backed by the power of Roman military.

1.4 Conclusion

Addressed to Paul's Christian community in the Roman colony of Corinth from his location with the churches of Asia in Ephesus, 1 Corinthians seeks to fashion a new *politeuma*: one where the citizen body derives its identity from Christ rather than from

¹⁶⁵ Luz, *Matthew 1–7*, 364.

the Roman emperor. Paul's characterization of Corinthian beliefs and practices indicate that the Corinthians aspired to be thought of as Roman Greek elites, possessing philosophical education and gymnastic recognition. Paul points out the fallacy of this nostalgia by emphasizing the state's control over the body in such imported Roman institutions as *munera* that were customarily despised by Greek cultural elites.

The citizen body is the *habitus* Paul envisions for the Corinthians. Many of the Corinthians already were sufficiently enculturated to the Roman material objects of the colony of Corinth to have multiple invitations to dine at the tables of Roman idols. They did this without necessarily feeling a loss of their Greek identity. As Greg Woolf has expounded, in Roman period Greece, "Greeks of all sorts, then, remained Greeks while using Roman things."¹⁶⁶ The Corinthian Christians, like other Greeks, felt that they could participate in the activities of Roman Corinth without diminishing their ethnic or religious identity.¹⁶⁷ Paul, however, manifests a more Jewish identity in being fully enculturated in athletic events while wanting to maintain a distance from idol food. In this philosophical position, he attempts to give clothing regulations that differentiate Christian prophecy and prayer from Roman prophecy and prayer.

¹⁶⁶ Greg Woolf, "Becoming Roman, Staying Greek: Culture, Identity and the Civilizing Process in the Roman East," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philosophical Society* 40 (1994): 116–143, 128.

¹⁶⁷ This phenomenon is also observed in the shift from Maccabean resistance to the gymnasium to Jewish acculturation to the Greek gymnastic system.

2. Training the Citizen Body in Early Roman Greece

Scholarship on 1 Corinthians has often conflated Paul's athletic metaphors, references to the *agōn*, and military metaphors. This confluence of imagery is attributed to the Cynic-Stoic diatribe, explaining the preponderance of athletic references in Paul's epistolary format as opposed to the narrative format of the Gospels.¹⁶⁸ I would like to draw a distinction between athletic and military metaphors and to see them as engaged in constructing the citizen body at Roman Corinth. It is true that the Roman conceptual world saw overlap among athletic spectacle, war spectacle, and rhetorical spectacle, an overlap which was firmly articulated by authors such as Polybius. Paul includes both spectacle metaphors in 1 Corinthians 4 and 15 and athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9.¹⁶⁹ Military metaphors appear in 1 Corinthians 9 and 14. Yet, all of these metaphors serve different rhetorical purposes in 1 Corinthians. In the spectacle metaphors, Paul emphasizes the veracity and alterity of the gospel, while, in the athletic metaphors, Paul describes the manner in which one should pursue faith in terrestrially bound spheres. Through the military metaphors, Paul conveys the meaning of the apostolic vocation and individual prophecy.

¹⁶⁸ As the prevalence of athletic metaphors in *4 Maccabees* tells us, the genre does not affect the presence of athletic metaphors as much as Stoic influence. On Stoic influence in 1 Corinthians, see Martin Dibelius, *Paulus auf dem Areopag*, Heidelberg 1939 (London 1956): 26. Cf. W.G. Kümmel, *Paulus* (Berlin 1956): 29. Betz notes that the association of rhetorical argument and the techniques of fighting is found already in Plato, continues in the rhetoric of court trials, and has deeply influenced epistolography, particularly in the letters of Paul (cf. 2 Cor. 10:1–6). Hans Dieter Betz, "The Human Being in the Antagonisms of Life According to the Apostle Paul," *The Journal of Religion* 80 (2000): 557–575.

¹⁶⁹ For Polybius, see Andrew J. E. Bell, "Cicero and the Spectacle of Power," *Journal of Roman Studies* 87 (1997): 1–22.

I think that Paul's athletic and spectacle metaphors are in conversation with one another. Paul masterfully mobilizes the opposition between spectacle and athletics created by elite Greek culture. Like contemporary elite Greek culture, Paul's spectacle metaphors are connected with Rome and hierarchy, while the athletic metaphors telegraph elite Greek nostalgia for national sovereignty even to the point of the exodus typology of 1 Corinthians 10.¹⁷⁰ Paul's spectacle metaphors illustrate the need for and the reality of the alternate citizenship in the heavenly *politeuma*, the Body of Christ. The athletic metaphors acculturate the Corinthian Christians to participate in the Christian Body just as *paideia* educated *ephebes* until they were eventually inscribed into citizenship in nostalgic customs in Roman Greece.¹⁷¹

In the next three chapters, I will argue that Paul dialogues with the existing tiered system of Roman Greek education in which training as an *ephebe* for enrollment as a citizen was preferable to enlisting in the Roman military and receiving citizenship upon discharge. In this chapter, I will expand upon Pfitzner's insight of the differentiation

¹⁷⁰ Roman cultural notations of Greek games seem to preserve this distinction in signifying the *agōn* with the term *certamina*, which blurs the boundary between contest and fight. The significant literary innovation of Statius' *Thebaid* is to make references to warfare in the context of Greek games explicit in such episodes as when Jupiter reproaches Mars for his failure by ironically describing the discus and boxing in warlike terms: *sonat orbe recusso | discus et Oebalii coeunt in proelia caestus* (The discus sounds with its sphere reverberating and Spartan boxers join battle, 7.20–21). Yet, even Statius uses Jupiter's remarks to underline the distinction, not the similarity, between athletics and war. Mars is a failure precisely because the only battles Mars fights are boxing matches. See Helen Lovatt, *Statius and Epic Games: Sport, Politics and Poetics in the Thebaid* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1995): 7.

¹⁷¹ Indeed, Paul's reference to the Corinthians as having many pedagogues seems to preclude them at that rhetorical moment from being considered militarily, as a transition from pedagogical instruction to military training (*tirocinium*) was one of the items that the *toga virilis* ceremony was supposed to indicate. S. Dixon, *The Roman Family* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1992) 101–2; J.A. Crook, *Law and Life of Rome, 90 BC – AD 212* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1967) 114. J. Albert Harrill, "Coming of Age," 256.

between the competition of the Greek games, in which all citizens competed for honor, and the voyeurism of the Roman games, in which citizens watched blood sport.¹⁷² I will draw upon the recent work on the nostalgic continuation of the ephebic system by Greek elites in the Roman period to extend a sense of national identity under Roman colonization. In the next chapter, I will suggest that Paul is playing to the Corinthians' sense of cultural capital. Paul is recalling the elite's rituals drenched in nostalgia for what it meant to be a Greek citizen. He invokes the image of not just one *paidogogos* by many to guide the Corinthians home, zigzagging across the Corinthian agora that featured the emperor—that other paternal figure—as *pontifex maximus*.¹⁷³ Paul, I contend, applies the

¹⁷² Pfitzner's differentiation comes in single paragraph: "This desire for supremacy in achievement, as a characteristic of the Greek mind, can also be observed by comparing the Greek and Roman public games. The Greek Agones provided the citizens with the opportunity to pit their strength and skill against each other. The Roman 'Ludi' or 'Venationes' on the other hand contained no vestige of this ideal. Here the citizens were passive spectators, observing the bloody contests of the gladiators merely for the sake of entertainment." See *Paul and the Agon Motif*, 17.

¹⁷³ Cf. Marc Kleiwegt, *Ancient Youth: The Ambiguity of Youth and the Absence of Adolescence in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1991): 97. As indicated by sources as early as Plato, among the pedagogue's duties were to escort the child to school and protect him or her from the unwanted advances of both male and female suitors from the ages of roughly seven to twenty (see Lucian, *Vit. Auct.* 15). Paul should be taken as referring to the classical model of the pedagogical system—which included inculcation of civic identity through drama—rather than the buffoonish presentation found in Roman New Comedy, as Betz had argued. See William M. Ramsay, *A Historical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979): 382–85; Ben Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 263–4. For the lower cultural valuation of pedagogues, see Betz, *Galatians* 177. For the Classical Greek role of theater in the education of the citizen and the maintenance of civic identity, see Paul actually seems to adopt the more Roman approach of emphasizing social standing as opposed to pedagogues. Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2000): 96. The important thing for the Corinthian Christians to remember, though they have many pedagogues, is that Paul is their father. This emphasis on pedigree is consonant with Livy's depiction of the impetus behind the rise of the Republic as the attempted violation of freeborn Verginia on her way to school as she passed through the Forum. For Livy's historiographic program in the shape of Verginia, see Andrew Feldherr, *Spectacle and Society in Livy's*

more violent sports to himself, differentiating the Roman sports in which he bears witness to his faith to a pagan audience from the Greek pugilism in which he participates with his Christian rivals. In chapter four, I will focus on the running to which Paul exhorts the Corinthian Christians as a community. By encouraging the Corinthians to pursue traditional Greek athletic agonistic competition, Paul is constructing a vision of the Corinthian Christian body that clothes *all* bodies within the Body of Christ with the same honor bestowed upon the elite Greeks who normally shaped their bodies to participate in such civic activities as footraces in commemoration of national foundational events and attired their bodies with garments indicating social rank.

2.1 Fashioning the Citizen Body

Training the body had a long tradition in Greek culture of being part of one's education and service to the state. Much as modern anthropologist Mary Douglas has suggested that society shapes the view of the body, physical education in Roman Greece was accompanied by intellectual education. This *paideia* constituted both the literal training and the theorization of the citizen body.¹⁷⁴ In the negative, punitive form of training of the body, we see physical discipline being meted out for perceived poor rhetorical performance. Such discipline is referenced in John 18:23 where Jesus asks, "If I spoke incorrectly, testify about the error; but if I spoke correctly, why do you hit

"History", (Berkeley: California, 1998): 203–223. J. Albert Harrill emphasizes the importance of daily ritual in the *toga virilis* ceremony that marked a boy's passage from childhood to adulthood, by switching the apotropaic *bullae* he had worn to indicate his freeborn status and to avert the evil eye and his purple-edged *toga praetexta* for the *toga virilis* in a ceremony before the whole family and the paternal gods that culminated in a procession in the Forum (Seneca, *Epistulae morales* 4.2). J. Albert Harrill, "Coming of Age and Putting on Christ: The Toga Virilis Ceremony, Its Paraenesis, and Paul's Interpretation of Baptism in Galatians," *Novum Testamentum* 40 (2002): 255–6.

¹⁷⁴ Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (London: Routledge, 1996).

(δέρεις) me?” Jesus relies upon his audience’s knowledge of the corporal punishment used by ancient teachers to instill in pupils the importance of learning lessons.

The term *agōn* connected the political, theatrical, and athletic spheres.¹⁷⁵ In Roman Greece, athletic events continued to be games more designed to acquire honor through the glorification of the body than kill the opponent as though in combat on the battlefield. Athletics therefore shared with politics an impulse toward agonistic competition for excellence. As in ancient Israelite culture, where Jacob acquires the nation’s name after wrestling with an angel (Gen. 32:23–34), the sport of wrestling was associated with Greek statecraft.¹⁷⁶ Violent *munera* and the gladiatorial games were especially identified by Greeks as Roman rather than truly Greek sports.¹⁷⁷ Yet, the Romans too saw the purpose of sport as a transmogrification of aggression into sacrifice, as seen in Vergil’s placement of the boxing match between Entellus and Dares at Eryx, where the legendary match of Heracles and Eryx took place, and close to Anchises’ tomb (5.664).¹⁷⁸ Both Polybius and Vergil make use of a comparison of boxers to military generals in order to

¹⁷⁵ On the conceptual connection of the political, theatrical, and athletic spheres through the term *agōn*, see *Andoc.* 4.2; Danielle Allen, *The World of Prometheus*, 60–61; Hans Dieter Betz, “The Human Being in the Antagonisms of Life According to the Apostle Paul,” *Journal of Religion* 80 (2000) 557–575; Jason König, *Athletics and Literature in Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005): 35; Meira Z. Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God*, 82. In the later *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, we see a legal and penal apparatus similar to that of 1 Corinthians. Without the benefit of formal court proceedings before the *bema* in the forum, Polycarp was both tried and executed in the stadium. See Leonard L. Thompson, “The Martyrdom of Polycarp: Death in the Roman Games,” *Journal of Religion* 82 (2002): 27–52, 36.

¹⁷⁶ Donald G. Kyle, *Sport and Spectacle in the Ancient World*, 171.

¹⁷⁷ Marcus Junkelmann, “Greek Athletics in Rome: Boxing, Wrestling, and the Pancration,” *Gladiators and Caesars: The Power of Spectacle in Ancient Rome*, eds. Eckart Köhne, Cornelia Ewigleben, Ralph Jackson (Berkeley: California, 2000): 75–84, especially 76–78.

¹⁷⁸ David A. Traill, “Boxers and Generals at Mount Eryx,” *The American Journal of Philology* 122.3 (2001): 405–413, here 407–8.

allow the generals to escape from combat uninjured and undefeated, with bodily integrity intact.¹⁷⁹ *Munera* were the reserve of those *infames* who had lost control over their bodies.

Paul plays on these connections by putting himself on display in the spectacle to contrast with the Corinthians' privilege (1 Cor. 4). The spectacle serves to illustrate that the sincerity of Paul's belief that the heavenly *politeuma* is the ultimate reality and adopting the constraints of the Christian lifestyle is not a futile exercise. But, as Nasrallah has demonstrated, Paul's preaching of his battered body in the spectacle and "Christ crucified" to the Corinthians is revealed to be a function of their spiritual immaturity. The Corinthians still subscribe to worldly epistemologies. Paul wishes for them to give up their secular philosophy for Christian theology, which is not beholden to the power structures inflicting capital punishment upon the bodies of Christ and his followers. If the Corinthians were "perfect" or "completed" (2:6), they could hear Paul preach the "Christ of the Wisdom and Power of God."¹⁸⁰ However, this wisdom to be spoken "among the perfect" (ἐν τοῖς τελείοις) is the wisdom neither of "this age" (τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) nor of the "rulers of this age" (τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος). Paul's body in the arena is proof of this.

However, Paul's bruised and thus enslaved body, which is put on display in the arena to illustrate the "dregs of this world" (περικαθάρματα τοῦ κόσμου) according to the Roman colonizer's epistemology, also serves as the pivot point by which to introduce the

¹⁷⁹ Polybius (58.6) concludes his boxer simile by underscoring the merits shared by both generals: "like two uninjured and invincible champions they left the contest drawn."

¹⁸⁰ See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet: Critical Issues in Feminist Christology* (New York: Continuum, 1994): ch. 5; Laura Nasrallah, *An Ecstasy of Folly: Prophecy and Authority in Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Harvard, 2003): 71.

enslaved into prestigious constructions of the body according to traditional Greek values. In the athletic metaphors, Paul claims at 9:27 that he beats (ὕπωπιάζω) his body (σῶμα) and enslaves it (δουλαγωγῶ). It is this pre-beaten and bruised body that Paul hopes will not be disqualified, a condition that would result in beating and bruising. The word that Paul uses to describe his disqualification is ἀδόκιμος, which has a wide semantic range and is more usually meant to denote counterfeit currency or an unproductive field (Hebrews 6:8). It is not a technical term for disqualification in the athletic competition. Paul's use of ἀδόκιμος confirms that even as Paul switches from the arena to the stadium what is at stake is the cultural capital achieved under this system.¹⁸¹ This usage differs from the metaphor of the gladiator employed by both Cicero and Seneca to demonstrate the discipline that underlay both athletics and rhetoric.¹⁸² Pfitzner observes that the “entire scope of the Agon has been altered” in Paul's thought. The call to “individualistic ‘moral ethics’” has been transferred to an “apostolic ethos.”¹⁸³ Christians are not undertaking a Stoic program of spiritual improvement; they are actively seeking to distinguish themselves in the eternal *politeuma* by striving in agonistic competition for a single prize (βραβεῖον), an imperishable crown (ἄφθαρτον στέφανον, 9:25).

2.2 Athletic Training and the State

¹⁸¹ Compare the paradoxical transfiguration of Paul's body in the present through his embodiment of Christ crucified in 2 Corinthians, where Paul says that Christians are “always carrying around the dying of Jesus in the body so that also the life of Jesus might be manifest in our body” (2 Cor. 4:10). Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2010): 72.

¹⁸² Cicero, *Tusc.* 2.41.

¹⁸³ Pfitzner 190.

It is likely that the members of the Pauline house-churches in the Roman colony of Corinth would have identified athletic training with the political state in which they found themselves. The connection made between athletic training and formation of young men for service of the state in the ancient Mediterranean was often an explicit one. Lucian, writing in the second century CE, records the famous Athenian lawmaker Solon as giving the rationale for male participation in the gymnasium as for the wreath of freedom, since not all could win a prize in the competitions held throughout their formative years:

And I shall now tell you what we think about our young men, and how we deal with them from the time when they begin to know good from bad, to be physically mature, and to bear hardships, in order that you may learn why we prescribe these exercises for them and compel them to train their bodies. It is not simply on account of these contests in order that they may be able to take the prizes—very few out of the entire number have the capacity for that—but because we seek a certain greater good from it for the entire state and for the young men themselves. There is another competition [*agōn*] which is open to all citizens in common, and a wreath that is not made of pine or olive or parsley, but contains in itself all human felicity, that is to say, freedom....

Here, as elsewhere in Greek texts, the athlete is an exemplar of renunciation of temporary pleasures for the sake of the greater good.¹⁸⁴ Prizes are not meant to encourage squabbling among particular individuals or city-states; rather, the ideal of being worthy of a civic crown is why citizens submit to the athletic apparatus and train their bodies.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ K.J. Frantz, “The Function of Paul’s Athletic Imagery in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27,” MATS thesis, McCormick Theological Seminary, 1988. Cited by Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 137.

¹⁸⁵ Van Nijf’s work has appeared in the form of articles: “Athletics, *Andreia* and the *Askēsis*—Culture in the Roman East,” *Andreia: Studies in Manliness and Courage in Classical Antiquity*, eds. Ralph Rosen and Ineke Sluiter (Leiden: Brill, 2003): 263–86 and “Local Heroes: Athletics, Festivals and Elite Self-fashioning in the Roman East,” in *Being Greek Under Rome*, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2001): 306–34. See Andrew Farrington, “Olympic Victors and the Popularity of the Olympic Games in the Imperial Period,” *Tyche* 12 (1997): 15–46 and Thomas Scanlon, *Eros and Greek Athletics* (Oxford: Oxford, 2002): 40–63.

The presuppositions of Lucian's sentiment are very much those of second century Favorinus, who equated excellence at Greek athletics with being Greek.

Roman imperialism also exploited native gymnasial culture for its own military needs, fashioning the men trained in the gymnasium as part of the military elite rather than the conscripted *hoi polloi* looking for social advancement. Beginning in the Republican period, Roman colonial activity in Greece and Sicily encouraged the establishment of a civic culture that included the institution of the gymnasium in order to sustain civic militia to support Roman interests.¹⁸⁶ Roman-backed native elites controlled the gymnasium, allowing it to retain its traditional place as an outlet for ambition and competition, maintaining old ideals of *arête* and a sense of community, for elite males.¹⁸⁷ As Ma has noted, not "many youths among the poor, urban or rural, had time to participate in the *gymnasion* and learn how to discharge a catapult."¹⁸⁸ In the Beroea gymnasiarch law, workers in the *agora* are explicitly excluded from the gymnasium.¹⁸⁹ Most cases of exclusion, though, would have been the result of the prohibitive cost of training, a process already seen in the Hellenistic period. By the continuation of the traditional structure of the gymnasium, Roman Greek elite men were allowed to retain a sense of independent nationhood, pre-colonization, even as their bodies were primed to defend the colonizer's state.

¹⁸⁶ Jonathan R. W. Prag, "Auxilia and Gymnasia: A Sicilian Model of Roman Imperialism," *Journal of Roman Studies* 97 (2007): 68–100.

¹⁸⁷ Onno Van Nijf, "Athletics, festivals and Greek identity in the Roman East," *PCPhS* 45 (1999): 176–200, at 193.

¹⁸⁸ John Ma, "Fighting Poleis of the Hellenistic World," *War and Violence in Ancient Greece*, ed. H. van Wees (London: Duckworth, 2000): 337–76, 347.

¹⁸⁹ Nonetheless, there was historical memory that, in times of crisis, the artisans from the agora could be called into service by the Roman consul. See Polybius' account of the Panhormitans fighting alongside the Romans against the Carthaginians (I.40.9).

2.2.1 Statecraft and Athletics

Athletics were thought to shape the political body in the application of the imagery of athletics to the activity of statecraft. Particularly associated with statecraft was the activity of wrestling.¹⁹⁰ This *topos* peppers political discourse from the Classical period to the Roman period. The chorus in Sophocles' *OT* prays that the god will never weaken the wrestling, *pālaisma*, that is good for the state (879). Juvenal's *Satire* remembers Palfurius Sura, the son of a consular and an infamous informer of Domitian's reign, as having been a wrestler in his youth during Nero's reign (4.53).¹⁹¹ In *Pericles*, Plutarch relates that the sophist Damon tried to disguise his ambition by acting as a musician, serving Pericles, "that political athlete, as it were, in the capacity of rubber and trainer" (4.1–2). Later, Plutarch's account informs us that Thucydides envisioned himself as "wrestling" against Pericles:

Thucydides belonged to the party of the 'Good and True,' and was for a very long time a political antagonist of Pericles. When Archidamus, the king of the Lacedaemonians, asked him whether he or Pericles was the better wrestler, he replied: 'Whenever I throw him in wrestling, he disputes the fall, and carries his point, and persuades the very men who saw him fall.' (8.4)

Here we might see the connection between athletics and sophistry disentangles to some degree, for the sophistry is driving the Athenian perception of the wrestling and not the other way around.¹⁹² It is the question of the Spartan king that sets the terms of the

¹⁹⁰ As Young, *Olympic Myth*, 46 and n. 42, points out, in Eur. *Hipp.* 1016f. Hippolytus' desire to be first in the athletic games but have a secondary place in the city strongly contradicts the amateur creed; see Young, *Three Odes of Pindar* (Leiden, 1968), 18.

¹⁹¹ Newby, 30–31, takes this as evidence of the early popularity of Greek athletics in Roman elite circles.

¹⁹² Euripides' *Autolykos* draws a connection between the wreaths of athletes and the laurels of the civic leader, stating that the former are more worthy of wreaths than the

debate and not that of either of the Athenians. Yet, Plutarch has told the reader just two lines before that Pericles' sobriquet "Olympian" had been earned on any number of accomplishments (8.2), so that Thucydides' admission of his rhetorical losses to Pericles even after his athletic victories against him signals that Pericles' title is earned even athletically, albeit with some muscling maneuvers from his tongue.¹⁹³ Marcus Cato, according to Seneca, took a similar approach and denied knowledge of having been struck, "I do not remember having received a blow" (Seneca, *De ira* 2.32.2). Barton has analyzed Cato's remarks in terms of Bourdieu's "snub gambit," in which a challenge is not made by a riposte but by a dismissal.¹⁹⁴ In 1 Corinthians 9:26, then, it is little wonder that Paul claims not to strike his rivals as "one who beat the air" (ὥς οὐκ ἀέρα δέπων).

As in the Classical period in Athens, many of the most successful athletes in the Roman period either came from elite families to begin with or achieved elite status

latter: "For who, I pray you, by his skill in wrestling, swiftness of foot, good boxing, strength at quoits in hand, or in the press of shields drive forth the foreman by force of fisticuffs from hearth and home? Such follies are forgotten face to face with steel. We therefore ought to crown with wreaths men wise and good, and him who guides the State; a man well-tempered, just and sound in counsel, or one who by his words averts evil deeds, warding off strife and warfare; for such things bring honor on the city and all Hellenes."

¹⁹³ Though Plutarch makes no mention of a tongue, Thucydides was said to have experienced literal tongue failure in his defense at his trial; according to Faraone, a dog on trial in Aristophanes' *Wasps* follows his example. See Christopher A. Faraone, "An Accusation of Magic in Classical Athens (Ar. *Wasps* 946–48)," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 119 (1989): 149–160. It is hardly surprising Pericles should come out ahead in Plutarch. Wrestling was a more natural association for Thucydides than Pericles, given that Thucydides' father, Melesias, was a renowned wrestler and Thucydides had his sons trained to become the finest wrestlers; see Wade-Gery, Kyle 114–115. Further metaphors include: Ar., *Ach.* 703–05; Plut., *Per.* 4.2; see H.T. Wade-Gery, "Thucydides Son of Melesias," *Journal of Historical Studies* 52 (1932): 208–11.

¹⁹⁴ Carlin A. Barton compares this to Pierre Bourdieu's "snub gambit." See Barton, "Savage Miracles," 58.

through their athletic achievements.¹⁹⁵ Athletic activity could play a crucial role in the construction of elite masculine identities throughout the Empire, though the importance of this role could sometimes be obscured by rhetoric that reflects competition between athletic trainers, philosophical schools, and ancient medical specialists for epistemological privilege.¹⁹⁶ The pervasiveness of the connection between athletic activity and *andreia*, manliness, can be seen in the accounts of Jewish and Christian martyrdom in *4 Maccabees* and *1 Clement*.¹⁹⁷

2.2.2 Athletics and National Identity

Just as those who lacked the status necessary to be educated and inscribed as a citizen could be educated and naturalized by military service, those who were already Roman citizens sometimes sought to acquire Greek identity through gymnastic honors. In his *Corinthian Oration*, Favorinus, the Roman equestrian from Gaul, criticizes the

¹⁹⁵ For discussions of the social background of competitors, see H.W. Pleket, “Zur Soziologie des antiken Sports,” *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome* 36 (1974), 57–87; id., “The Participants in the Ancient Olympic Games: Social Background and Mentality,” *Proceedings of an International Symposium on the Olympic Games, 5–9 September 1988*, ed. W. Coulson and H. Kyrieleis (Athens, 1992), 147–52; Onno van Nijf, “Athletics, Festivals and Greek Identity in the Roman East,” *PCPS* 45 (1999): 176–200; id., “Local Heroes,” 306–34.

¹⁹⁶ van Nijf, “Local Heroes,” 321; König, *Athletics and Literature in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge), introduction. See also Pleket, “Games, Prizes,” 74–89 and contrast M. Gleason, *Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome* (Princeton, 1995); Schmitz, *Bildung und Macht*. For an analysis of the way that this agonistic culture pervaded other areas of elite life, see T. Barton, *Power and Knowledge: Astrology, Physiognomics and Medicine under the Roman Empire* (Ann Arbor, 1994). Ignatius combines medical theory, education, and the motif of unity common to *homonoia* speeches (Ign., *Pol.* 2.1–2).

¹⁹⁷ Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson, “Taking It Like a Man: Masculinity in *4 Maccabees*,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117.2 (1998): 249–273.

exclusivity of the Greek practice of commemorating local athletes with statues.¹⁹⁸ As a foreigner, as many in Paul's audiences were, Favorinus wishes to use his athletic enculturation to legitimate his cultural belonging to Roman Greece rather than the Latin West. Favorinus shares with Isocrates the notion that Greekness may be attained through education rather than birth and upbringing, which were requirements for the Greek system of *paideia* that ultimately enrolled the *ephebe* as a citizen.¹⁹⁹

If someone... has emulated not only the voice but also the mind-set, life-style and appearance of the Greeks.... so that one thing should happen to him above all else, to seem Greek and to be Greek, does he not deserve to have a statue among you? And indeed in every city! Among you because, like your city, though a Roman he became Greek; in Athens because he atticizes in his speech; in Sparta because he loves the gymnasium and among all because he practices philosophy and not only has he already roused many of the Greek to philosophize along with him, but he has also attracted more than a few barbarians.²⁰⁰

Favorinus is a Gaul attempting to have his acculturation to his adopted homeland validated by a Corinthian audience.²⁰¹ The elements he singles out—Atticizing speech, the gymnasium, and philosophy—collectively constitute “Greekness.” Through the performative acts of speaking, exercising, and thinking, Favorinus hopes to imitate and be accepted as a Greek.²⁰² Newby has noted that athletic games, due to the inherent similarities between Greek and Roman styles, “could provide a fruitful area for debates

¹⁹⁸ Favorinus was born without his testicles in the Latin West. Gleason notes the peculiarity of his attempt to become Greek in his study of masculinity.

¹⁹⁹ Isocrates, *Panegyric* 50.

²⁰⁰ Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 37.25–6.

²⁰¹ König, “Favorinus’ *Corinthian Oration*,” 141–68.

²⁰² Tim Whitmarsh, “‘Greece is the world’: Exile and Identity in the Second Sophistic,” *Being Greek*, ed. Simon Goldhill, 269–305, here 296. Newby notes that the desire to be perceived as Greek in other parts of the Roman Empire, such as Favorinus’ native Gaul, may have been motivated not by an affinity for Greek culture but an affinity for the Roman culture that found exercising *à la Greque* fashionable. Newby 84.

over origins and self-identities.”²⁰³ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a Greek living in Rome in the first century BCE, highlighted alleged Greek features in the *ludi Romani*, which were commonly thought to have originated with the Etruscans who were themselves immigrants from Lydia, in order to present Rome as a Greek city. Favorinus, then, had an interpretative system consistent with a native Greek. It was not the finely tuned process of *paideia* that made Greek athletics Greek. Rather, it was something more intangible and ephemeral.

A similar belief in the enculturating potential of the gymnasium is evinced by Jewish communities, who normally actively participated in the gymnasium in their pursuit of status and representation within civic bodies in the Greek East. 1 Maccabees suggests that many Jews were participating in the Greek *gymnasium* and some even removed the marks of circumcision through a procedure of *epispasm* in order to better assimilate (1 Macc. 1:14–15).²⁰⁴ Hall has argued that the practice of *epispasm* was prevalent in both the Hellenistic and Roman periods, reaching “a plateau of popularity in the first century.”²⁰⁵ The popularity of the practice coincides with the extensive building programs of Herod the Great, which introduced games to Caesarea and Jerusalem.²⁰⁶ Yet, even with its potential encouragement for removing the marks of circumcision, Philo presents the gymnasium as conducive to spiritual training, telling parents that their children benefit from having their bodies trained in the gymnasium:

²⁰³ Newby 24–25.

²⁰⁴ Gruen posits that the lack of mention of nudity or reversing circumcision in 2 Maccabees may indicate that the text originally referred to the period of Antiochus’ persecution. See *Heritage and Hellenism*, 30.

²⁰⁵ Robert G. Hall, “Epispasm and the Dating of Ancient Jewish Writings,” *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 2 (1988): 71–86, here 71.

²⁰⁶ Josephus, *Ant.* 15.268. See the discussion of Pfitzner 74.

have done the same for the soul by means of letters and arithmetic and geometry and music and philosophy as a whole *which lifts on high the mind (nous) lodged with the mortal body* and escorts it to the very heaven and shows it the blessed and happy beings that dwell therein (*De specialibus legibus* 2.230).²⁰⁷

Philo received a gymnastic education and attended sporting events.²⁰⁸

Like Roman and Greek cultural discourse, Jewish cultural discourse coded the gymnasium as a distinctively Greek institution. Gymnastic culture could be altered in order to accommodate Jewish customs, but it nonetheless retained its alterity in being a foreign institution. 1 Maccabees situates its hostility to the gymnasium in the challenge that the gymnasium represented to the previous “lawful way of living” (*tas comimous politeias*) and the institution of “new customs contrary to the law” (*paranomous ethismous*). The Maccabean anxiety lay not in the nudity of the gymnasium, if Jubilees (3.31) and Josephus (*Ant.* 15.8.1) are any indication, but in the location of the gymnasium “beneath the very citadel” of Jerusalem, either the Temple Mount or the Akra (4:12). A further insult to Jewish identity comes in the concern over the Greek hat worn by the athletes, which marked the otherwise nude bodies of the Jewish athletes as Greek rather than as Jewish.²⁰⁹ The continued importance of the retention of national customs and maintenance of national identity within the gymnasium can be seen in the historiography

²⁰⁷ Scholars such as Gleason and Schmitz have seen a greater cultural trend of preferring the intellectual aspects of *paideia* over the physical ones among the elite. Maud Gleason, *Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome* (Princeton, 1995) and Thomas Schmitz, *Bildung und Macht* (Munich, 1997). However, even with the settling of the Roman Empire into a relatively stable polity, there were still political intrigues among the upper classes that would have encouraged physical training, not to mention the need for continued physical education to provide the semblance of continuity with the cultural apparatuses of the past.

²⁰⁸ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 160–1; Erich Gruen, *Diaspora*, 124–25.

²⁰⁹ Don B. Garlington, “*The Obedience of Faith*”: *A Pauline Phrase in Historical Context* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991): 135.

of Josephus. According to Josephus, Seleucus Nicator (312 – 281 BCE) granted the Jews of Asia, lower Syria, and Antioch citizenship and gave orders for a fixed sum of money to be given to Jews who did not wish to use foreign oil at the gymnasium.²¹⁰ Josephus' historiography displays awareness of the national identities of athletic systems and distances sports and religion from war:

To native Jews this was a conspicuous break with the customs venerated by them. For it appeared a glaring impiety to throw men to wild beasts for the pleasure of spectators, and impiety to change their customs for foreign practices; but above all it was the trophies that irked them most; for, thinking them to be images surrounded by weapons, they were highly displeased, because it was not their national custom to venerate such images.²¹¹

It is thus likely that Paul's house-churches would have been fully acculturated in the world of Greek athletics. The athletic references Paul makes are not to some secular cultural practice in Roman Corinth in which the Corinthian Christians do not partake. Some of the Corinthian Christians have sufficient wealth to participate in the *ephebeia*, and those who do not are expected to recognize the civic values that athletic participation suggests. The connection of national identity to athletics would have been evident to Paul's audiences even without Paul's reinforcement of the national implications of athletics through such rhetorical moves as following the athletic metaphors at 1 Cor.

²¹⁰ *Ant.* 12.20. Josephus may be anachronistic in placing the receipt of national privileges so early. On the one hand, redirection of received goods was said to have occurred around the time of the Maccabean revolt. Money sent by Jason for a sacrifice to Hercules, for instance, was redirected to equip triremes for Tyre. Martha Himmelfarb, "Levi, Phinehas, and the Problem of Intermarriage at the Time of the Maccabean Revolt," *JSQ* 6 (1999): 1–21. On the other hand, the picture painted by 1 Maccabees is one of competing national systems. A special allotment of oil for the gymnasium presupposes a group that has had time to familiarize itself with the gymnastic systems and adjust its own self-understanding to identify concessions that will allow it to "retain" its identity. Gruen and Barclay doubt Josephus' dating. Barclay dates the incident to the Mucianus who was governor of Syria in 67–69 CE. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 256–57; Gruen, *Diaspora*, 126.

²¹¹ *Ant.* 15.274–6.

9:24–27 with the Israelite exodus at 1 Cor. 10. In the next section, I will outline the extent to which the elite male body would have been perceived as being shaped by participation in the Greek athletic apparatus.

2.3 Athletics and the Elite Male Body

Athletic participation in the Hellenistic and Roman Mediterranean was meant to shape the body of the elite male citizen: enrollment as an *ephebe* was the first step to citizenship, and to be an *ephebe* meant to be trained in the gymnasium.²¹² Training was often an instrument of discipline enacted by an established member of society on a less established member of society: the athlete was passive, the object of the analysis of a trainer such as Philostratus.²¹³ Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 1–4, Paul and the Corinthians are wrestling over the question of who is in the dominant position and who is in the subordinate position.

Both Jews and Romans had concerns that participation in Greek athletics would pose a challenge to their masculinity, whether through effeminacy or vulnerability. Dionysius of Halicarnassus emphasizes that the Romans adhere to the original Greek custom of wearing a loincloth, whereas Greeks now run naked, though he does not specify the dress

²¹² On Jewish participation in athletics in the Diaspora, see Poliakoff, “Jacob, Job, and Other Wrestlers” (63): “For the Diaspora, one can say with more authority that the Jews of that city were anxious to engage in athletic festivals under the aegis of the gymnasium (*CPJ* 153). Gymnasium membership was the first step towards citizenship: their eagerness to participate and Alexandrian hostility suggests that their athletic activities were a bid to gain citizenship and avoid the poll tax levied on non-citizens, but it is still clear evidence of Jewish enthusiasm for Greek sport in the Diaspora. There is also evidence of Jews in ephebic (gymnasium youth) organizations. An inscription from Hypaea (II CE) reads “Ioudaion Neoterion”—which strongly suggests Jewish ephebes. An ephebic inscription from Iasos has a number of identifiably Jewish names on it.”

²¹³ Jason König, *Athletics and Literature in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005): 253.

of Greek athletes who competed in Rome.²¹⁴ This is a continuation of the Classical Greek philosophical and intellectual position, held by Socrates, Euripides, Aristophanes, and others, that forbade gymnastics for rhetoric and criticized men who haunted these places seeking boys for pederasty.²¹⁵ Petronius (27–66 C.E.) relates how he concocts a plan to gain access to a handsome boy by posing as a philosopher: “Whenever anybody said anything at dinner about the use of handsome [boys], I blushed so much, I expressed so severe a displeasure that my ears should be violated by obscene speech, that the mother totally started looking at me like I was some philosopher” (*Sat.* 85.1–3). Simon Goldhill and Daniel Boyarin point to a scene in Achilles Tatius’ Greek novel *Leucippe and Clitophon* where the hero and first-person narrator does not resist being beaten. Eventually, the hero Clitophon claims that his opponent “grew tired of thumping me and I of philosophizing” (5.23.7).²¹⁶

2.3.1 Aesthetics of the Boxer’s Body

Aesthetic beauty was an important aspect of the athlete.²¹⁷ Like Rocky Balboa’s pride in his unbroken nose in the first *Rocky* or Ali’s claim to be the “prettiest thing that ever lived,” the ideal athlete’s body was supposed to be unbruised and uninjured, and boxers were in a sport in which disfigurement was likely. Imagery of breadmaking is

²¹⁴ 7.72.2–4. The nakedness of Greek athletes may lie behind Augustus’ ban on women attending athletic contests. See Suetonius, *Augustus* 4.4.

²¹⁵ Donald G. Kyle, *Athletics in Ancient Athens* (Leiden: Brill, 1987): here 133.

²¹⁶ Simon Goldhill, *Foucault’s Virginité*, 95; Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct*, 7.

²¹⁷ On the concern of Greek and Roman physicians and trainers to sculpt the male body, see Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale, 1995): 25. On the use of Eros to promote concord in the polis, along with Hermes (physical intellect) and Herakles (physical strength), see Margaret M. Mitchell, *The Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, p. 166 n. 614. This may be seen in such figures as the naked male runner in Longus’ second century CE Greek novel *Daphnis and Chloe*.

used by Theocritus to describe the way in which champion Polydeukes works over his opponent: “the unbeaten Polydeukes kneaded Amykos’ face with disfiguring blows” (22.11).²¹⁸ Dio’s ideal boxer, Melancomas, allegedly participates in boxing matches wherein the two participants do not come to blows, but rather endure for hours along with spectators who likewise watch for hours. Whereas lesser boxers punch quickly and decisively to see if they can obtain a victory, Melancomas’ strategy of outlasting his opponent elicits Dio’s approval for its “manliness, courage, self-control, and moderation” (*Or.* 29.14).²¹⁹ The endurance required for a boxing match is also demonstrated by Rufus, according to his representation by his home city of Smyrna on a monument in Olympia cosponsored by Smyrna and Elis. For Smyrna, though Rufus had won many contests, his *andreia* was proven by his attitude in the face of defeat, where “rather risking his life than giving us hope of victory he held out until night fell and the stars were seen.”²²⁰ Such a description implies that Rufus employed the strategy of dodging blows and waiting for the opponent to tire himself in trying to land one big punch, a technique which preserved the wholeness of the body. In the second century CE, the preponderance of *ekphrases* of beautiful male bodies in Philostratus’ *Imagines* is comparable to the physiognomical language in *Gymnasticus* and *Heroicus*.

²¹⁸ Cf. also *Argonautica* 2.59.

²¹⁹ Despite the legendary stature of Melancomas, he is generally thought to have been a historical figure, albeit not the lover of Titus Themistius claims he is (Themistius 10; 165 Dindorf). See A. Lemarchand; Nigel B. Crowther, “The Evidence for Kicking in Greek Boxing,” *The American Journal of Philology* 111 (1990): 176–181.

²²⁰ *I.v.O.* 54 (=SIG3, 1073II). Rufus’ difficult match is at lines 31–35. See Onno van Nijf, “Athletics, *Andreia* and the *Askésis*—Culture in the Roman East,” *Andreia: Studies in Manliness and Courage in Classical Antiquity*, ed. Ralph Rosen and Ineke Sluiter (Leiden: Brill, 2003) 263–86, here 264.

On the other hand, despite the ancient athlete's embodiment of beauty, the boxer also could be a very liminal figure in antiquity. In the *Aeneid*, Vergil describes the boxing match between the elder boxer Entellus and the young, brash Dares with the Greek overtones of a gigantomachy.²²¹ Entellus, the chthonic Sicilian, towers over his opponent: "With these words, he threw the double cloak off his shoulders, baring the great joints of his limbs, the great bones and muscular area, and stood giant-like in the middle of the arena." Vergil's description of Entellus in gigantic terms seems to follow the tradition of boxing as gigantomachy set by the boxer Amycus. Theocritus compares Amycus to Tityus (*Theocr.* 22.94), while Apollonius compares him to Typhoeus (*Argon.* 2.38–40). Amycus' status as a monstrous, intimidating opponent seems to have been transposed by Vergil onto Entellus; just as hulking Amycus faced nimble Polydeuces, so too does lumbering Entellus spar the flighty Dares.

Entellus makes good the connection between blood sacrifice and athletic competition posited by Meuli, Geertz, and Girard—he reserves the mortal blow he would liked to have given Dares and instead gives that punch to his prize for winning the match, an ox.²²² As Poliakoff has shown, Entellus at one level of the story embodies a "figure of noble restraint," a perception reinforced by the Homeric boxing matches in *Il.* 23.651ff.

²²¹ A trend in late Hellenistic and Roman period literature was the conflation of gigantomachy and titanomachy motifs of myths known from earlier periods in reference to fighting. For a discussion of this phenomenon in Apollodorus, Horace, Ovid, Lucan, et al., see Lovatt 115–116. The Greek version of Judith (*ca.* first century C.E.), for instance, features the heroine singing in the hymn of praise after her victory: "nor did the sons of the Titans strike him (Holophernes) down, nor did tall giants set upon him" (16.6).

²²² Karl Meuli, *Der griechische Agon: Kampf und Kampfspiele im Totenbrauch, Totentanz, Totenklage, und Totenlob* (Cologne: Historisches Seminar der deutschen Sporthochschule, 1968). Philip Hardie, *The Epic Successors of Vergil: The Dynamics of a Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1993): 19–36, 52.

and *Od.* 18.1ff. Yet, at the same time, Vergil's allusions to Apollonius link Entellus with the ogre Amycus. The purpose of this paradox is to underscore a recurring theme in the *Aeneid* that "the corrupting forces of anger and violence take hold easily and in unexpected place, and that responsible people must constantly labor to subdue them."²²³ By having Entellus give the mortal blow to the ox rather than to Dares, Vergil has Entellus assume the priestly role associated with Dares' name.²²⁴

Entellus thus provides an example of the cultural commonplace of the boxer who has learned to regulate himself and achieve *enkrateia* in order to rejoin society at a transcendent level. Vergil anachronistically depicts the boxers as having the Roman period *caestus* available to them in order to depict Entellus as renouncing his right to use the *caestus* of Eryx and thus to inflict wanton destruction upon the body of another. Dares' expression registers his acknowledgement of the danger involved in boxing by appearing dumbfounded (5.406) and frightened (5.420) when Entellus throws the *caestus* into the contest area. This primal fear is also found in myths that boxers become wolves, learning to restrain their impulses. According to Pausanias, Demarchos of Parrhasia, who won the boxing competition at Olympia in around 400 BCE, "turned into a wolf at the sacrifice to Zeus Lykaeos and turned back into a man again in the tenth year

²²³ Michael B. Poliakoff, "Entellus and Amycus: Vergil, *Aen.* 5.362–484," *Illinois Classical Studies*, X.2 (1985): 227.

²²⁴ In the *Iliad*, Dares is a priest of Hephaestus at Troy in Book 5. The A-scholia to the *Iliad* give an etymology for the name that derives from δέρω ("flog, flay"). H. Erbse, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri "Iliadem,"* Vol. 2 (Berlin 1971): E9b 67–69. McGowan argues that Vergil is aware of an etymology that derives the name Dares from *dero*, in particular the aorist passive participle *dareis* "the beaten." The inflection from *Daren* to *Dareta* reflects this knowledge. Fulgentius inherits Vergil's etymology. See Matthew M. McGowan, "On the Etymology and Inflection of 'Dares' in Vergil's Boxing Match, *Aeneid* 5.362–484," *Classical Philology* 97 (2002): 80–88.

thereafter.”²²⁵ The Hellenistic author Euanthes, known to Varro, describes a ritual by which a boy would be selected by lot and led to a lake. Once there, the boy hung his clothes on an oak tree and swam across the lake to become a wolf for eight years. If he succeeded in abstaining from human meat during that time, he could return to the lake and regain his humanity, but as a grown man.²²⁶

In sum, then, cultural interpretations of boxing in antiquity seem to bear out the generalization of Bourdieu that boxing is “gambling with the body itself.” Boxing both throws the body of the would-be elite male into jeopardy and accrues honor to the elite male body that has managed to remain relatively unscathed. As in Vergil’s treatment of the name and priestly profession of Dares, the boxer was connected in elite Roman literary production with restraint of aggression so that combat was redirected into sacrifice. When, in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27, Paul claims that he is not shadow-boxing and yet he bruises and beats his body in order not to be disqualified, he is presuming that the gamble ends badly.

2.4 Athletics and the Female Body

Scholarship has viewed the inclusion of women into the Roman athletic apparatus with some skepticism. The athletic opportunities for women in Roman Corinth, in particular, have also received varying assessments. As Wayne Meeks has observed, women had expanding athletic opportunities in the late Republic and early imperial period to the point that “even professional athletics were opened to women in the first

²²⁵ Burkert 85. In other myths, turning into a wolf served the same training purpose as enrolling in ephebic training might.

²²⁶ Burkert 87.

century B.C.”²²⁷ The famous three daughters of Hermesianax of Tralles, for example, won prizes in the Isthmian, Pythian, Nemean, and Epidaurian games each year between 47 and 41 BCE. Murphy-O’Connor opines that Hedeia’s victory in the two-horse chariot race (*biga*) “goes some way toward explaining the liberated Corinthian women whom Paul encountered (cf. 1 Cor. 11:2–16).” He finds a precedent in the cultural memory of the successful charioteer Cyniska, a fifth century BCE Spartan princess, mentioned by Pausanias multiple times (3.8.1–2, 15.1; 5.12.5; 6.1.6).²²⁸ Cyniska’s pride in her accomplishment is as evident as its exceptionalism in the speech Pausanias attributes to her in *Greek Anthology* (13.16): “Kings of Sparta were my fathers and brothers, and I, Cyniska, winning the race with my chariot of swift-horses, erected this statue. I say that I am the only woman in all Greece who won this crown.”²²⁹ Poplutz argues this exceptionalism eliminates the possibility of females winning athletic prizes and social recognition, concluding that “Frauensport existierte, wie ein Blick in die Siegerlisten zeigt.”²³⁰ She cites the satire of Juvenal.²³¹

In this section, I will contend that women had sufficient—albeit not equal—access to academics to give rhetorical mentions of their participation in athletics the weight of veracity. Female athletics were not perceived to be an inversion of Roman values, as were specific (imagined) cultural adversaries such as the Amazons. Rather, female

²²⁷ Meeks, “The Image of the Androgyne,” 168.

²²⁸ Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, *St. Paul’s Corinth: Text and Archaeology* (Liturgical, 2002): 15.

²²⁹ Thirty years later, Euryleonis, another Spartan woman, also won a chariot race at Olympia. Betty Spears, “A Perspective of the History of Women’s Sport in Ancient Greece,” *Journal of Sport History* (1984): 32–47.

²³⁰ Uta Poplutz, *Athlet Des Evangeliums. Eine motivgeschichtliche Studie zue Wettkampfmetaphorik bei Paulus*, HBS 43 (Freiburg: Herder, 2004).

²³¹ Cf. Juv., *Sat.*, VI 252–4.

athletes in the Roman period would have had their exertions interpreted through the same cultural lens that was applied to male athletes: participation in traditional, non-violent events such as running had positive connotations of building national identity, while participation in violent events such as gladiatorial games had negative connotations of lower social status.

2.4.1 Women's Participation in Education and Greek Athletics in the Roman Period

Citizen women throughout the Roman Empire usually received an education that paralleled the training received by citizen men in a less formal way.²³² Livy, for example, expects his readers to be outraged that Virginia was importuned by an unscrupulous civic leader on her way to school in Rome. In Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, a Lesbian foundling boy and girl are educated alike in the hopes that their expensive tokens of recognition indicate their elite birth. In Sparta, according to Plutarch, young women were trained in all of these activities, a tradition begun with the lawgiver Lycurgus (*Lyc.* 14.2):

He made the maidens exercise their bodies in running, wrestling, casting the discus, and hurling the javelin, in order that the fruit of their wombs might have vigorous root in vigorous bodies and come to better maturity, and that they themselves might come with vigour to the fulness of their times, and struggle successfully and easily with the pangs of child-birth. He freed them from softness and delicacy and all effeminacy by accustoming the maidens no less than the youths to wear tunics only in processions, and at certain festivals to dance and sing when the young men were present as spectators.

Just as the rites for Artemis Orthia were developed in the Roman period, athletic attitudes for girls in Roman Sparta had to be influenced by the Roman conquest; thus, the

²³² Athenaeus 14.531c; Plut. *Lyc.* 14.2; Nic. Dam. *FGrH* 90 F 103; Kennell, *The Gymnasium of Virtue*, 46; Jean Ducat, "La femme de Sparte et la cité," *Ktèma* 23 (1998): 385–406. See also A. Brelich, *Paidēs e Parthenoi*, vol. 1 (Rome 1969): 157–59.

wholehearted endorsement of female athletics had to be evinced elsewhere in the empire to some degree or, at least, not completely antithetical to Roman values.²³³

However, opportunities for women as athletes tended to be restricted to the Greek East. Women at Corinth would have been able to participate in footraces in panhellenic competitions such as the Nemean and Isthmian games as well as at lesser festivals such as the one at Sicyon. Menander Rhetor's comment that "in some festivals, such as at Olympia, women do not appear at all" seems to imply that it is the *absence*—rather than the *presence*—of women at the games that is noteworthy (Men. Rh. 364.5-6). Even at Olympia, though, women asserted their presence by having their own footraces dedicated to Heraia, an archaic custom that appears to have persisted from at least the Classical period to be described by Pausanias in the Roman period (5.16.2-4):

Every fourth year there is woven for Hera a robe by the Sixteen Women, and the same also hold games called Heraea. The games consist of foot-races for maidens. These are not all of the same age. The first to run are the youngest; after them come the next in age, and the last to run are the oldest of the maidens. They run in the following way: their hair hangs down to a little above the knee, and they bare the right shoulder as far as the breast. These too have the Olympic stadium reserved for their games, but the course of the stadium is shortened for them by about one-sixth of its length. To the winning maidens they give crowns of olive and a portion of the cow sacrificed to Hera. They may also dedicate statues with their names inscribed upon them. Those who administer to the Sixteen are, like the presidents of the games, married women. The games of the maidens too are traced back to ancient times; they say that, out of gratitude to Hera for her marriage with Pelops, Hippodameia assembled the Sixteen Women, and with them inaugurated the Heraea.

The association of the footraces with marriage indicates the high status of participation.

In all of the events, running accrued honors such as prizes with monetary value, public

²³³ Cartledge and Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta*, 205–6. Sarah Pomeroy argues that Romans categorized the nudity of Spartan female athletes under the framework of their Roman spectacle and thus regarded revamped customs surrounding female athletics in Sparta as tourist attractions rather than as acceptable modes of “natural” female behavior. See Sarah Pomeroy, 28.

statues, and public crowning with laurels. At the Heraia, the connection with marriage, a privilege reserved for citizens, was explicit. We may thus conclude that throughout Roman Greece in the first and second centuries CE, women would have been able both to participate in athletics and to receive honors for athletics.²³⁴

2.4.2 Women in Roman Athletics

In the Roman arena, women also attained full participation, though in much fewer numbers than men. Some women received specialized athletic training in order to become gladiators. Inscriptional evidence suggests that the *collegia iuventum*, institutions begun by Augustus, trained young women along with freeborn young men being instructed in weaponry and martial arts. A funerary inscription was erected by the *magister iuventum* to Valeria, a girl who lived seventeen years and belonged to the collegium (CIL 9.4696). Members of both sexes may be mentioned in another inscription (CIL 8.1885). Hostilianus boasted both of being the first to feature women combatants and the patron who put on the local edition of the Iuvenalia, the games of the Ostia

²³⁴ According to the sources on the Olympic Games as reorganized in 181 C.E. consulted by early Byzantine chronicler John Malalas, the status implications for women became as hefty as those for men (12.10):

Well-born young people came from every city and district to the sacred contest of the Olympic games, competing under an oath, and they contended against each other. Receiving no money from any source, they conducted themselves chastely and with great moderation; they were rich, having their own slaves as attendants, each according their own wealth, and many of them were maidens... There were maidens who practiced philosophy and were present under a vow of chastity; competing, wrestling in leggings, running, declaiming and reciting various Greek hymns. These women competed against other women and the competition was intense, whether it was in wrestling, the race or recitation.

collegium iuvenum.²³⁵ The 11 C.E. SC banning women under the age of 20 from entering the arena seems to imply that women over the age of 20 could fight. The training evidence and the regulation suggest that some professionalism was attached to women's participation, despite the lack of any nomenclature in Latin for women gladiators, let alone the specialized terms found for male gladiatorial activity. Typically, women were represented artistically either in bikinis or pitted against each other as Amazonia and Achillia, as an inscription from Halicarnassus exemplifies.²³⁶ Amazons would have been understood as real historical enemies, and thus the gladiators as valid representatives, if Pausanias' record of wooden images of Artemis Astartia and Apollo Amazonius is any indication (3.25.3). Tacitus is often taken as suggesting that even female senators entered the arena in games sponsored by Nero: "That same year he held gladiatorial shows as magnificent as those that went before; but many distinguished ladies and senators disgraced themselves in the arena" (*Annals* 15.32.3).²³⁷ Similarly, Juvenal derides a girl blasting the trumpet for Flora as having designs upon the arena itself (*Sat.* 6.246-267). Accordingly, women in Paul's community would be able to envisage themselves both fighting animals along with Paul and featuring in a spectacle.

2.4.3 Women as Soldiers

²³⁵ Mark Vesley, "Gladiatorial Training for Girls in the *Collegia Iuvenum* of the Roman Empire," *Echos du Monde Classique* 62.17 (1998): 85–93, here 88–90.

²³⁶ An inscription from Halicarnassus commemorates two female gladiators, presented as Amazonia and Achillia, who have earned their freedom (*CIG* 6855 G).

²³⁷ Statius describes a similar lack of professionalism: "With all the new thrills and extravagances the tenuous pleasure of watching goes quickly: the sex untrained in weapons recklessly does men's fights!" Statius' emphasis on the novelty of such a sight is a little overemphasized since he is writing in 92–96 CE, after Suetonius' account of the games at the Colosseum under Domitian (4.26) in 81 CE.

Although women did not have access to military service and its accompanying education, early imperial Roman literature and art depicted women as soldiers. In his history of the Roman republic, Livy described Lucretia as killing herself like a warrior on the battlefield in order to oblige her husband and father to go to war to avenge her rape.²³⁸ In Rome, the visual commemoration of Cloelia would have reminded women and men of that city of the heroic physical deeds of one of its legendary female citizens. Her equestrian statue, traditionally reserved for men, was situated on the *Sacra Via* to commemorate Cloelia's virtue with a new kind of honor (*novo genere honoris*). Servius, in his commentary on Vergil's *Aeneid* (8.646), notes that the statue still stood in the fourth or fifth century CE. However, Dionysius of Halicarnassus insisted that the statue had been removed by the late Republic, when he was writing (5.35.2). Pliny the Elder denounces the statue as "over the top" since not only did Cloelia sport a toga but she was honored with a statue when Lucretia and Brutus were not (*HN* 34.13).²³⁹ Clearly the statue—or its remembrance—posed a challenge to male elites and yet suffered no *damnatio memoriae*.

Cloelia's virtue, though, was manly and should have aroused less censure. Inspired (*exitatae*) by Mucius' virtue, Cloelia led the other Roman female hostages to escape armed Etruscan guards by swimming across the Tiber. In Livy, Cloelia is designated as a

²³⁸ Lucretia is a salient example because Lucretia and Virginia are the two incidents upon which Livy structures his entire history. Tacitus later echoes Livy in remonstrating Boudicca, queen of the Iceni, for avenging the rapes of her daughters as a male leader would. However, Boudicca's revolt (60–61 C.E.) and Tacitus' gender construction both postdate the time of Paul's letter to the Corinthians. For a discussion of the incompatibility of soldiering with Roman (as opposed to foreign, aberrant) femininity, see Francesca Santoro L'Hoir, *Tragedy, Rhetoric, and the Historiography of Tacitus' Annales* (Ann Arbor: Michigan, 2006): 140–141.

²³⁹ Takács 12–13.

dux agminis virginum (a military leader of a military column composed of girls of marriageable age), and the Etruscan leader Lars Porsenna declares Cloelia's action greater because she succeeded. Nonetheless, Porsenna demanded the temporary return of Cloelia to save face for having allowed a woman to escape. When she did, Cloelia was allowed to choose half of the Roman hostages to return home. Demonstrating the importance of raising hostage youths in the Roman strategy for political domination, such as the Roman rearing of Antiochus Epiphanes IV, Cloelia chooses the Roman male youths.

The identification women would have had with Paul's boxing is perhaps confirmed by their inclusion in Paul's application of the role of "soldier." As Harnack observes, the term "soldier" is not used broadly in terms of the more modern notion of the Christian hymn "Onward, Christian soldier." Rather, Paul uses the term more restrictedly for himself and his coworkers.²⁴⁰ Pfitzner holds that Phil. 2:25 and Philem. 2 single out Epaphroditus and Archippus for the title "fellow soldier."²⁴¹ However, I think that the combination of Phil. 2:25 and Philem. 2 show not that the "fellow soldier" is necessarily a fellow in the sense of being male, but that the title is part of a set of stock titles that Paul applies to his co-workers, some of whom were female. We might first conclude that "fellow soldier" is a singular—and perhaps masculine—designation when we read Philippians 2:25: "With regard to Epaphroditus, my brother and co-worker and fellow soldier, your messenger and minister in my need, I consider it necessary to send him to you." Nonetheless, Philemon 1-2 spreads these attributions over a number of persons, leading to the conclusion that "fellow soldier" is part of a battery of terminology: "Paul,

²⁴⁰ Harnack, *Militia Christi*, 14.

²⁴¹ Pfitzner 161.

a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon, our beloved and our co-worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church at your house.”

Other Pauline letters use military metaphors to describe all believers. Romans 6:13 speaks of sin in terms of members of the body being used as “weapons of wickedness.” These members are to be transmuted into “weapons of righteousness.” In the same letter, Paul envisions the eschatological garments as the “armor of light” that contrasts with the present hour of darkness, preceding salvation (13:12). Both of these uses of the metaphor insist upon the discipline of a soldier, restraining desire and training the body. 2 Corinthians imagines the present cohort of believers as being led by God through Christ in a triumphal procession. Here, the comparison is not to the athletic perfection of the body, but the discursive practice of people of authority: “For we are not peddlers of God’s word like so many, but in Christ we speak as persons of sincerity, as persons sent from God and standing in his presence” (2:17). This emphasis on rhetorical prowess occurs again at 10:3-6 where Paul sees the apostolic role militaristically; he destroys his opponents’ arguments and takes “every thought captive to obey Christ” (10:5). The Corinthians seem to have been granted clemency or at least a rehabilitation period in that Paul only stands ready to “punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete” (10:6). Though Romans focuses on bodily discipline and 2 Corinthians favors rhetorical perfection, these were both part of the *paideia* of citizens and the militaristic Roman imperial imaginary. Paul’s description of the armor does not seem to be particularly gendered in any way, lending support to the notion that women could be soldiers metaphorically.

Such a conclusion is also borne out by the first letter to know 1 Corinthians: *I Clement*. Military metaphors highlight the role of discipline as obedience in *I Clement*, written from Rome to Corinth several decades after Paul. There is more self-conscious gendering in *I Clement* as the militaristic and athletic imagery transforms a woman's "endurance" into "manly courage."²⁴² Nonetheless, women are commended for their bravery in the combat sports of the arena. These metaphors may have been influenced by the Stoics, who, as Epictetus pronounced, believed that the sage rendered to God what the soldier rendered to the emperor.²⁴³ To Zeigler and Jaubert, the implied community of *I Clement* parallels the contemporary cults of Isis and Mithras, whose initiates were said to become soldiers of the deities.²⁴⁴ Jaubert further notes the militaristic stance of the ideal community at Qumran. The military metaphors of *I Clement* might also be in conversation with 2 and 4 Maccabees, which have been noted to use both athletic and military imagery in relating the tales of the Maccabean martyrs.²⁴⁵ In 4 Maccabees, the mother is praised for her manly courage in emulating the example(s) of her sons.²⁴⁶ In *I Clement*, women are held up as *exempla* for men for their militaristic/athletic courage in the amphitheater in addition to their nurturing roles as mothers. Clement reprimands his mutinous community with the examples of these martyrs "who became athletic contenders in quite recent times" (5.1). Founding male figures and contemporary female

²⁴² Dio Chrysostom, *Virt.* [Or. 8]; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 1.18.21, 1.24.1–2, 3.20.9, 3.22.56; Seneca, *Prov.* 2.2–4.

²⁴³ Annie Jaubert, "Les sources de la conception militaire de l'Eglise en 1 Clément 37," *Vigiliae Christianae* 18 (1964): 74–84.

²⁴⁴ Reitzenstein.

²⁴⁵ Jaubert, "Les sources," 77. See 4 Macc. 6.10; 9.23; 11.20; 12.11, 14; 13.13, 15; 16.16; 17.11–16.

²⁴⁶ Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson claim that the female is paradoxically the "prime exemplar of masculinity in 4 Maccabees." See "Taking It Like A Man," 252.

martyrs are the honorees—other male martyrs are excluded. Martyrdom in the actual arena is not the highest virtue for everyone—and even the martyred Paul is praised for pointing the way to the prize for endurance as he preached in both the East and the West (5.7). Clement further stresses that martyrdom is not the only way women may be the equals of men. The “race of faith” includes both martyred women, whom Clement compares to Judith in the Hebrew Bible, and wives remaining alive with their families, whom he compares to Esther (55.4-6).²⁴⁷

2.5 Conclusion

As Pfitzner perceived, there was a difference in Roman Corinth between the traditional Greek games and the newly imported Roman games. Recent studies by classicists have done much to illumine the cultural debate over these two systems of agonistic striving that often competed with each other. Participation in the Greek athletic system would have connotations of status and citizenship. In the Greek system, the beauty of the body was emphasized, elevating non-disfiguring sports such as the footrace and prioritizing avoiding disfigurement in more violent sports like boxing. By contrast, taking part in the more violent Roman athletic apparatus as a gladiator or beast fighter usually was subject to at least derision from Roman moralists and possibly could indicate legal stigma.

Participation in an athletic apparatus was inexorably intertwined with participation in the civic body. The Greek *ephebeia* had ceased to be open to all citizens by the

²⁴⁷ Judith and Esther appear as women in the list of women Clement of Alexandria adduces in order to prove his claim that “men and women share equally in perfection, and are to receive the same instruction and discipline” as ‘in Christ there is neither male nor female’ (Gal. 3).”

Hellenistic period, and, by the Roman period, the perpetuation of the *ephebeia* and the gymnastic system that trained young men to be inscribed as citizens of the *polis* largely served the nostalgic program of supporting the illusion of a continuing Greek nation comprised of a loose federation of city-states independent of Roman rule. Roman spectacles were seen as a violent, expensive, and foreign imposition on Greek cities by Greek cultural elites.

Nonetheless, Roman Greeks such as those in Paul's house-churches at Corinth would have familiarity with women's participation in both systems. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, women regularly competed in Greek athletic events against other women. At the same time, they could train as gladiators, though exhibitions of female gladiators were typically a rare variation designed to titillate audiences with the novelty rather than a statement about Roman attitudes toward the place of women in martial arts and combat. Nonetheless, women such as Cloelia were commemorated visually in Roman public places and historiography for their wartime heroism. When Paul mentions coworkers in terms of martial imagery, his audiences would have been able to envision both his male and female coworkers adopting a more violent, confrontational role. In Philippians, he overtly refers to Euodia and Syntyche as fellow combatants (4:2).

As I will demonstrate in the next chapter, the background for Paul's athletic and martial imagery indicates that Paul's use of athletic and martial imagery did not vastly diverge from contemporary usage within Rome and Roman Greece. Paul's construal of the Corinthians as having many pedagogues and already as kings suggests that they were enculturated in the Roman Greek elite athletic apparatus that sought to promote a sense of cultural continuity with the sociopolitical constructions of previous periods of political

independence. Moreover, Paul's reference to himself as a pugilist conforms to the philosophical tradition of referring to rhetorical argument through linguistic comparison to actual physical combat.

Chapter Three:

Athletic Imagery in 1 Corinthians

As we have seen in the previous chapter, athletic *topoi* were integral to the construction of civic identity in the early Roman Empire. Native elite families in Roman Greece preserved a sense of national identity and their own privileged position by continuing the Greek ephebic system, which had become restricted to the upper classes in the Hellenistic period. This national discourse both continued attitudes from centuries earlier and competed with the Roman imperial interest in athletics.²⁴⁸ In this chapter, I will contend that 1 Corinthians uses athletic metaphors from the lived experience of Paul's audience, what often scholars have overlooked as "local color," in order to construct a similar national discourse for the Christian *politeuma*. Like Greek elite discourse in the Roman colony of Corinth, Paul's rhetoric creates an opposition between the newly imported Roman spectacle and the classical Greek gymnasium and stephanitic games. The former illustrates the beleaguered condition of the present world order; the latter represents the world order to which Corinthians, and those in the Pauline house-churches, should wish to return.²⁴⁹ Even in elite Greek civic discourse, the question of national sovereignty took on cosmic dimensions as cities, either singularly or in federation with others, awarded eternal coronal honors to exemplary benefactors such as

²⁴⁸ Koenig.

²⁴⁹ The political scope of Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians corresponds with the letter's form of *sumbouletikon*, a political letter urging concord. The tone of antagonism with Roman structures in Corinth can be found throughout the letter in such places as Paul's opposition of the features of Roman Greece to those behind the eternal realities of the Body of Christ found throughout the letter, such as the contrast of pagan temples with the temple of the believer's body (6:19) and that of idol table meat versus the eucharistic meal (8 and 10).

Junia Theodora. Similarly, Paul collapses the boundary between metaphor, *paradeigma*, and history so that past historical events, such as the Israelite exodus, are typological, contemporary historical events, such as his beast fighting, could be metaphorical, and metaphors, such as his exhibition in the spectacle and the race for the imperishable crown, are historically proleptic.²⁵⁰ In this chapter, I will analyze Paul's development of an opposition between the motif of the Roman spectacle (1 Cor. 4 and 15), which is restricted to the mortal world, and the motif of the classical Greek gymnastic model, which retains its otherworldly dimensions (1 Cor. 4 and 9). In two subsequent chapters, I will explore the two main components of the athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 directed at the Corinthian house-churches: the race of faith and the receipt of an “imperishable crown.”

As the letter progresses, the spectacle and athletic motifs shift from a concern with the earthly *polis* to the Christian *politeuma*. In the first spectacle and athletic metaphors of the letter, Paul starkly contrasts the Roman Empire with the churches of God.²⁵¹ Paul

²⁵⁰ This fluidity between literary text and history has been noted somewhat by Margaret Mitchell, who calls attention to Paul's presentation of himself as *paradeigma* and as his own letter of recommendation: “Paul then offers, throughout the letter, himself as a living example, a living paradeigma, of the non-factionalist, non-divisive course to which he counsels them.” See *Rhetoric* 2. Laura Nasrallah has observed that, in the battle over epistemology at Corinth, what is ultimately at stake is control over the eschatological boundary, not the location of the eschatological boundary. She identifies this disagreement as being between Paul and the Corinthians, but I think the combatant in 1 Corinthians is not so much the libertine Corinthians as the “powers” that can put Paul and the Corinthians in the arena and physically inscribe ideology on Paul and the Corinthians by various means. See *Ecstasy of Folly*.

²⁵¹ Paul's speech to Felix in Acts 24 contains many of these same themes of nationalistic struggle, while toning down the eschatological element that characterizes Paul's presentation of the nationalistic struggle in his letters. Paul describes the commonality between him and his Jewish accusers as being a belief in the resurrection of the dead and the charge of which he has been accused as being related to this same belief. Paul's response to Felix at Caesarea emphasizes the “nation.” Felix has been a judge of “this

notes that the Corinthians have many pedagogues, but he observes that they do not have many fathers, seeking to position himself as their father. In so doing Paul is inherently competing with the patriarchs of Corinth and the *pater patriae*, the Roman emperor. Paul imagines a situational reversal wherein Christians judge angels or messengers rather than engage in lawsuits that might subject them to those *angeloi*. To use the sociological terms of Weber, I think Paul is using his charismatic authority to challenge the traditional authority structures operating in Corinth.²⁵²

Toward the end of the letter, Paul's spectacle and athletic references are directed toward the eschatological. Paul exhorts the Corinthians to run for an imperishable (ἄφθαρτον) crown, and he reminds the Corinthians that his fighting with beasts in Ephesus would be in vain and the practice of proxy baptism would be for naught if there were not a bodily resurrection awaiting each Christian in the future.²⁵³ Here, Paul shifts away from the theodicy and its eschatological reversal in 1 Corinthians 4 to concentrate solely on the eschatological bodies the Corinthians will receive. While he does not exhort the Corinthians to asceticism or martyrdom, Paul nonetheless notes that *all* bodies are sown in dishonor and, like seeds sown in the ground, spring up in a more glorious form than when they entered the soil. Thus, ultimately, there is not, in fact, a difference

nation" (24:10), and Paul gives his purpose as "I came to bring alms to my nation" (24:17).

²⁵² Max Weber (1864–1920) defines charismatic authority in opposition to "rational, and particularly bureaucratic, authority, and to traditional authority, whether in its patriarchal, patrimonial, or estate variants." *Economy and Society, Volume I* (Berkeley: California, 1978): 244.

²⁵³ Mathis Rissi, *Die Taufe fuer die Toten: Ein Beitrag zur Paulinischen Tauflehre* (Zurich: Zwingli, 1962): 57; Bernard Spoerlein, *Die Leugnung der Auferstehung* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1971): 79; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975): 273; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987): 763.

between Paul's enslaved body with its bruises and calluses and the bodies of the Corinthians, which are being trained in the gymnasium as elite bodies with muscles.

As the athletic motif develops in 1 Corinthians, then, we see that Paul ascribes to all Corinthians the traditional prestige conferred by participation in the ephebic system that preserved a sense of Greek nationality even during colonization by Rome. After envisioning the Corinthians with "many pedagogues" in 1 Corinthians 4, Paul exhorts the Corinthians to run in 1 Corinthians 9. Running is a metaphor for the race of faith that is predicated on one of the most honorific events at the panhellenic games. The Corinthian Christians' prestige contrasts with Paul's abased position in the Roman athletic apparatus of the arena, where Paul is a spectacle for angels and fights with beasts.²⁵⁴

As an apostle with a special revelation, Paul himself inhabits the prestigious Greek cultural system in order to include the excluded. Whereas Paul presents his prophetic authority equivocally in 2 Corinthians, moderating his ecstasy both by his having reached only the third heaven and by his acquisition of an "angel of Satan" to keep him modest (2 Cor. 12:10-13), the Paul of 1 Corinthians is very clear that he has seen the risen Christ

²⁵⁴ Victor Pfitzner identifies Paul's physical duress as a critical component of Paul's transformation of the agon motif from those of Seneca and Epictetus: "Paul on the other hand uses the picture to illustrate the humility and indignity to which the apostles, as servants of God, are subjected." See Pfitzner 1967, 188–189, 194. John Pairman Brown has also underscored the reality of physical vulnerability in the arena for Paul: "But Plutarch or Philo did not suffer for their beliefs; and Paul takes up the philosophic commonplace because of what the agon has become in real life. The glamour of Pindar is spread over the place where criminals were punished, so that the language of the games is in the early Church applied directly to the sufferings of the martyrs. Paul says that the Philippians had the same *agon* or boxing match as he (Phil 1:27–30; cf Rom 15:30, Col 1:21)." See John Pairman Brown, "Inversion of Social Roles in Paul's Letters," *Novum Testamentum* 33 (1991): 303–325, 323.

(9:1, cf. 15:8).²⁵⁵ This vision is the basis of Paul's apostolic authority, and it appears twice in 1 Corinthians in advance of athletic and spectacle imagery. It appears both at the beginning of a defense of his apostolic rights and at the end of a historical resume of the beginning of the appearances of the risen Christ and the Jesus Movement. The apostolic defense concludes with the athletic metaphors exhorting the Corinthian Christians to "run so as to win," including the Corinthian Christians in high status activities. It is only Paul who participates in pugilism, and he characterizes his engagement in this sport as one who does *not* merely shadow-box. Paul's hyper-masculine display places him outside the realm of the wrestling among elites at the baths and even outside of the realm of being employed by a wealthy patron as a punching bag. Paul debases the honor that the Corinthian Christians might wish to accrue to the role of apostle by constructing the apostolic role as a combative one, fraught with personal danger. By engaging in both activities, running and boxing, Paul legitimizes honorific running as an apostolic activity and devalues combative boxing as an apostolic activity. Likewise, the historical resume ends with Paul's description of himself as receiving a revelation as one "untimely born,"

²⁵⁵ Hans Dieter Betz takes Paul's account of his ascent and the "angel of Satan" pressing a thorn in his flesh to keep him from being "elated" as two separate parodies. Paul's claim to have reached the third heaven is a parody of an ascent because it lacks a revelation, while Paul's insistence that he has been tormented by a thorn inverts the customary healing narrative one would expect. See H.D. Betz, *Der Apostel Paulus und die sokratische Tradition: Eine exegetische Untersuchung zu seiner "Apologie" 2 Korinther 10–13* (BHT 45; Tuebingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1972): 414–452. See also "Eine Christus-Aretalogie," 290–91. Paula Gooder finds that the "strange half-telling of the ascent narrative—including a lack of mention of a vision of God—alerts us to the fact that Paul is subverting the heavenly ascent genre here. The fact that he is unable to recount it properly indicates that something is wrong—either in the ascent itself (i.e. it was a failure) or in Paul's perception of ascent (i.e. it does not prove strength or power in Christ as this is made perfect in weakness not in ascending to heaven)." See Paula Gooder, *Only the Third Heaven: 2 Corinthians 12:1–10 and Heavenly Ascent* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006): 201.

implying an equivalency between Paul and others who were not in the right place at the right time to see the risen Christ. Paul then uses his example as a beast fighter in Ephesus as evidence for the reality of the bodily resurrection. Paul, as an apostle, participates in the lower forms of physical activity—boxing and beast fighting—with potential for disfigurement and death in order to include social classes that would not have been able to participate in elite athletic activity in Roman Corinth. This reinforces his inclusion of all social classes and genders in the running metaphor drawn from civic imagery.

3.1 The Roman Spectacle in 1 Corinthians

In 1 Corinthians, Paul refers twice to the spectacle. The first time is at 4:8-13, where he contrasts his own humiliated position as one on display in the arena with the Corinthians' exalted position as those who "rule," traditionally those sponsoring the blood games in which Paul envisions himself as an act of public munificence.²⁵⁶ The second time is at 15:30-34, when he is admonishing the Corinthians on the need to believe in the resurrection. Paul poses the rhetorical question to the Corinthians: "If with merely human hopes I fought with wild animals at Ephesus, what would I have gained by it?" (15:32).²⁵⁷ Were it not for the reality of the bodily resurrection, according to Paul in

²⁵⁶ In the early imperial period, aediles and the public purse often split the cost of sponsoring games. See David Gilman Romano, "A Roman Circus in Corinth," *Hesperia* 74 (2005): 585–611.

²⁵⁷ Hans Conzelmann characterizes the Corinthians' attitude as "enthusiastic individualism;" Walter Schmithals sees "a pneumatic-libertine Gnosticism." Following Johannes Weiss, Dale Martin contends the so-called "strong" among the Corinthian community are not as concerned with purity boundaries as the so-called "weak." Elizabeth Castelli identifies an attempt by Paul to corral the Corinthians into "sameness." See Johannes Weiss, *A History of the Period A.D. 30–150* (vol. 1 of *Earliest Christianity*; trans. Frederick C. Grant; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959): 323–41; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 212; Walter Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth*, 117, 193–

this same phrase, the Corinthians could adopt the saying “eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” (15:32) found in Isaiah 22:13. One envisions such a common phrase escaping the lips of a gladiator at the banquet (*cena*) held in his honor the night before the gladiatorial combat (*munus*).²⁵⁸ In both the spectacle imagery of 4:8-13 and 15:30-34, what is in Paul’s view is the wider, non-Christian culture of Roman Corinth rather than the cultic context of the worship meal and gathering in house-churches. Paul moves from highlighting the physical jeopardy faced by the apostle in the arena as an illustration of the alterity of Roman imperium to explaining the veracity of physical salvation in the form of bodily resurrection of even those members of society Roman imperium has cast as “refuse.”

3.1.1 *The Spectacle as a Roman Cultural Institution in Corinth*

Paul’s hierarchical conception of kings and spectacle in 1 Corinthians 4 would have been familiar to the recipients of his letter. The Roman spectacle was a significant part of religious and political life in Roman culture. Roman cultural discourse framed the games as an amazing testament to Roman *artefice* and victory over nature. Just as the Priene Inscription deemed Augustus’ birthday the start of civilization, the games reinforced the Roman triumph of Roman artifice over nature in the creation of a Roman society by flooding the amphitheater with water for *naumachiae* and releasing captured wild

304; Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991): 98–111, 115–17; Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 1996): 195–99; Sandra Hack Polaski, *Paul and the Discourse of Power* (Sheffield: Sheffield, 1999): 12–13, 14–15.

²⁵⁸ On gladiatorial banquet, see Leonard L. Thompson, “The Martyrdom of Polycarp: Death in the Roman Games,” *Journal of Religion* (2002): 27–52.

animals by mechanical devices into the amphitheater for beast fights. Roman audiences arranged themselves in hierarchical order in the seats of the amphitheater to witness the Roman control over nature. Authors such as Calpurnius Siculus provide evidence for the social orientation Roman cultural elites wished for the spectacle to provide for the populace. Calpurnius Siculus imagines a naïve countryman named Corydon recounting his visit to Rome to a compatriot in 57 C.E. Corydon is in awe of the amphitheater (*spectacula*) that looks just like a natural valley (7.30-4). Corydon, as a rustic, is seated “where the dirty-cloaked mob usually watch, among the women’s seats” (7.26-7). From his perch in the third *maenianum*, just below the women’s *tabulationes* in the *summum maenianum*, Corydon can see the equites and tribunes below in gleaming white clothes (7.28-9). An elderly man next to him, a native of Rome, remarks that he is still in awe of Roman spectacles (7.39-46). *Munera*, in this Neronian temporary amphitheater, underscore Roman military dominance over the Mediterranean world and reinscribe the social order in seating arrangements.

From Corinth itself, we have evidence that gladiatorial games were a despised device for demonstrating Roman allegiance.²⁵⁹ According to Dio Chrysostom, “the Corinthians watch these combats outside the city in a ravine, a place that is able to hold a large crowd, but otherwise is sordid and such that no one would even bury here a freeborn citizen” (*Or.* 31.121). This predilection for the blood sport of the arena was not traditional for mainland Greeks, and there are numerous indications that the novel presence and financial burden of Roman athletics were resented. In the Flavian era, the Argives complain to the provincial governor that they and others are supplying funds for

²⁵⁹ Wiedemann 43.

spectacles on Corinthian territory that are “neither ancient nor Hellenic.”²⁶⁰ Non-Greek athletic events that rankled the Argives included the *venationes* that were neither musical nor gymnastic contests. When Athens, out of rivalry with Corinth, considered gladiatorial games, Demonax reminded his fellow citizens of the peculiarity and distastefulness of the custom (Luc. *Demon.* 57; cf. D. Chr. 31.122; Philostat., *VA* 4.22). Accordingly, while games such as the Caesarian games, held every four years to commemorate the emperor, began to interfere with every other celebration of the Isthmian games by 30 BCE, the institution of gladiatorial games remained the larger threat to “being Greek” in Greece.²⁶¹

Thus, when Paul claims that “God has exhibited us apostles” as “a spectacle to the world, to angels and mortals” (v. 9), his references to the arena are engaging with the predominant cultural institutional threat both to elite Greek nostalgia for the democratic agonistic striving of the Classical period and to the vulnerable Christian community. Paul answers the problem of Roman hierarchical order by framing the experience of the arena (θέατρον, Vlg. *spectaculum*) under the control of God, rather than the emperor. By assigning the levels of hierarchy peering down at the apostles in the arena as “world, angels/messengers, and mortals/humans” (τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις), Paul endows his picture with an apocalyptic element, peeling back the clouds above the

²⁶⁰ The letter (*Ep.* 28 in Loeb edition) is attributed incorrectly to the emperor Julian. See M.E.H. Walbank, *Evidence for the imperial cult in Julio–Claudian Corinth, in Subject and Ruler: The cult of the ruling power in classical antiquity*, ed. Alistair Small, (Ann Arbor: JRA, 1996) pp. 212; and A.J.S. Spawforth, *Corinth, Argos and the imperial cult: Pseudo Julian, Letters 198, Hesperia* 63 (1994) 211–32. For the place of the games within, see Mary E. Hoskins Walbank, “What’s In a Name? Corinth Under the Flavians,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* (2002): 251–264.

²⁶¹ Murphy-O’Connor, *St. Paul’s Corinth*, 12–13.

amphitheater to reveal the angels watching the spectacle.²⁶² *Angelos* occurs for the first time in 1 Corinthians in this verse, to be repeated later at 6:3, 11:10, and 13:1. Paul presents these angels not as antagonists with a specific point of view, as one might expect of Satan in Job, but in the traditional sense as preservers of the status quo.

3.1.2 The Spectacle as a Metaphor and Paul's History

Whether Paul is being literal or figurative in these two spectacle metaphors is ambiguous, manifesting a relationship with reality that both privileges collective experience of life in the Roman Empire and buttresses Paul's individual claim to having been the only one to have an exclusive post-Ascension vision of Jesus. It is unclear just how much real danger to his life Paul faces within the Roman amphitheater at Corinth and beyond in places like Ephesus. Paul never mentions the amphitheater at Corinth directly. In 1 Corinthians 4:8-13, where the image is preceded by Paul's notation of the Corinthian Christians' high social expectations, Paul characterizes exhibition in the spectacle as one condemned to die as the condition of "us apostles." Meanwhile, in 1 Corinthians 15:30-34, where the image is being used as an assurance of the resurrection of Christ and of the dead, Paul observes that Christ "appeared to James, then to all the apostles," and, "last of all, as to one untimely born," to him (15:7-8). Yet, he adduces a very personal experience in Ephesus fighting beasts that is presented as a single historical event and not the universal condition of all apostles: "If with merely human hopes I fought with wild animals at Ephesus, what would I have gained by it?" (15:32). Both

²⁶² Fitzmyer calls the introduction of angels a "cosmic element," but I think that we can go farther than that. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians* (New Haven: Yale, 2008): 219.

spectacle motifs emphasize the alterity of the Christian order and the eternal nature of belonging to the Body of Christ. The spectacle, for Paul, symbolizes how the individual body is threatened with perishing in this Roman world but can be assured of continuing in imperishable form in the world to come.

3.1.3 *The Spectacle as Apostolic Condition*

Paul's first spectacle metaphor in 1 Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 4:8-13, is constructed metaphorically. After chastising the Corinthian Christians for their presumptions of status that have no basis in reality, Paul contrasts his social position as an apostle with their imagined status as rulers. He wishes that his audience did, in fact, have political power so that he might rule with them (4:8): "Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Quite apart from us you have rule! Indeed, I wish that you had become kings so that we rule with you!" His real position, however, is to be exhibited in the spectacle: "For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, as though sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals" (4:9). Paul qualifies that he is giving his opinion by prefacing the spectacle metaphor with "I think" (δοκῶ, 4:9). The simile that Paul is making of apostles as *damnati ad mortem* is clearly indicated by a "ὥς" (4:9). For Paul, the comparison seems valid because of the apparent alterity of the apostolic social position, which finds credence in the eyes of all sociopolitical levels of Roman society across the Mediterranean. "Us apostles" do not have honor in the contemporary world order, as represented by "angels" and "mortals."

The generic nature of the terms—*kosmos*, *angelos*, and *anthropos*—Paul uses lends them a polysemous quality so that they could apply to either the imperial construction of

the cosmos or the creational model known to the Corinthian Christians from Genesis. Paul is at once placing himself within the Roman spectacle apparatus and overtaking it by ascribing ultimate power over its mechanical bulls and ravenous lions to God. As Deleuze has suggested more generally of combat, this “is not a judgment of God, but the way to have done ... with judgment.”²⁶³ For Paul, it is God (ὁ θεός) who puts the apostles as last, “like those marked for death” (ὡς ἐπιθανάτιους). The “last” position of the apostles indicates their location in the social hierarchy rather than the order in which they were exhibited in the spectacle.²⁶⁴ God has ordained the apostles to suffer social ignominy. Like the Stoics, Paul’s diatribal passage ends in a proof of the philosopher’s endurance against the vicissitudes of cruel fate.²⁶⁵

Unlike the theodicy of the Stoics, Paul’s endurance does not result in heroism.²⁶⁶ Rather, Paul positions the apostolic role as outside the Roman caste system: “We have become like the refuse of the world, the dregs of everything to this day” (4:13). He has not, however, been placed there by the emperor or any of his political surrogates. Rather,

²⁶³ Gilles Deleuze, “To Have Done with Judgment,” *Essays: Critical and Clinical*, trans. by Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (Minneapolis: Minnesota, 1997): 126–135, here 134.

²⁶⁴ Fitzmyer 218.

²⁶⁵ Seneca, *Ep.* 64.4–6, *Prov.* 2.9; Wendland, *Literaturformen*, 357, n. 1; Adolf Bonhoeffer, *Epiktet und das Neue Testament*, RVV 10 (Giessen: Toepelmann, 1911), 170; Johannes Leipoldt, “Das Bild vom Kriege in der griechischen Welt,” *Gott und die Götter: Festgabe fuer Erich Fascher zum 60. Geburtstag* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1958) 16–30; Braun, *Gesammelte Studien*, 186–191.

²⁶⁶ Paul’s speech in Athens in Acts 17, like Josephus’ equation of Stoics and Pharisees, expects its Stoic audience to accept the validity of Paul’s arguments based on common adherence to stereotypical providence and theodicy. See Jerome Neyrey, “Acts 17, Epicureans and Theodicy: A Study in Stereotypes,” *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, eds. D. L. Balch and W. A. Meeks. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990): 118–134.

for Paul, “God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, as though sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals” (4:9).

Paul’s use of the “present hour” in which apostles find themselves and his description of the apostolic menial labor further suggest that Paul is including martyrdom in the arena more for its theological value than for the purposes of giving an historical account.²⁶⁷

Whereas later the Gospel of John will appropriate the “hours” of Roman time so that Jesus can speak of “his hour” that will arrive, Paul is very clear that the “hour” of the “present” is not a Christian category: “To the present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless, and we grow weary from the work of our own hands” (4:11-12). The “present hour” holds the place of judgment, an activity from which Paul abstains (4:3-4).²⁶⁸ Paul does not conclude that the response to the oppression of the “present hour” is to lose oneself in the “coming glory” or even to anticipate a future “imperishable crown,” as in 9:24–27. Rather, he recommends endurance without the promise of compensatory status inversion at a future date: “When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we speak kindly. We have become like the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things, to this very day” (4:12-13). The referents of the “us apostles” in the spectacle are the disposable elements of the world according to traditional standards of honor, *i.e.*, socioeconomic status and political

²⁶⁷ Lyotard, in writing on the Shoah, observes that the “only way you can make a ‘beautiful death’ out of ‘Auschwitz’ death (Nos. 156, 160) is by means of a rhetoric.” See Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*, trans. Georges Van Der Abbeele (Minneapolis: Minnesota, 2002): 109. If Paul is writing concerning a real experience, it has been sanitized to the point of being largely historically unusable.

²⁶⁸ Hock argues that Paul’s representation of his work in both 1 Cor. 9:19 and 2 Cor. 11:7 derives from an elite perspective that views labor as degrading. Ronald F. Hock, “Paul’s Tentmaking and the Problem of His Social Class,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97 (1978): 555–564, 562. Cf. Jennifer Glancy, “Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11:23–25),” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123 (2004): 99–105.

power. The apostolic body has been shaped into a dispensable one by means of cultural apparatuses such as the Roman spectacle, a process with a long history implied by the phrase “to this very day.” This, as we will see below, is just the beginning of Paul’s historiography of the social and political processes separating Roman honor from (Greek) Christian honor.

3.1.4 Paul as Beast Fighter

Paul’s fight with beasts at 1 Corinthians 15:32 is presented rhetorically as an historical event. Paul begins the chapter by reiterating the traditions that he has given to the community, effectively situating his discourse in the realm of historiography. Thus, his appearance in the arena as a beast fighter at 15:32 has the same rhetorical implications as his appearance in the spectacle as one condemned to die at 4:8-13. Paul uses the mortal danger that his body faced in the beast fight to argue for the bodily resurrection of the dead. With the beast fight, Paul gives the resolution to the cosmology he gave in the spectacle metaphor of 4:8-13. Whereas in the spectacle metaphor Paul merely stood in social death before the “world” as one condemned to die, the beast fight addresses physical death in that all die, sow their bodies into the ground, and receive resurrected bodies. Both the spectacle and its consequences are more tangible in 1 Corinthians 15. As the practical application in Paul’s historiography of the Christian movement beginning with the resurrection and appearances of Jesus, Paul’s beast fight at Ephesus serves to remove believers from imperial historiography and the shame of imperial spectacles and to situate them in a historiography that is the reality of the Christian.

Historiographic concerns introduce the issue of the resurrection of the dead. In the first two verses of chapter 15, Paul repeats his role of messenger and the community's role as recipient of this gospel: "Now I want to remind you, brothers and sisters, of the gospel that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain." Paul recalls for the Corinthian house-churches the foundational act of the movement, which he clearly demarcates as the origination of the Christian movement: "I handed on to you as of first importance what I had myself received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared to me" (15:1-8). From this historical resume, Paul moves on to correct the opinion of some within the Corinthian Christian house-churches that "there is no resurrection of the dead" (15:12).²⁶⁹ He rehearses the

²⁶⁹ The Christocentric focus of Paul's historical resume would not have prevented his audience in the Roman colony of Corinth from recognizing it as history. A dominant theme of contemporary Roman history was the presentation of Roman history as world history. See E.L. Bowie, "Greeks and their Past in the Second Sophistic," *Past and Present* 46 (1970): 3–41, 12. Polybius, who reinvigorated the tradition since Timaeus commencing history with Olympiads, begins expressly at the 140th Olympiad (220–216 BCE) because it is there that a "body" (*somatoeides*) of history can be discerned: "Previously the doings of the world had been, so to say, dispersed, as they were held together by no unity of initiative, results, or locality: but ever since this date history has been an organic whole (*somatoeides*), and the affairs of Italy and Libya had been interlinked (*symplekesthai*) with those of Greece and Asia, all leading up to one end" (i 3.1–4, Paton). See the discussion of Kenneth Sacks, *Polybius on the Writing of History*

soteriological rationale behind resurrection, that the resurrection of Christ has abrogated the death imposed upon humanity since the Fall of Adam (and Eve, whom Paul leaves unmentioned) from the Garden of Eden: “For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ” (15:21-22).

In the next verses, Paul resolves the apostolic problem he faced in the spectacle metaphor of 1 Corinthians 4. At the eschaton, Paul tells the Corinthian Christians, Christ “hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power” (15:24). It is only here that the Corinthian Christians may finally understand the full import of Paul’s criticism in chapter 4 of “already you rule!” (4:8). The horror of the apostolic condition in this world that Paul presents in chapter 4, where Paul characterizes the apostolic condition as one of having become “a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals” (3:9). He contrasts the salvific act of Christ with the Roman claim on the world order, arguing that God “must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet” (15:26). The last of these enemies is death, whereupon “the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him” (15:27). Once the Son is subjected, God will be “all in all” (15:29). Presumably, this will be the end of hierarchy.

Only after Paul has related Jesus’ resurrection appearances and their theological import does Paul progress to explain the sincerity of his belief in this theology. Paul’s certainty in the resurrection is attested by the perpetual endangerment he mentions at v. 30: “And why are we putting ourselves in danger every hour?” Recalling the spectacle

(Berkeley: California, 1981): 116–117. Surely, Paul’s audience would have appreciated a recounting of history that began with the “body” of Christ and its sightings.

metaphor of 1 Corinthians 4, Paul's "us" should correspond with the apostles. Yet, Paul uses hyperbole ("I die everyday!") to underscore his own psychological commitment to the belief in the resurrection of the dead. In the next verse, he equates the certainty of his daily demise with that of his boasting in the Corinthian Christians. The boast may indicate Corinthian familiarity with Paul's customary reference to his communities as his "crown" or his "joy." Elsewhere, the crown of boasting will only be attained at the eschaton. Here as well, Paul seems to include the Corinthian Christians in the hourly danger and daily death, presuming that the Corinthians will carry through to the end with him.

Having echoed the spectacle metaphor of 1 Corinthians 4 in his theological justification of belief in the resurrection of the dead, Paul adduces his personal experience in which he directly faced death. Unlike his hyperbolic statement in the present tense of recurring death, Paul cites an incident in the past in which he has confronted his own mortality. He asks the Corinthian Christians: "If with merely human hopes I fought with wild animals at Ephesus, what would I have gained by it?" (15:32). Paul uses the aorist "I fought with beasts" (ἐθηριομάχησα), which should refer to a single beast fight in the past rather than repeated activity as a beast fighter. In any event, Paul presents his activity as a beast fighter as a historical fact. Yet, Paul's beast-fight is not corroborated by Acts, Paul's list of hardships and sufferings for the gospel (2 Cor. 11:23-29), or Paul's "reconciliation letter" (2 Cor. 6:4-10). As Kyle and Welborn have noted, the logic of Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 15 relies on the strong likelihood of death upon entering the arena, since Paul adduces the example along with proxy baptism in order to prove the reality of the resurrection of the bodies that the Corinthians "sow into the ground" like

dishonorable seeds.²⁷⁰ Likewise, his rhetorical question about what he would have gained from entry into a beast fight without hope of the resurrection implies that he would not have done so if 1) he had no hope in an afterlife because 2) he suspected he might die. Again, we see a connection with the spectacle metaphor of 1 Corinthians 4 in that, just as before God was ultimately responsible for Paul's suffering, the Roman disciplinary and cultural apparatus is not credited with full control over Paul's body and its future prospects.

Paul states that there would be no reason for his participation in a beast fight in Ephesus if there were no actual, physical basis for the resurrection that Christians expect. This construction is a little puzzling as Paul frames his beast fighting as a volitional activity. Does Paul mean that he was participating in the activities of the Roman arena? Elite men and women were known to compete in the arena for prizes and to perform on

²⁷⁰ Larry L. Welborn follows Johannes Weiss in arguing that 1 Corinthians 15:32 is an unreal conditional sentence, with the particle *an* omitted from the apodosis in a manner customary of Epictetus, so that Paul's spectacle metaphor in 1 Corinthians 15 refers to "a metaphorical comparison of the dangers of his existence as an apostle of Jesus Christ with a beast-fight in the arena at Ephesus." See Larry L. Welborn, "Towards Structural Marxism as a Hermeneutic of Early Christian Literature, Illustrated with Reference to Paul's Spectacle Metaphor in 1 Corinthians 15:30–32," *Bible and Critical Theory* 8 (2012): 27–35. I think that there is a further connection between the arena and Paul's rhetoric of "being sown into the ground" dishonorably in the contemporary historical memory of the live burials of Greeks and Gauls during a brief intermission in periods of war between Rome and those nations in 228, 216, and 114/113 BCE. Georg Wissowa in his grand handbook on Roman religion first published in 1902, was the first to see these victims as *actual* enemies, as *Kriegsopfer* (war sacrifice). Paul's phrase "being sown into the ground dishonorably" also resonates with philosophical notions of the body as a seed, of course, and the importance of the idea of a *change* in bodily state in Paul's thought should refer one to Troels Engberg-Pedersen's fine study on the combination of Genesis creational imagery and Stoic theories on the body, *Cosmology and Self* (Oxford: Oxford, 2010). However, the proximity of this phrase to his reference to beast-fighting could invoke images of slain enemies in Roman cultural discourse on live burials.

stage as gladiators, despite several senatorial attempts to curtail their exhibitions.²⁷¹ As one who works with his hands, he could also be fighting in the beast fights for financial compensation. Or is Paul construing agency in the manner of Seneca who praises the condemned criminal who choked himself to death with a toilet plunger rather than allow himself to be conformed to the script of the arena?

The actuality of Paul's claim has been much debated by scholarship. As Paul is writing the Corinthians from Ephesus (16:8), his fight with beasts would have had to have happened just prior to his composition of the letter.²⁷² Paul's Roman citizenship should have precluded him from being condemned to die in the arena—and, in any event, he likely would have died there if he had been convicted. Josephus, though, claims that the innocent were spared. Scholars of an earlier generation cited the story of Androclus and the Lion as a potential option for Paul's escape: like the wounded lion the runaway slave Androclus had healed in the desert and which had refused to eat him in the amphitheater, the lion released in Ephesus simply did not want to eat Paul.²⁷³

²⁷¹ Dio, LVI.25.7.

²⁷² Fitzmyer 582.

²⁷³ Bowen adduces the Androcles-type tapes found in the *Acta Pauli*, *Acts of Martyrs*, *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. See Clayton R. Bowen, "I Fought with Beasts at Ephesus," *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1923): 59–68, here 65. The uncertainty of being thrown to the beasts was part of the allure of that particular mode of capital punishment; it was a much different experience than condemnation to be burned. See Wiedemann 89. There is also, as already is seen in early twentieth century scholarship on the subject, the possibility of *missio*, freedom given to truly brave and skilled fighters. Typically, gladiators who received this had been trained for a considerable period of time in sword fighting. See Wiedemann 89. We have no indication that Paul has received such training, however, particularly as an elite Pharisee with possible Roman citizenship. Later apocryphal literature picks up this motif of being saved from the lion's den, but for far different purposes than those of Daniel or of Paul. In the *Acts of Paul*, Paul is not only rescued from the lion but the lion speaks, perhaps a function of rationality and spirituality often imputed to animals in apocryphal literature. Both *P. Hamb.* and *P. Bodmer LXI* place this event on Pentecost, linking the event with charismatic activity

Alternatively, Paul possibly could have been part of a *venatio* and successfully slayed the beast.²⁷⁴ Even gladiators often stood a chance of emerging from the amphitheater alive as actors from a *familia* of gladiators who trained together were loathe to kill one another and *editores* had invested so much in training and medical treatment. Fallen gladiators, whose lives were forfeit, often received a *missio* from the crowd for fighting bravely. Even those who did not fight fiercely enacted the triumph over death by dying in a ritualized way, meant to convey dignity and the *virtus* of the deceased.²⁷⁵ Certain instances of the reception history of this verse in the second and third centuries seem to adhere to a belief that Paul really fought actual beasts at Ephesus. An allusion to the story is found in Hippolytus' commentary on Daniel (earliest years of the third century C.E.) in the protasis: "If we believe that when Paul was condemned to the wild beasts...."²⁷⁶

Other early Christian authors emphasize the rhetorical nature of Paul's comments when themselves under imperial death sentences. Ignatius, who was writing while being sent to Rome to die under a very real death sentence, envisions himself in much the same way as Paul: "All the way from Syria to Rome I am fighting with beasts, by land and

rather than prophetic encounter with imperial authority. Such a charismatic connection is enhanced by P. Bodmer LXI, moreover, where Paul's encounter with the lion is preceded by the appearance of an angel, speaking in tongues comprehensible only to Paul. For the lion encounter in the *Acts of Paul*, see Janet Spittler, *Wild Kingdom*, 186.

²⁷⁴ A passage in Statius' *Silvae* 2.5 describes the dismay experienced by *populus*, patricians, and Caesar alike at the death of a lion in the arena, indicating that feeling pity for animals and thus their necessary sacrifice was part of the ritual life of the arena. See Anna McCullough, "Heard but Not Seen: Domitian and the Gaze in Statius' *Silvae*," *Classical Journal* 104 (2008): 148.

²⁷⁵ Wiedemann 34.

²⁷⁶ Edgar J. Goodspeed, unlike more recent scholars, takes the remarks of Hippolytus to refer to the *Acts of Paul*. Edgar J. Goodspeed, "Recent Discoveries in Early Christian Literature," *Biblical World* 46 (1915): 339–352, here 343.

sea, by night and day, bound to ten leopards, namely, a detachment of soldiers” (*Letter to the Romans* 5.1). At this point, Ignatius has had as presumably little experience with fighting beasts as Paul had had, but he describes the privations he has endured at the hands of soldiers in mental preparation for the grisly sufferings he will face in the arena. Tertullian assumed that Paul was referring to his Ephesian opponents (*De Res. Carn.*, 48), and scholars have argued that the “beasts” of 1 Cor. 15:32 were the “Judaizers.”²⁷⁷ Traditions such as those of Daniel, Heracles, and Diogenes would have encouraged Paul to speak to the Corinthians using the motif of an athletic struggle.

The rhetorical elements of Paul’s claims are as ambiguous as the historicity of the event. Paul includes many different aspects of the arena that would have been recognizable as discrete. On the one hand, the idea of Christ putting his enemies under his feet is in keeping with Roman triumphal imagery.²⁷⁸ The phrase “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” fits both militaristic and gladiatorial contexts, which were often seen as compatible enough to allow upper class fighters to fight each other in matches for prizes. However, on the other hand, Paul depicts himself fighting with beasts, an event that was scheduled prior to the culmination of the gladiatorial fights in the post-Augustan *munera*.²⁷⁹ It is not even clear whether Paul is fighting against beasts or being fed to them.

²⁷⁷ Robert E. Osborne, “Paul and the Wild Beasts,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 85 (1966): 225–230, here 230.

²⁷⁸ Fee, *Corinthians*, 722; Malherbe, “Beasts at Ephesus,” 74–78. Later, in her martyrdom, Perpetua will envision herself as putting her foot on top of the devil, crushing him beneath her heel.

²⁷⁹ After Augustus, the schedule of the gladiatorial combats reinforced the gladiator’s triumph over life as the *munus* was usually preceded by two kinds of display: the slaughter of animals and the public execution of criminals of low status (*noxii*, *cruciarum*). Wiedemann 55.

Just as in the spectacle metaphors in 1 Corinthians 4, the Corinthians seem not to be implicated in participation in the *venationes* described in 1 Corinthians 15. Paul's comment that he has fought with beasts has a scriptural antecedent in Daniel's experience in the lions' den. Based on the likely interpolation at 1 Cor. 14:34 by a later author to harmonize Paul's letter to the Corinthians with the later norms of 1 Tim. 2:11-13 and the awkwardness of the grammar at 15:31c, MacDonald argues that the boast mentioned is properly the Corinthians' and not Paul's.²⁸⁰ Working against this claim is the fact that this pericope occurs in one of the most diatribal of all Paul's letters. This means that, unlike the athletic metaphors of 9:24–27, the elements of the spectacle metaphor are supposed to constitute an argument that is generic. Supportive of this claim is the early observation by Johannes Weiss that 1 Cor. 15:32 is an unreal conditional sentence, since this expression τί τὸ ὄφελος is found in Epictetus with the same omission of the particle ἄν.²⁸¹ With this in mind, I would prefer to read “fighting with beasts” as exclusively depicting Paul's imaginary history and the banqueting slogan as belonging to fictive combatants appropriately generic for a diatribal passage. It is not an image directly arising out of the Corinthians' personal experience. The Corinthians are not being envisioned as gladiators. Paul casts himself into the role of beast fighter, but it is a role from which he has escaped and from which he can deduce that he will receive eternal life instead of being dragged through the Gates of the Underworld in the arena along with the other fallen gladiators.

²⁸⁰ Dennis Ronald MacDonald, “A Conjectural Emendation of 1 Cor. 15:31–32: Or the Case of the Misplaced Lion Fight,” *Harvard Theological Review* (1980): 265–276.

²⁸¹ Johannes Weiss 1910: 365.

The common phrase “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” exhibits the same multivalency between militaristic and gladiatorial techniques. In the LXX, this phrase occurs in Isaiah 22:13b and serves in its Isaian context to illustrate the anguish of the inhabitants of Jerusalem prior to certain conquest by the Assyrians. Rather than repenting their sins by weeping, shaving their heads, and girding themselves with sack-cloths (Isa. 22:12), the Israelites decided to feast and make merry: “But they engaged in joy and gladness, slaying calves, and slaughtering sheep, so as to eat flesh, and drink wine, saying, ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die’” (22:13). Though Paul quotes directly from Isaiah 22:13, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (15:32), he does not introduce this scriptural quotation as such. Interpreters have taken the lack of a direct attribution of the quotation to scripture to mean that it was being invoked as a piece of Epicurean philosophy or simply as a “popular slogan,” corresponding to sentiments that pervaded Roman Corinth and the Corinthian Christian house-churches.²⁸² The Roman amphitheater was an artificial battlefield on which were enacted the great feats of the Roman hero. The refrain “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” could have been

²⁸² As Abraham Malherbe has observed, the libertine attitude evinced by Isaiah 22:13 is “popularly, if unjustly, associated with the philosophy of Epicurus.” A widespread Hellenistic tradition related the tale of Sardanapalus, the seventh century BCE Assyrian founder of Tarsus. Several authors, including Athenaeus and Strabo, give the inscription on his grave in nearby Anchiale as reading *esthie, pine, paize* (“eat, drink, play”). While some other authors in the tradition exchange *paize* for *ocheue* (“copulate”) or *aphrodisiaze* (“have intercourse”), Chrysippus preserves a version of the inscription that dwells on the notion of immortality: “knowing full well that thou art but mortal, indulge thy desire, find joy in thy feasts. Dead, thou shalt have no delight.” Roman period Cynics contrasted Sardanapalus, the Epicurean *par excellence*, with Heracles, model of athletic restraint and overcoming the passions. Paul’s quotation of Isaiah would have resonated with Epicurean sentiment in the cultural environment of his audience, who would have been especially prone to associate Paul with Epicureanism because of his origin in Tarsus. See Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986): 84–85.

uttered by any gladiator at a *cena*, the banquet given the night before a spectacle, prior to his re-creation of Rome's military skirmishes in order to commemorate important Roman dead.²⁸³

As in the spectacle metaphor of 1 Corinthians 4, Paul's certainty of his own death in the arena in vv. 30-31 erodes in the verses that immediately follow the image. Paul continues by citing two slogans with which the Corinthians ostensibly would have been familiar. The first ("Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die") recommends gluttony in the face of certain death, and the second ("Bad company ruins good morals") commends good company for good morals. Both seem aimed at collective responsibility, an aspect that has led interpreters to posit that Paul's instruction is aimed at group belonging rather than at individual fear of mortality.²⁸⁴ Given the Corinthian ritual of baptism on the behalf of the dead that immediately precedes the spectacle motif at 15:29, it seems that the Corinthians are relying on ritual to include dead family members in collective body without necessarily directing their attention toward those with lesser status in the community of the living. Paul's directive "Come to a sober and right mind, and sin no more; for some people have no knowledge of God" at v. 34 implies some members of the Pauline house-churches cared more for the licentiousness of the funerary meal than for

²⁸³ Known from 264 BCE when gladiators fought at the funeral of Junius Brutus Pera, gladiators battled to commemorate a deceased family member or important person, whose spirit needed to be appeased with blood. This meaning seems to have persisted to the end of the second century, since Tertullian references the notion while criticizing it in *De Spectaculis* (XII): "this class of public entertainment has passed from being a compliment to the dead to being a compliment to the living."

²⁸⁴ Jonathan Z. Smith points out that Paul's discussion of the resurrection of the dead in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians seems connected with questions from the community about the status of dead members. See Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: Chicago, 1996) 20–23.

establishing fictive kinship with people and enculturating them through education into the Body of Christ.²⁸⁵

Returning to the question of whether Paul's body was in danger as he claims, it is not impossible that Paul should fight beasts in Ephesus and then live to tell the tale to the Corinthians from Ephesus. There was a difference in Roman spectacle events between fighting beasts (*bestiarii*, θηριομάχοι) and being fed to them (*damnati ad bestias*)—the *venationes* were performed by highly trained individuals with specialized weaponry and a chance of survival, whereas the latter centered around presenting the victims' death according to the logic of some entertaining fashion.²⁸⁶ Like a gladiatorial game, the *venatio* recreated military pastimes and, in fact, was often supplied with a menagerie of beasts already fought and captured in the wild by military.²⁸⁷ A risk of death was

²⁸⁵ DeMaris has identified a possible Corinthian cultic trend toward worship of the dead, as exemplified by the first century C.E. cults of Palaimon and Demeter. He speculates that Paul's implicit sanction of the practice of proxy baptism, which is conveyed by Paul's use of proxy baptism as an example that can be used to derive theological understanding, would have augmented the prestige of women in the Corinthian churches. Funerary rituals "in Greco-Roman society were overwhelmingly in the hands of women, so Paul's toleration of baptism for the dead would have added to the prestige and influence of Corinthian women." See Richard E. DeMaris, "Corinthian Religion and Baptism for the Dead (1 Corinthians 15:29): Insights from Archaeology and Anthropology," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114 (1995): 661–682, 680.

²⁸⁶ J.W. Hunkin, "1 Corinthians 15:32," *ExpT* 39 (1927/28) 281: "He was not, in other words, thinking of himself as a condemned person, but as a *bestiarius* hardened by long training; and it had been through quick and decisive action involving a succession of the greatest efforts that he had been delivered from his opponents at Ephesus." The difference is made clear by such visual evidence as the surviving portion of the amphitheatre mosaic from the Villa di Dar Buc Ammera at Zliten in modern Libya. A *bestiarius* grips the hair of a *damnatus* and propels him towards a lion. The *bestiarius* is equipped with a whip in his hand, while the *damnatus* flings his hands up protectively against the beast in a vain attempt to prevent the coming onslaught. K.M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades: Roman Executions Staged as Mythological Enactments," *JRS* (80) 1990: 44–73, 54.

²⁸⁷ Christopher Epplett, "The Capture of Animals by the Roman Military," *Greece & Rome* 48.2 (2001): 210–222.

involved, as it was for the military who captured the beasts in the first place, but the result was not legally obligated to be lethal.

Paul's clarity in 1 Corinthians 4 that he is rhetorically presenting himself in a simile of being in the spectacle as part of a death sentence is not to be found in 1 Corinthians 15. Does this elliptical presentation mean that the Ephesian incident is well known to the Corinthians? Or should the lack of details signal its fictitious character, the paucity of description arising from the purely speculative enterprise in which Paul is engaging? Is Paul's appearance as a beast fighter at Ephesus in 1 Corinthians 15 behind his characterization of the apostolic condition as exhibition in a spectacle as one condemned to die? Or is Paul's clear metaphor in 1 Corinthians 4 influencing his description of his personal history in 1 Corinthians 15?

If the event Paul describes is not historic, it is at least consistent with the other historical accounts Paul gives of his life. The image of Paul as prisoner and sufferer for the sake of the gospel resonates with other incidents he presents as real occurrences in his personal history in other correspondence to the Corinthians, such as his flight from Damascus (11:30-33) at the end of Paul's *peristasis* catalog in which he lists his labors, imprisonments, floggings, and times near death for the sake of the gospel. The list includes both moral enemies and neutral enemies and from contexts both within the city and without.²⁸⁸ Paul categorizes oppression as a phenomenon that does not belong solely to Jews, from whom he has received forty lashes minus one (11:24), or Gentiles, who have put him in "danger" (11:26). Oppression happens within the church itself, and so Paul must also endure "anxiety for all the church" (11:28). Paul does not empathize with

²⁸⁸ Paul's use of a *peristasis* catalogue was a traditional philosophical rhetorical device for demonstrating virtue. See Fitzgerald 1988.

the oppressed from his own suffering; he takes on the suffering of fellow believers: “Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I am not indignant?” (11:29). The culminating piece of evidence for the catalog of Paul’s sufferings for the sake of the gospel is his body as fugitive, where he must flee King Aretas and his guards by being “let down in a basket through a window in the wall” (11:33). This, as many commentators have noted, is an inversion of the honors of the civic crown.

What is crucial, then, about Paul’s appearance in the arena in both 1 Corinthians 4 and 15 is that the body that Paul presents as a rhetorician assumes servile connotations that are far beneath the status as a free Roman that he claims to possess in his defense of his role as an apostle in 1 Corinthians 9.²⁸⁹ Paul highlights the real danger that rhetorical violence entails for individuals throughout the epistle, underscoring inflicting corporal punishment on others is unworthy behavior on the part of Christians. Paul is emphatic at 6:1-7 that it would be better to be defrauded than to bring a lawsuit against another believer. He reminds the Corinthians that at the eschaton they will judge angels. Angels are among those who judge Paul at 4:9 when Paul claims that he and other apostles are exhibited “as last of all,” as a “spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals.” The peril in which Paul’s apostolic work places him can be seen again when he asks the Corinthians, “And why are we putting ourselves in danger every hour?,” at 15:30 in the context of his defense of the reality of the resurrection of the dead. While there is no

²⁸⁹ In Corinth, Paul faced opponents who maintained traditional expectations that a rhetorician would embody a robust presence and a Christian rhetorician even more so, since Christ’s spirit filled the apostle. Paul believes that the spirit of Christ fills the apostle (cf. 2 Cor. 12:12), but he interprets its effects differently. As Schnackenburg frames the issue: “Christ himself must be proclaimed as crucified, and only in the second place as risen in the life of the one who proclaims [cf. 13,13f], or better, Christ wants to show his power of life to those who receive the gospel, primarily through the weakness of the herald.” Schnackenburg 298.

clear evidence that Paul's fight with wild beasts is historical fact rather than rhetorical fact, it is clear that Paul perceives the act of discoursing with outsiders as one that involves the risk of being brought before civil authorities and being sentenced to death. That for Paul apostolic argumentation is violent can be seen from his use of military imagery in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5: "For though we are subject to all human limitations we do not war according to these limitations; for the weapons of our warfare are not human and weak, but have power through God to destroy strongholds." I will argue that the rhetorical purpose of this discrepancy is to place the role of apostle in the same socially marginalized role as the Roman gladiator, and that vestiges of this social marginality persist in Paul's description of his apostolic role as boxer as opposed to the communal task of running. The apostolic role is a combative one against the bodies of rival apostles and gospels; the communal role constructs civic harmony.

3.3 The Gymnasium and the Games

While the apostolic role in the spectacle is one of shame and dishonor, a placement that demonstrates the need for Paul's historiographic appropriation of Roman imperial prerogatives, the gymnastic role of the individual believer in community is just the opposite: the Corinthians are able to chase honors in the classical Greek ephebic model as individuals as long as they do not envision a specific antagonist but remind themselves there is only one crown. As with proxy baptism, Paul implicitly sanctions the pursuit of excellence represented by agonistic activity in gymnastic events as good. Just as he had accused them of being kings, Paul frames the Corinthians as elite citizens of the *polis*. Rather than being slaves or having served in the military, Paul envisions all of the

Corinthians as having the resources to pursue specialized training in the gymnasium and compete in athletic games for laurels rather than monetary purses at a young age. When he positions the Corinthians as mere infants and himself as their father, rhetorically, he is turning back their life clocks to imagine a scenario wherein each of them have the advantages that had been possessed by all citizens in democratic Classical Greece. As I will argue in the next two chapters, Paul's rhetorical move is consonant with the democratization of Second Temple Judaism, which had occasioned a shift from a Temple-centric cult controlled by elite priests to a set of individualized religious practices. For now, in the next sections, I will demonstrate the citizen status Paul attributes to the Corinthians through his invocation of the gymnasium and the panhellenic games.

3.4 The Greek Gymnasium in 1 Corinthians 4 and 9-10

The Gymnasium in Roman Corinthian Culture

At the time of Paul's letter, the gymnasium had probably not undergone the renovations of later decades. The large exedra in the courtyard was Hadrianic, and evidence for the Gymnasium Stoa dates from the mid to second half of the first century C.E.²⁹⁰ Nonetheless, it was an important feature of life in Roman period Corinth, being situated directly next to the Asklepieion, a feature of civic planning that implicitly connected care of the body and health.²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ Dutch 132.

²⁹¹ Despite a lack of physical evidence for them, Wiseman holds that Corinth, as a large city, would have had multiple gymnasia. This idea corresponds with the second century statement of Aelius Aristides: Furthermore, in the second century CE, Aelius Aristides describes Corinth's second century educational apparatus as multiply centered: "the

Use of the gymnasium and participation in contests arranged by gymnasium officials would have been prestigious. *Paideia* was not only a pursuit of those whose ancestry had historically wielded power; it was also a means of upward mobility because it was an expression of enculturation as a citizen. This was especially true in the early imperial period, when we see Livy cast Virginia's inability to cross the forum to go to school as a major event in Roman history and Horace describe his own freedman father taking great care to make sure his son had the social advantages conveyed by the appropriate educational accoutrements: "Anyone who saw my clothes and attendant slaves—as is the way in a great city—would have thought that such expense was met from ancestral wealth" (*Sat.* 1.6.78-80).²⁹²

However, it would have been even more prestigious for Jews. In the years following the initial equation of the gymnasium with anti-Jewish Hellenism in *I Maccabees*, Jews across the empire had come to embrace gymnasium education and all its accompanying opportunities and privileges for civic life.²⁹³ Yet, Jewish hold on citizenship remained tenuous. Jews could be excluded from gymnasia and conscripted into the army as a group for the misdeed of one individual.²⁹⁴ Following a scandal involving the swindling

gymnasiums and schools are in themselves instructions and stories." *Or.* 46.28. Oster, van Nijf, and Dutch think it would be unlikely for Roman Corinth to not have a gymnasium during the New Testament period. See Dutch 135.

²⁹² Lauren Hackworth Petersen, "'Clothes Make the Man': Dressing the Roman Freedman Body," *Bodies and Boundaries in Graeco-Roman Antiquity*, ed. Thorsten Foegen and Mireille M. Lee (New York: DeGruyter, 2009): 197.

²⁹³ In Seleucid Antioch, Jews were clearly entitled to a share in the official distribution of oil by gymnasiarchs, which indicates a similar state of affairs. *Jos., Ant.* 12.120.

²⁹⁴ Jewish exclusion from traditional access to the gymnasium and ephebeia can be evidenced by *CPJ*, 2, pp. 29–33, no. 151, p. 41, no. 153. Militarily, this was a change from the Hellenistic practice when, as Kasher argues from Egyptian papyri such as *CPJ* I, 19, ll. 43–44, independent organization and legal status was largely derived from military

of a converted Roman matron in 19 C.E., for example, Tiberius conscripted 4,000 Jews in Rome for guard-duty against the *banditti* in Sardinia. Some may have claimed an established privilege of exemption from such duty.²⁹⁵ Such exemptions were temporarily granted to Jews by Roman authorities in cities like Ephesus and Delos. In 41 C.E., Claudius issued an order that was devastating for well-educated Alexandrian Jews like Philo.²⁹⁶ The edict ordered Jews not “to pour into” the games and restricted entry into the ephebate based on parentage. While most interpreters take Claudius’ edict as a restriction of Jews from the gymnasium, Erich Gruen argues that neither “gymnasiarchal education nor access to citizenship is even hinted at here.”²⁹⁷ However, whether or not Gruen is correct, Claudius’ edict serves as another reminder that the Jews are not truly citizens of the city and need to be content with the privileges they have been given.²⁹⁸ Fashioning one’s child’s body in the manner of the *kalos k’agathos*, the elite Greek gentleman, may have been “open” to Jews, but Jews could not take this privilege for granted as could the elite non-Jewish families of Roman Greece.

3.4.1 *1 Corinthians 4*

service. See Aryeh Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt: The Struggle for Equal Rights* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985): 50.

²⁹⁵ Elmer Truesdell Merrill, “The Expulsion of Jews from Rome under Tiberius,” *Classical Philology* 14 (1919): 365–372. Unlike the Hellenistic period, when Jews and other ethnic and religious groups were allowed to serve in the army while keeping their national customs, the Roman legion included obligatory religious elements such as the *auspicia*, *signa* and *auguria*, ceremonials, sacrifices, oaths, and imperial cult. Consequently, though Jews might serve in the auxiliary forces (*auxilia*) with a much reduced risk of conversion, serving in the Roman military was unlikely to be the Jewish route to citizenship. See Kasher 78.

²⁹⁶ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 60; A. Kasher, “The Jewish Attitude to the Alexandrian Gymnasium in the First Century A.D.,” *AJAH* 1 (1976): 148–61.

²⁹⁷ Erich Gruen, *Diaspora*, 81.

²⁹⁸ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 58–59.

Paul's first reference to the gymnasium both attempts to confer the high status of the institution on the Corinthian Christians and to critique the institution as unmeritocratic.²⁹⁹ At 1 Corinthians 4:15, Paul admonishes the Corinthians that they have many pedagogues, but they do not have many fathers. This statement has a twofold purpose. First, it critiques the elite cultural apparatus of *paideia*. Second, it establishes Paul as patriarch.³⁰⁰ Thus, it seems that the gymnastic references in 1 Corinthians plays into the models of the Corinthian body proposed by scholars such as Dale Martin and Elizabeth Castelli, though they do not include Paul's athleticism in their data.³⁰¹ As Joop Smit has contended, this establishes Paul's authority as father over against possible rivals like Apollos. Paul describes Apollos as a popular baptizer (1:12) and a builder on Paul's foundation (3:10). Paul implies he is a mere pedagogue among many (4:14-15, 21).³⁰² Yet, by appropriating the role of father to the Corinthian Christians, Paul has already surpassed these rivals. Whereas these rivals act as teachers in a gymnasium, unable to elevate the status of their charges but merely able to educate charges to be citizens, Paul

²⁹⁹ A tension existed in Second Temple Judaism between, in the words of 4QMMT, the holiness of all Israel and the priests as holy of holies. 4QMMT B 75–82; see Himmelfarb, *Kingdom of Priests*, 27–28. In contrast to the Jewish priesthood, rabbis fashioned themselves as a profession or class in which position was achieved by training. As Martha Himmelfarb notes, “even if the story of the poor shepherd who became Rabbi Akiva is fiction, it is a fiction that reveals something about rabbinic self-understanding.”

³⁰⁰ *Rabdos* was the traditional instrument for punishing small children at home and in school, and it was a main metaphor for *paideia* in the sense of discipline. By speaking of the stick, Paul encourages the Corinthians to think of themselves as recipients of an elite education as adults rather than recipients of the traditional elite education as children, if “father” is to be understood as meaning “teacher.” Reidar Aasgaard, “Paul as a Child: Children and Childhood in the Letters of the Apostle,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126 (2007): 129–159, here 152.

³⁰¹ Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body*; Elizabeth Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power*.

³⁰² Joop F.M. Smit, “‘What Is Apollos? What Is Paul?’ in Search for the Coherence of First Corinthians 1:10–4:21,” *Novum Testamentum* 44 (2002): 231–251, 242.

constructs Christian instruction as a process by which Christians not only learn how to be spiritual citizens but stand on equal footing with their teachers. Paul recounts that he has sent his “child” Timothy to instruct them, telling them this was “to remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church” (4:17). I argue that the athletic metaphors participate in the construction of a different type of body, one that differentiates itself from imperial and rival Jewish and Christian counterparts.

3.4.2 1 Corinthians 9:24–27

In Paul’s athletic metaphors of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27, Paul describes only himself as training for and competing in the athletic event of boxing. His rhetoric does not presume that the Corinthians will find the sport particularly prestigious; in fact, the situation is just the opposite. Paul presumes that the Corinthians will find the footrace highly prestigious. He, however, is the one who “enslaves” his body. Paul’s participation in the athletic event of boxing takes a further stance against honorific modes of civic expression by its implicit critique of rhetorical culture. While Paul engages in the agonistic competition for excellence typical of the classical Greek model of the pursuit of *arête*, Paul depicts himself as not doing so without actual physical damage to his opponents. In this section, I will argue that Paul utilizes the connection of boxing with Roman combat sports and imperialism to display the degradation to which the Corinthians were being subjected as “those who rule” by Roman colonization. Paul’s appropriation of boxing for himself as renouncer of honor is part of his eschewal of the oppressive structures of the (Roman) world such as the spectacle.

3.4.2.1 *The Place of the Athletic Metaphors in Paul's Argument: Apostolic Defense or Exodus Typology?*

The place of Paul's athletic metaphors within the context of Paul's immediate argument in 1 Corinthians 9 and 10 has been debated. Paul's athletic metaphors from the stephanitic games are often seen as the culmination of Paul's discussion of his apostolic rights.³⁰³ Sumney, though, has suggested that Paul's reflection on his apostolic rights ends at v. 23 and his instructions on running the race of faith in 9:24–27 properly begin the Israelites' unsuccessful journey in the desert in chapter 10.³⁰⁴ Reading chapter 10 in the light of 9:24–27, the Corinthians would understand the Israelites “began the race, but through lack of self-discipline sank back into idolatry and so did not receive the reward.” Parallels between the situations of the Corinthian Christians and the Israelites in the wilderness include baptism, partaking of spiritual food, and association with Christ. Accordingly, to Sumney, Paul desires the Corinthians to apprehend the similarity and identify with the Israelites, learn from their mistakes, and practice self-discipline.

Sumney's proposal is commendable in that it makes sense of the abased social position in which Paul places himself in 1 Corinthians 9:12–23. Paul starts off renouncing the rights he has claimed as due to him in 1 Corinthians 9:1–11 with high

³⁰³ Margaret Mitchell identifies 1 Corinthians as an example of deliberative rhetoric and finds that Paul is giving himself as an example rather than offering an apology. See *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: John Knox, 1991): 243–47. B.J. Oropeza argues that Paul's idea of running emerges in Galatians 2:2 and has a prophetic valence based on its scriptural relation to Habakkuk 2:2–4. See “Running in Vain, But Not as an Athlete (Galatians 2:2): The Impact of Habakkuk 2:2–4 on Paul's Apostolic Commission,” *Jesus and Paul: Global Perspectives in Honor of James D.G. Dunn for his 70th Birthday*, eds. B.J. Oropeza, C.K. Robertson, and Douglas C. Mohrmann (London: T & T Clark, 2009): 140–150.

³⁰⁴ Jerry L. Sumney, “The Place of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 in Paul's Argument,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119 (2000): 329–333.

status priestly imagery in v. 12-14. The first athletic imagery of 1 Corinthians 9 appears at v. 12, with Paul's notation that "Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ." Not only does this notion of an "obstacle" invoke the idea of the "race of faith," but the image of enduring for food at a temple would have resonated with Roman Greek ritual practices such as the whipping of elite boys at the Temple of Artemis Orthia as they attempted to steal cheeses from its altar.³⁰⁵ Paul's reiterates his desire to endure anything in more stark terms in v. 15, where he professes a desire to die rather than be deprived of his "ground for boasting." In the next verse, however, he expressly identifies his proclamation of the gospel as an "obligation" instead of a "ground for boasting" since he proclaims the gospel not of his "own will." Paul equates his commission with slavery in v. 19, and he extends the loss of his rights to every conceivable category. Whereas at v. 12 he merely made no use of his apostolic rights, Paul proceeds to elaborate in vv. 19-23 how his status as a renunciant of all status allows him to relate with every social class in Roman society. The categories with which he explicitly identifies are free, slave, Jew, "those outside the law," and weak.

However, the athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 are differentiated from the Israelite exile in 1 Corinthians 10 in terms of status and prestige. Boxing and running were athletic pursuits of the gymnasium and isolympic games. The Israelite exile was an event experienced by all classes of society, including the lower classes of society, slaves and freedmen. Paul emphasizes the honorific nature of the games by underscoring the pursuit of the imperishable crown. We can be certain that Paul refers to these and not a

³⁰⁵ Paus. 3.16.7, 3.16.9-11.

jab as a gladiator because Paul mentions shadow-boxing and disqualification. Paul adduces the *paideia* and athletic competition engaged in by the upper classes of society, those with enough leisure and financial resources to participate in and excel at physiological moves that were artificially restricted around a track or a ring and related to a physical and educational apparatus.

3.4.2.2 *Paul as Pugilist*

Paul's use of the rhetorical commonplace "Do you not know that..." (9:25) to introduce the athletic metaphors indicates that this *topos* should draw upon the experience of his audience.³⁰⁶ This makes his restriction of the boxing metaphors to himself all the more significant. Pfitzner and more recent interpreters such as Seesengood have characterized Paul's athletic metaphors of the dominant culture as a subversive discursive act.³⁰⁷ I, however, see Paul parodying boxing as part of the Roman cultural apparatus and interpret his exhortation to run as part of the Roman Greek predilection for nostalgia as a form of resistance to Roman occupation. Through his description of his preparation for a boxing event and his participation in the event itself, he presents a picture of his body that highlights the degradation inflicted upon individuals by the Roman cultural apparatus.

Paul's body is the focus of Paul's argument that combat with the world's opponents imperils the Christian body and forces it to train lest it be disqualified. The verbs Paul chooses to describe his training underscore the demeaning quality of his role as a boxer. According to Johannes Weiss, the repetitious verbs ὑπωπιάζω and δουλαγωγῶ are a

³⁰⁶ Conzelmann.

³⁰⁷ Pfitzner; Seesengood.

“Hebraizing parallel double expression.”³⁰⁸ However, the fact that Paul trains to “bring himself under submission” and to “enslave” himself demonstrate that this rhetorical feature has actual meaning.

3.4.2.3 Paul’s Opponents

Paul’s insistence that he boxes “not as one beating the air” (οὕτως πυκτεύω ὥς οὐκ ἄερα δέπων, 9:26) tells us that Paul is engaged in agonistic competition in earnest. But who are the opponents receiving these real blows? Are they competing apostles, specters who repeatedly overshadow Paul’s thoughts? Or are they related to the “messenger of Satan” in 2 Corinthians responsible there for putting a thorn into the side of the body that Paul is training in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27? Boxing, as a more violent sport, differed from wrestling and running in that it was typically not a sport one practiced with one’s friends or political allies. Moralists derided social leeches, for instance, for serving as punching bags for their patrons. According to Plutarch (*ca.* 45–120 C.E.), the Spartan leader Lycurgus forbade the Spartans from engaging in boxing or wrestling, because he did not want them to know what it was like to be defeated. Spartans were to channel their energy toward waging war, implying an association between pugilistic and militaristic engagements.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁸ Johannes Weiss, “Beitrage zur paulinischen Rhetorik,” *Theologische Studien, Festschrift für B. Weiss* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897): 169.

³⁰⁹ Roman period Spartans instead preferred to emphasize teams. A ball game, the *sphaireis* tournament, functioned as a liminal event that marked the transition from their time as ephebes and the beginning of adulthood. See Nigel M. Kennell, *The Gymnasium of Virtue: Education and Culture in Ancient Sparta* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina, 1995): 60–61.

I think we might find the identity of Paul's opponents if we look to the wrestling imagery in early Christian and Jewish literary encounters with Satan and his angels.³¹⁰ There, the refinement of the believer's soul is the purpose of the *agōn*, where the satanic figure actually seems at least to not begrudge the believer's moral progress—the *agōn* is clearly defined as a struggle within the heart of the individual and not as a struggle between the forces of good and evil on a cosmic scale. Dale Martin, noting the presence of “good” angels (2 Cor. 11:14; Gal. 1:8; 4:14) and “bad” angels (1 Cor. 6:3) in Paul's theology, posits that the “angel of Satan” whose “thorn in the flesh” that tortures him is to a malevolent satanic tormentor. He points to the phrases “because of the angels” 1 Cor. 11:10 and “the rulers of this age” in 1 Cor. 2:6 and 8 as indicative of angels who usurp the correct order of the cosmos. In Gal. 3:19, to Martin, it is possible that the angels gave the law to Moses rather than God himself, and thus angels were responsible for the law that Paul wants to replace with faith (particularly when the verse is read in light of Acts 7:53).³¹¹ This effectively obviates God from responsibility for the practical consequences of having given the world via Moses the law, and it means that angelic agency is only occasionally dependent on divine approval. Martin assigns angels of God and angels of Satan to the same species; in Christian thought, demons belong to another.

What if, though, the Corinthians were operating with a notion of ambiguous figures straddling the divide between human and divine? The idea of a hero cult is, after all, often presumed to be the basis of the funerary games, and Theagenes is the perfect example of a mortal athlete who became sufficiently divinized to have his own cult statue

³¹⁰ For the Greekness of wrestling, see Goldhill, *Being Greek*, 182–183.

³¹¹ Dale B. Martin, “When Did Angels Become Demons?,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129 (2010): 657–677.

with healing powers. In this case, the term demons would be restricted because it was reserved for spirits being exorcised and “angel of Satan” would function as a figure not unlike Heracles or Theagenes. Cult sites for demigods—divinized humans—peppered Greece. Paul described himself as having taken a heavenly journey in 2 Corinthians. According to 1 Corinthians, some Corinthians were attempting to eat food sacrificed to idols. Clearly, some of them would have interpreted the angel of Satan in 2 Corinthians not as a hindrance to personal progress but as a trainer figure in a liminal position reminiscent of that of Satan in the Book of Job, where Satan does not attempt to interfere with Job’s faith out of disobedience to God but because his doubt of the sincerity of Job’s allegiance to God.³¹² This is a much more likely scenario because Paul insists the angel of Satan gives him humility, a spiritual good, while the courtroom imagery of 1 Corinthians 4 is in response to those who oppose Paul’s apostleship. Paul’s anticipation of judging angels one day is primarily directed at those “angels” trying to persuade his churches to choose a gospel other than the one he has been preaching.

³¹² In the *Testament of Job* 27, Satan admits defeat in his wrestling match with Job: “I was like an athlete wrestling with another athlete, and the one hurled the other down, and the one above choked the one below, filling his mouth with sand, and battered all his limbs, and since the one underneath was bearing this harshness and was not admitting defeat. The athlete above cried loudly at this crisis. Even so, you, Job, are underneath and in misfortune but you have overcome my wrestling tricks which I was laying upon you.” Like a statesman, Job has wrestled the adversary for control of a mutually contested domain. The presence of Satan and the notion of domain seems more pronounced and tangible than the image in Philo of Jacob as wrestler: “Although Pleasure expects to heel-trip (*pternizein*) and deceive the discerning mind, she will herself be heel-tripped by Jacob, trained in wrestling not of the body, but the sort which the soul wrestles with its enemies: the habits, fighting against passions and evil” (*Allegorical Laws* 3.190). The Septuagint had already developed the image of Jacob as a wrestler by translating Gen. 27:36 with the Greek wrestling term *pternizo*, “heel-pull,” or “heeltrip.” Philo has Jacob continue as the heel tripper even at Jabok (*On Changes of Names* 81.2).

Elsewhere, Paul admonishes the Galatians with an elision of himself and an angel from heaven (1:8): even if an angel of heaven appears to tell them an alternate history of Christ, the Galatians should believe the word from Paul they accepted. Clearly, in Paul's opinion, some of the angels of heaven are in fact angels of Satan trying to land the Corinthians in another direction than the one in which Paul is going. However, the angels—those of Heaven and those of Satan—are not simply two forms of the same angelic species; these angels are human, rival preachers. Paul is competitive with these rival preachers—he too has experienced a cosmic journey—but Paul does not rely on his heavenly tour to justify his authority or to claim subsequent revelations. This human status of angels corresponds to what we know from inscriptional evidence around Greece. Early Christian tombstones from Thera employ the word angel to refer to the deceased in *I.G.*, XII, iii, Suppl.: 1384, 1636, 1637.³¹³ Bruce Winter has suggested that “because of the angels” (1 Cor. 11:10) refers to human messengers who might report the Corinthians to the Roman-controlled political authorities, known to distrust even local associations much less foreign religious cults. These messengers were interpreting situations using Roman legal categories, and they were liable to construe an unveiled woman as a promiscuous woman with no legal standing.³¹⁴ If this is the case, then, as in Galatians 2:4 where Paul mentions false brethren who are threats to the community (“false brethren who sneaked in to spy out our liberty, that they might bring us into bondage”), Paul probably expects the Corinthians to envision him boxing and contending against real,

³¹³ James Wiseman, “The Gymnasium of Corinth, 1969–1970,” *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, 41 (1972): 1–42, here 28.

³¹⁴ Bruce Winter, *After Corinth*, 136–138. Cf. Margaret M. Mitchell.

human opponents. These opponents possess a Christian faith that differs significantly from Paul's or is insincere.

Hindrance in the race of faith—whether from false apostles or undisclosed “stumbling blocks”—is a recurring theme in the Pauline corpus. In Galatians 5:7, for example, Paul assumes that someone has hindered the Galatians after they were “running well.” The *koptō* root of *egkoptō* suggests hitting or cutting.³¹⁵ In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul is emphatic that he is not shadowboxing; his blows are, in fact, landing on another person. Disqualification could happen through inappropriate punches or fixing a game. Paul is playing by the rules that he must challenge his opponent, a condition made easier since the community is exhorted to run and not box.

Early Second Temple Jewish and Christian texts envisioned wrestling as a spiritual exercise to refine one's own soul. In his commentary on 1 Corinthians, Conzelmann cites the consensus that general collection of metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 functioned as rhetoric of “ethical transformation” in terms of individual spiritual struggle on the order of Jacob's struggle with the angel.³¹⁶ Such a motif is found in Hebrews 12:1-2 and Josephus, which both claim that God exercises and reproves the community of faith in the wilderness. 1 Corinthians 9, though, would seem to lack any notion of struggle in terms of reproof or as an end in and of itself. Paul emphasizes the attainment of the prize and the need not to be disqualified (cf. 2 Tim). While Paul applies

³¹⁵ For Galatians 5:7, Longenecker translates “Who cut in (*egkoptō*) on you to be keeping you from obeying the truth?” and notes that the verb “in the context of a race suggests tripping or otherwise interfering with a runner, which inevitably had to do with one runner cutting in on another as they ran and so impeding the other's progress” (*Galatians* [WBC], 230).

³¹⁶ Conzelmann, 111.

it to himself, he is not engaged in a struggle against himself but actual opponents with different religious beliefs.³¹⁷

3.4.3 Reading 1 Corinthians 4 and 9 Together

However, while Paul is boxing others—and contending for a prize rather than fixing the fight—he is disciplining himself. Paul tells us that he bruises his body in training. This self-mortification of the flesh is unusual in that Paul seems to play the role of his own gymnasiarch. In 1 Cor. 4:15, Paul has reproached the Corinthians for their preoccupation with status, noting that even if they have countless guides to Christ, they do not have many fathers. While the pedagogues guiding the Corinthians between the gymnasium and their respective homes may be slaves, Paul is not a slave in 1 Cor. 4:15.³¹⁸ Rather, he is the Corinthians’ father. In 1 Cor. 9, he takes on even more authority by taking responsibility for meting out physical punishment—a role assumed by the gymnasiarch. Overall, these passages indicate Paul is assuming and surpassing the traditional roles of gymnastic officials. He has authority as a father, and, in his technical mastery of a Greek sport, could be rivaling other surrogate fathers—the emperor, for instance, who sat in the middle of the Corinthian agora sacrificing in his role as *pontifex maximus* and *pater patriae*.

³¹⁷ In John Chrysostom’s assessment of Paul in his *Homily 25 on 2 Cor. 3* (PG 61.574.32), by contrast, the athletic contest is spiritualized: “Entering the world as if a stadium, and having stripped before all, thus he made a noble stand. For he knew the devils who were boxing with him. Accordingly he straightaway shone radiant from the beginning, from the very starting post, and to the end he persevered unchanging; instead, he even increased his pursuit as he drew nearer the prize.” Likewise, Tertullian envisioned Paul’s opposing beasts at Ephesus (1 Cor. 15) to be his Ephesian opponents, *angeloi* of a different character, perhaps.

³¹⁸ Dutch 106.

When Paul invoked the metaphor of athletics, using the specific examples of boxing and running, his listeners would have understood him as using a particularly Greek trope, referencing the Greek *gymnasium*. In choosing boxing and footracing out of the panoply of athletic activities, Paul was availing himself to a classic combination dating back to Homeric literature. Like Paul in 1 Corinthians 9, Virgil includes only a foot race and a boxing match in his version of the Heroic Age funeral games given by Aeneas for his father Anchises. The other heavy sports and light sports are ignored in favor of the dualism of this classic pair. It is not a natural move for a lover of athletics, an ardent attendee of the Isthmian games. The lack of chariot racing references denies the Corinthians of truly being envisioned as kings, since the chariot race had long possessed aristocratic connotations.

Paul's use of athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 invites the Corinthians to envision him training his body, a process that would have involved nudity in his social location. This invitation not only corresponds with his role as recipient of bloodthirsty gazes in the spectacles related in 1 Corinthians but also with his description of the thorn in his side in 2 Corinthians. Paul, who claims the body is a temple, is very much an embodied human being in his self-presentation to the Corinthians. The athletic metaphors, which occur in 1 Corinthians 9 following a discussion of Paul's unexercised rights as an apostle, do indeed resonate with the spectacle and courtroom language Paul uses earlier in the letter at 4:9. In a Roman court, an unfavorable verdict could result in being sentenced to die in the Roman spectacle, the condition to which Paul compares his apostleship: "For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, as though

sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals” (1 Cor. 4:9).

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have set Paul’s spectacle metaphors of 1 Corinthians 4 and 15 in juxtaposition with Paul’s pedagogical metaphors in 1 Corinthians 4 and 9. Paul shares with Roman Greek cultural elites the same privileging of traditional Greek pedagogical models over against the new regime order indicated by the Roman spectacle, which was resented by natives as being costly and bloody. He positions his Corinthian correspondents in the upper echelons of Roman Greek society, fashioning them as well-born youth whose families have the financial means to support their ephebic training. Paul reminds them that, though they have this local status and many pedagogues, they do not have many fathers. Implicitly, he invokes the paternalistic language of the imperial cult. Rather than Caesar being the father of the Corinthians, Paul is their father. Such a rhetorical strategy highlights the social cost of empire that was already acknowledged in the resentment toward imperial structures felt by Greek elites.

In 1 Corinthians 4 and 15, in diatribal passages, Paul describes exhibition in the spectacle as an apostolic condition. This debased status contrasts with the social honor enjoyed by the Corinthian Christians in their enculturation to Greek athletic models. Paul uses the first person plural to indicate that his placement in the amphitheater is not a singular one. Those judging him are not the Corinthians, whom he would have ruled so that the group vulnerable to exposure in the amphitheater might rule with them. Paul and the members of the enigmatic “we” are judged by the rulers of this age and by angels. If

Paul had not believed in the veracity of the resurrection, he would never, he assures his audience, have fought beasts at Ephesus. Paul thus questions the underlying logic of the Roman arena. *Munera* were originally funeral games put on by members of the elite for their heroic dead. A social undesirable was trained to perform deeds of military heroism so compelling that elite women would prefer them to elite men.

Unlike in his spectacle imagery in 1 Corinthians 4 and 15, which are diatribal passages and may or may not refer to events perceived by ancient audiences as factual historical events, Paul's athletic imagery in 1 Corinthians 4 and 9 can be identified as events with a basis in fact for the most elite Corinthians, but certainly not the membership of the Corinthian house-churches. The athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 can concretely be said to allude to the local color of Corinth and the nearby Isthmian games. The lack of a reference to the bloody Roman arena and the invocation of the Classical gymnastic model used to train elite youths for citizenry would have flattered the Corinthians, who evinced a serious concern about status. It also would have recalled the classic models of prestige over against imperial upstarts.

4. Running for the Crown

For Paul, as in contemporary Roman literature, the “race of life” is a common pursuit that encompasses the span of an individual’s life.³¹⁹ While Paul’s athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 are often seen as elements of local color arising from the nearby Isthmian Games, they belong to a footrace motif found in Hellenistic Jewish and Roman literature that only occasionally is extended into wrestling or boxing.³²⁰ I will argue that running through the footrace motif in the authentic Pauline correspondence is a connection of the footrace to Greco-Roman ideals of education, citizenship, and military representation of national identity.³²¹ Paul transfers believers

³¹⁹ The “race of life” is a commonplace. See, for example, Juno’s despair at watching a man on his way to defeat in Vergil’s *Aeneid*: *nunc iuuenem imparibus uideo concurrere fatis* (Now I see a young man running to meet an unequal fate, 12.149). Philo uses the image of a “race of life” repeatedly, blithely presupposing an unfair race in which individuals are tripped by the vicissitudes of life: “For no man unaided can run the race of life from birth to death without stumbling; we all have to endure being tripped, sometimes intentionally, sometimes accidentally” (*Quod Deus sit immutabilis* 75); “Rarely does God allow a man to run the race of life to the end without stumbling or tripping, and permit him to avoid both kinds of foul, intentional and accidental, by sweeping past the other runners with a sudden surge of speed which they cannot match” (*De Agricultura* 180). See Harold Arthur Harris, *Sport in Greece and Rome* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1972): 32. While literary evidence for the metaphor of a footrace or obstacle course of life is secure, iconographic evidence for the “race of life” is debated and takes the form of chariot races rather than footraces. Chariot races from the circus were common motifs for funerary art, and they were the most popular choice to commemorate children. Erotes gave circus motifs a transcendent aspect that meant the “race of life” at least entailed the eternal, if not “faith,” as for Christians. See Eve D’Ambra, “Racing With Death: Circus Sarcophagi and the Commemoration of Children in Roman Italy,” *Hesperia Supplements* 41 (2007): 339–351, 341–3. The lack of a fixed position of the chariot team in the iconography leads Humphrey to conclude that the popularity of the motif arises purely from the popularity of the circus rather than a philosophical musing on the course of life. John H. Humphrey, *Roman Circuses: Arenas for Chariot Racing* (Berkeley: California, 1986): 200–201.

³²⁰ Philo, *On Dreams* I.129–130; cf. Robbins, *Tapestry*, 131.

³²¹ These ideals are foundational to Greco-Roman thought, as can be seen in Plato’s *Apologue of Protagoras*, which describes both parents sending their children to the gymnasium “that they may not be compelled through bodily weakness to play the coward

from citizenship in the secular *politeuma* to the heavenly *politeuma* in the footrace motif in Philippians 3, with Paul's emphasis placed on a victorious Christ figure who subjects his opponents as might any Roman emperor.³²² The footrace motif in Romans situates the site of athletic activity not in the arena or gymnasium but in the natural terrain trod by the newly emerging nation of Israel on its exodus from Egypt. In 1 Corinthians 9 and 10, we find both athletic events connected with citizenship and exodus typology. In 9:24–27, each believer runs in competition for a single crown. We are not told whether Christ crowns the victors. Paul tells his audience that he himself may not be able to complete his contest, let alone win it. Yet, he encourages the Corinthians to run so as to win, presuming that none of them will be disqualified. If in Philippians Paul's exhortation to imitate him assimilates Paul to the victorious Christ, then in 1 Corinthians Paul's projected defeat accomplishes just the opposite: it leaves the prophetic role void, allowing each believer to race toward it. Paul channels Corinthians' agonistic spirit toward a definable goal as a pragmatic pastoral move and implies that each believer may surpass him in spiritual authority as a theological move.

I will argue the prophetic role each believer adopts by undertaking a footrace for the "imperishable crown" conforms to the democratization Shaye Cohen has seen in Second Temple Judaism, with which Paul, who trained as a Pharisee, was familiar.³²³

in war or on any occasion" and a philosophical race of rhetoric where philosophers adjust their speed in order to run the stadium together rather than to win.

³²² *Politeuma* in Philippians 3:20 is a *hapax legomenon* in the authentic Pauline correspondence, but the concept of the *politeuma* is routinely taken to be dogmatic for Paul. See Richard S. Ascough, *Paul's Macedonian Associations: The Social Context of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians* (WUNT 2.161; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003): 162–90.

³²³ Shaye J.D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1988): 10, 97.

This democratization of religious practice shifted the heart of worship from the Temple to individual rituals, from center to periphery. These practices represented a transition away from the strictly regulated model of prophecy wherein a prophet supported a king and influenced the national discourse.³²⁴ In the Second Temple period, there were a wider array of individuals who had access to education and could “seek and find” the answers to their own questions in Scripture in synagogues and homes around the Mediterranean.³²⁵ Paul, in seeking to distance the fledgling Christian movement from fulfillment of the prescriptions of the Mosaic Law that were impediments to Gentile participation in Christian house-churches, sought to replace the individualistic, charismatic role of Moses with the communal “prophethood of all believers.”³²⁶ Thus, Paul’s model of spiritual pursuit in 9:24–27 pushes against the hierarchy of prophecy found in 1 Corinthians 14:5.³²⁷ It impels the believer toward non-ecstatic, conscious, and

³²⁴ Ephraim E. Urbach, “When Did Prophecy Cease,” *Tarbiz* 17 (1946): 1–11 (8) (Hebrew). According to Josephus, Jewish prophecy in the Second Temple period took the form of fortune-telling for local audiences. See Josephus, *Ant.* 13.311–13; 14.373–79; see also Josephus, *J.W.* 1.69; 1.78–80; 1.347; 1.657; 2.159; 4.385–88. Josephus, of course, was intimately familiar with the role of national prophet, having revived the role in his service to Vespasian.

³²⁵ Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988): 244; Jacob Wright, “Seeking, Finding and Writing in Ezra–Nehemiah,” *Unity and Disunity in Ezra–Nehemiah: Redaction, Rhetoric and Reader*, ed. Mark J. Boda and Paul L. Redditt (Sheffield: Sheffield, 2008): 278. On the emergence of a literary class from the bureaucratic–administrative class, see A.L. Oppenheim, “On an Operational Device in Mesopotamian Bureaucracy,” *JNES* 18 (1959): 121–28; and D. Schmandt–Besserat, “The Earliest Precursor of Writing,” *Scientific American* 6 (1978): 38–47.

³²⁶ If we are to be guided by the character of Jewish teaching as represented by Mark, where Jesus is said to teach as “one with authority and not as the scribes” (1:22), then this charismatic authority constitutes a stepping into a void created by the democratization of Second Temple Jewish observances and not by a denigration of the authority of scribes and synagogal authorities.

³²⁷ Elizabeth Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991); Laura Nasrallah, *An Ecstasy of Folly: Prophecy and Authority in Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Harvard, 2003).

disciplined pursuit of faith. Members of the Pauline house-churches do not have to receive the gift of prophecy; each individual may undertake the race regardless of individual talent. Moreover, it privileges the athletic event—that is, running—that women would have found most accessible. Paul’s vision is democratic and egalitarian.

In the next two chapters, I will follow the recent work of Brändl in seeing the emphasis of the running metaphor in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 as comprised of two main images: the race of a life lived in faith and the crown.³²⁸ However, unlike past interpretation, which understands the metaphors either as local color or as part of the *agōn* motif running through the Pauline epistles, I will argue that running in 1 Corinthians serves a specific rhetorical function.³²⁹ “Running so as to win,” to paraphrase Paul, is not merely a prelude to the wandering of the proto-Corinthian Israelites in the desert that follows Paul’s apostolic defense in chapter nine, contrary to the arguments of Sumney.³³⁰ Rather, as Vernon Robbins has demonstrated, Paul uses running as the culminating example of the epideictic discourse that predominates in the passage to evaluate and reaffirm cultural values shared by Paul’s community at Corinth.³³¹ This serves to reinforce Paul’s argument throughout the section of 1 Cor. 8–11:1 that the “Strong” should have concern toward the “Weak” during commensality at meals of other associations in Corinth by refraining from food announced as idol food, an

³²⁸ Brändl 329.

³²⁹ One wonders why the circus, which was founded during the reign of Augustus and expanded during the first century CE, was not included in this local color. For a discussion on the archeology of the Roman circus at Corinth, see David Gilman Romano, “A Roman Circus in Corinth,” *Hesperia* 74 (2005): 585–611.

³³⁰ Jerry L. Sumney, “The Place of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 in Paul’s Argument,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119 (2000): 329–333.

³³¹ Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 1996): 77–89.

issue that may have become a point of contention because low-status members (the “Weak”) had less access to such food than members of high socioeconomic status (the “Strong”).³³² I maintain that Paul seeks to position the Corinthian Christians in one of the most honorific traditions of Greek culture: the footrace, what was understood by Roman period authors as the first sport at Olympia. Elsewhere in 1 Corinthians, Paul uses his one-off charismatic authority to challenge the traditional authority of the Roman colony of Corinth, by which I mean he adopts the charismatic mantle only in order to privilege the *mind* and *spirit* of Christ rather than those of the emperor.³³³ Yet, the footrace

³³² For the seminal articulations of the “Strong” and “Weak” in socioeconomic terms, see Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity*, ed. and trans. John Schueltz (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 121–143. For refinement of Theissen’s thesis, including the notion that the Corinthians were divided over “idol food” rather than “idol meat,” to which impoverished Corinthian Christians would have had more access than Theissen suggests, see Justin Meggitt, “Meat Consumption and Social Conflict in Corinth,” *JTS* 45 (1994): 137–41; John Fotopolous, *Food Offered*, 13–14. The outline given by scholarship influenced by Gooch’s work on 1 Cor. 8–11:1 is: address of “idol–food” at temples in 9:1–10:22 (indirect appeal to avoid idolatry in 8:1–13, indirect appeal supported by Paul’s example in 9:1–27, direct challenge to avoid idolatry using Israel’s example in 10:1–22) and address of potential “idol–food” eaten elsewhere in 10:23–11:1. Peter Gooch, *Dangerous Food: 1 Cor 8–10* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier, 1993): 83–84; Carl N. Toney, *Paul’s Inclusive Ethic* (Tuebingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008): 176.

³³³ Castelli has characterized Paul’s self–presentation in 1 Corinthians in terms of a tension between having special authority to speak yet possessing “an emptiness which removes him from the fray.” Paul’s authority to speak comes from having “traditions” that he “hands on” to the Corinthians like a baton. His role as a spiritual authority in 1 Corinthians could be defined using Bourdieu’s idea of a religious specialist. The “religious specialist” is an individual who has been “socially recognized as the exclusive holders of the specific competence necessary for the production or reproduction of a deliberately organized corpus of secret (and therefore rare) knowledge.” Pierre Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field,” *Comparative Social Research* 13 (1991): 9. Castelli has interpreted Paul using Michaelis’ argument for imitation “is not repetition of a model. It is an expression of obedience” (Michaelis 1967: 668). What is striking about this argument is that Michaelis does not appear to connect his reading of the call to obedience he ascribes to Paul’s discourse of mimesis to the broader context of Paul’s larger rhetorical agenda.

envisions the Corinthians as surpassing their exemplar, Paul.³³⁴ In the footrace, we see a model of spiritual authority different from the model of the charismatic founder figure that we find in Paul's calls for imitation of his example and in his recounting of his visionary experience of the resurrection of Christ. Prophetic authority is dispersed throughout the community. Each prophet-runner overcomes the cultural apparatus to gain a crown that confers eternal, not worldly, status. It is not that the prophet is engaged in a personal, solitary "struggle," as many commentators have suggested for this passage. Rather, the race of faith represents a prophetic mode by which anyone with a sincere desire to "win," that is, to attain faith, may successfully transmit a revelation by running "so as to win" within the context of a faith community. Paul uses exodus typology in 1 Corinthians 10 to reinforce his point that both Strong and Weak can attain the imperishable crown through faith by using the Israelite journey through the desert as an "example" for the Corinthian Christian community. Some doubted and died, but they were all expected to complete the march of faith to the Promised Land. Just like the "Strong," the "Weak" may serve as carriers of revelation, as is seen in the racing scenes in the first generations of Christianity in which Rhoda runs to spread the word that Peter remains alive (Acts 12:12-15) and Mary Magdalene, the Beloved Disciple, and Peter race to apprehend and to report the resurrection of Christ (John 20).

In this chapter, I will focus on the implications of running for Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 9 and 10. While these chapters fall within Paul's discussion of commensality at the meals of other associations in Corinth and at the meals of the Corinthian house-churches, they do not serve merely to support the renunciation of rights

³³⁴ Max Weber, *Essays in Economic Sociology*, ed. Richard Swedberg (Princeton: Princeton, 1999): 106.

on the part of believers (1 Cor. 10) just as Paul renounces his rights as an apostle (1 Cor. 9:22). As Sumney has identified the problem, even “though Paul does continue to use himself as an example to be imitated, the subject is no longer the renunciation of rights in these final verses of chapter 9.” Before 1 Corinthians was commonly agreed to be a unified composition, the partition theories of Walter Schmithals and Johannes Weiss associated 9:24–27 with 10:1–22. Paul transitions from contending against practices of other apostles whose authority he respects and other opponents with whom he completely disagrees in 1 Cor. 9:1–23 to a more trenchant reflection on the Christian race of faith in 9:24–10:22 that admits the possibility of disqualification from the race of faith and expulsion from the chosen community for all believers.

I will suggest that Paul’s exhortation to the renunciation of status on the part of the more privileged (the so-called “Strong”) in 1 Cor. 9:24–27 seeks to replace the contemporary model of citizenship, with its forms of reciprocity, and a model of citizenship based on the eternal values of the heavenly *politeuma*. The athletic metaphors in 1 Cor. 9:24–27 act as a pivot to vacate the roles of Christian authorities in 1 Cor. 9:1–23 and to disperse prophetic authority among the community in 1 Cor. 10. Paul highlights the possibility that he himself, an apostle, could be disqualified from the athletic events, which for him comprise boxing and running. The Corinthians only compete in the footrace, which was the most honorable of the events in the athletic games. Paul’s portrayal of this footrace corresponds to those found in both Philippians and Romans, where the footrace ties into ideas of civic education and national identity. In the exodus typology (1 Cor. 10) that follows the athletic metaphors (1 Cor. 9:24–27), Paul uses the middle voice to describe the Corinthians as baptizing themselves into

Moses. Whereas the Corinthians had been fixated on who had been baptized by whom, Paul deemphasizes the role of human leaders, letting the Israelites baptize themselves into the corporate body centered on the charismatic authority of Moses as a figure for the contemporary Christian community at Corinth. This is emblematic of participation in the body of Christ in that it is possible for some of the baptized to be excommunicated.

4.1 Local Color and Broad Metaphor

Due to Paul's reference to a crown as a prize, the background for his metaphorical language in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 has been seen as the stephanitic games, at which one competed for crowns, as opposed to the chrematic games, at which one competed for monetary prizes.³³⁵ The most prestigious stephanitic games were the panhellenic games. These were held in rotation among Olympia, Nemea, Isthmia, and Delphi. The Isthmian Games returned to Corinthian control shortly after Corinth became a Roman colony in 44 B.C.E. Instead of their former location at the temple of Isthmian Poseidon, they were held in Corinth until at least the middle of the first century C.E.³³⁶ The geographic proximity and Roman associations of the Isthmian Games have been thought to provide an ineluctable influence on the athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians.

³³⁵ Brändl 223.

³³⁶ The archaeological excavations conducted by the University of Chicago found that repairs to the site began only in the mid-first century C.E. and the landscaping of the *temenos* and rebuilding of the theater some years later. Elizabeth R. Gebhard, "The Isthmian Games and the Sanctuary of Poseidon in the Early Empire," *The Corinthia in the Roman Period*, ed. T.E. Gregory (Ann Arbor: JRA, 1993): 78–94, 79–82. This explains why Strabo, who visited Corinth and the Isthmian sanctuary in 29 B.C.E., describes the temple of the Isthmian Poseidon as the place "where the Corinthians used to celebrate the Isthmian Games" (8.6.22).

But what kind of influence? Umberto Eco, building on Aristotle's assertion in the *Rhetoric* that the best metaphors are those that "show things in a state of activity" (1411b25ff.), insists that "metaphorical knowledge is knowledge of the dynamics of the real."³³⁷ Paul and the members of the Corinthian house-churches attracted from the Jewish synagogue probably participated in the gymnasium, but they would have had some compunctions about participation in the Isthmian Games. The games were both boisterously sexual and sacredly solemn. On the one hand, sophists and fortunetellers peddled their rhetorical goods, while athletes displayed their nude bodies to the pollution of the gaze. This admixture represented Heracles' original intention, according to Lysias, for the games to be the basis of friendship and camaraderie among citizens.³³⁸ On the other hand, Pausanias, likens the Olympic Games to the Eleusinian mysteries, a cult in which we know the Corinthian Christians should not have been initiates.³³⁹ Moreover, all Corinthians could not have been participating in the Isthmian Games. Training for one of the most elite competitions was arduous and expensive.

Helpful here might be philosopher Brad Inwood's metaphorical typology relating metaphor and philosophical content. Inwood sees a fourfold distribution pattern in metaphors, which may be: (1) purely ornamental, (2) epistemologically essential, (3)

³³⁷ Umberto Eco, "The Scandal of Metaphor: Metaphorology and Semiotics," *Poetics Today* 4.2 (1983): 217–257, 234.

³³⁸ Lysias, *Olympian Speech* 33.2; Håkan Tell, *Plato's Counterfeit Sophists* (Cambridge: Harvard, 2011): 143.

³³⁹ Pausanias asserts that the Olympic Games and the Eleusinian Mysteries were the two most holy sites of Greece: "on nothing does heaven bestow more care than on the Eleusinian rites and the Olympic Games" (5.10.1). Pausanias himself was an initiate into the mysteries, and he claims in his narrative that a dream revelation "forbade the description of the things within the walls of the sanctuary, and the uninitiated are of course not permitted to learn that which they are prevented from seeing" (1.38.7). Thus his claim that the Olympic Games are comparable to the rites at Eleusis are no trifling compliment. See Jaś Elsner, 276.

supportive of a concept without determining content, or (4) deliberately analogical and drawn from experience.³⁴⁰ According to Shadi Bartsch, the third type is most profitable in analyzing Senecan metaphor.³⁴¹ Seneca, as Mireille Armisen-Marchetti points out, refers to the metaphor as a loan: “I am using a figure and a metaphor... I resort to this language for the sake of making clear (*demonstrandae*) my subject; when I say a ‘loan,’ it’s understood as if it were a loan” (*On Benefits* 4.12.1).³⁴² If we apply Seneca’s concept of a “loan” to Paul’s use of metaphors, we can see how Paul can invoke the Isthmian Games without necessarily meaning to carry all of the associations of the games into the lived experience of the race of faith undertaken by the Corinthian Christian. Paul specifically draws a distinction between the Greek games and the Christian games in 9:25: “Every athlete exercises discipline in every way. They do it to win a perishable crown, but we an imperishable crown.”³⁴³

Such a hermeneutic works well if we remember that the “race of faith” in 1 Corinthians 10 and Romans 9 draws from imagery in the Jewish scriptures to compare

³⁴⁰ Brad Inwood, *Reading Seneca. Stoic Philosophy at Rome* (Oxford: Oxford, 2005): 31–2 n. 15.

³⁴¹ Shadi Bartsch, “Senecan Metaphor and Stoic Self-Instruction,” *Seneca and the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2009): 189–90.

³⁴² Mireille Armisen-Marchetti, *Sapientiae facies: Étude sur les images de Sénèque* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1989): 23–7.

³⁴³ Jaś Elsner gives a succinct definition of the secular–sacred and “Despite the fact that Christianity had only escaped persecution less than a century before her, Egeria assumed that her readers, indeed the whole world of her personal experience, would share her Christian initiation. A religion which had begun as an exclusive sect, little different from the initiate cults we meet in Pausanias had become a universal church. One of Christianity’s greatest achievements in transforming the identity of the ancient world was the way in which it used the intense exclusiveness of the initiate cult, which we see so clearly in Pausanias, to define the world of secular and social experience as well. What in Pausanias had been two worlds—secular and sacred—had become one sacred world.” See Jaś Elsner, “Pausanias: A Greek Pilgrim in the Roman World,” *Studies in Ancient Greek and Roman Society*, ed. Robin Osborne (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2004): 260–285, here 282.

the course trod by the faithful with the Exodus from Egypt. As Stanley Stowers notes of the motif in Romans: “The “race metaphor provides a way to illustrate something about how Paul’s intertextuality works and about the perils of making Jewish or Hellenistic influence mutually exclusive. Paul thinks—that is, writes—in both kinds of cultural discourse.”³⁴⁴ Presuming Paul is not uniformly finding perfect convergences of Jewish and Greek usages of the footrace motif, we should assume that Paul must make creative choices as to which elements of cultural borrowing to preserve from each cultural context and that the resulting product represents the pastiche of both contexts.

4.2 The Race of Faith

The Pauline “race of faith” develops out of antecedents in Jewish and Greco-Roman tradition. In Paul’s authentic letters, the “race of faith” seems to suggest the activity of running with one’s feet, whether a formal footrace (cf. Philippians 3:13-14) or activity as a messenger (cf. Romans 10:15) or member of the migrating people of Israel (Romans 9:16, 1 Corinthians 10). Paul’s stress that he “presses toward the mark” or “beats” his body resonates with the uses of the trope by Greco-Roman authors such as Horace, who exhorted audiences to be in self-perfection as “energetic as robbers” (*Epp.* 1.2,32).³⁴⁵ In this emphasis, Paul differs from other New Testament authors, who see the “race of faith” not as exertion but as progress on a set course. The distinction between these two concepts is perhaps seen in Hebrews, which enjoins believers with the phrase “let us run

³⁴⁴ Stowers, *Romans*, 316.

³⁴⁵ On the race of faith in Roman cultural discourse, see A.D. Nock and J.D. Beazley, “Sarcophagi and Symbolism,” *American Journal of Archaeology*, 50 (1946): 140–170, here 146. Horace’s assertion would seem to complement the mythographic tendency to pit heroes such as Herakles or Theseus against robbers. The depiction of Herakles Victorious Over the Robber Cacus, for instance, was popular in the early and mid-imperial period.

to the contest” (τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῶν ἀγῶνα, 12:1). There, the race of life is an injunction to persistence in the chosen path of received Christian traditions, a “Bewährungsethik.”³⁴⁶ It is not focused, as it is in 1 Cor. 9:24–27, on strenuous training and proving excellence by winning a prize or crown.

For Paul, I will argue, the “race of faith” intersects with the Roman Greek cultural discourse that continued to connect gymnastic training, athletic events, and national identity. In this, I build off Schniewind’s position that the background of Paul’s running language is the scriptural imagery of the herald who bears good news of victory on the battlefield and occasionally receives a thank-offering for his efforts.³⁴⁷ The race of faith in Paul’s thought appears to be a more or less discrete concept, though its manifestations could alter depending on Paul’s argument and audience. Semantic overlaps occur in Paul’s uses of the motif in 1 Cor 9:24–27, Phil 3:12–14, and Rom 9:16–30. In 1 Cor 9:24–27 and Phil 3:12–14, one can identify a range of agonistic vocabulary: στάδιον, τρέχω, βραβεῖον, ἀγωνίζομαι, ἐγκρατεύομαι, στέφανος, πυκτεύω. Further semantic parallels can be found in the images of the runner in Gal 2:2 and 5:7, and Phil 2:16.³⁴⁸

However, Paul’s treatment of the “race of faith” also has prophetic valences, with antecedents in passages like Jeremiah 23:21. This can be seen most clearly in Romans 10:15 and Galatians 2:2 and 5:7, but I will argue that these prophetic valences can be found in the athletic metaphors of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 and the exodus motif of 1 Corinthians 10. As one who has preached to others, Paul expresses the hope in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 that he will not have preached to others only to have those others

³⁴⁶ Pfitzner 153.

³⁴⁷ J. Schniewind, *Euangelion: Ursprung und erste Gestalt des Begriffs Evangelium Untersuchungen* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1927): 137.

³⁴⁸ Southall 162.

receive the reward from which he has been disqualified. In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul recounts the events of the Israelites' sojourn in the desert to illustrate the need for holiness on the part of all believers. The race of faith is thus envisioned as a spiritual pursuit of a collective of prophets. Like Paul, these prophets have the potential to be disqualified. The lack of Moses typology indicates that Paul has vacated this role, allowing prophetic authority and responsibility to be dispersed throughout the community of holiness. While, as Elizabeth Castelli has noted, this is a theology of sameness, Paul also constructs the prophetic race of faith in a manner consonant with the democratization ethos of Second Temple Judaism described by Shaye Cohen.

In the following sections, I will explore the race of faith in Philippians and Romans, which are Paul's other extended uses of athletic metaphors. I will skip over the passing references to athletics in Galatians, where Paul simply assumes that someone has hindered the Galatians after they were "running nobly" (Ἐτρέχετε καλῶς, 5:7). The *koptō* root of *egkoptō* suggests hitting or cutting, but there is no further information to indicate how Paul is envisioning the Galatians in this race of faith.³⁴⁹ I will then seek to illustrate the programmatic place of the athletic metaphors in Paul's thought by identifying the correspondence of 1 Corinthians 9 and 10 with Philippians 3:12-21 and Romans 9:16-33.

4.2.1 *Philippians 3:12-21*

³⁴⁹ For Galatians 5:7, Longenecker translates "Who cut in (*egkoptō*) on you to be keeping you from obeying the truth?" and notes that the verb "in the context of a race suggests tripping or otherwise interfering with a runner, which inevitably had to do with one runner cutting in on another as they ran and so impeding the other's progress" (*Galatians*, 230).

Paul explains the race of faith most fully in Philippians 3:12-21, which is his second most extensive treatment of athletic metaphors in his authentic letters after 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. As in 1 Corinthians, Paul develops a vision of the Christian believer through the model of the education of citizens. Cultural capital derives from the possession of maturity in faith. Christians are encouraged to keep educating themselves until they attain “perfect maturity.” Paul’s focus on honor-laden educational models is somewhat surprising given his imprisonment (1:13-14), but a similar juxtaposition occurs in 1 Corinthians. The Philippians are not simply running; they are emulating Paul in the race of faith to run toward the prize (3:14) as they are themselves Paul’s crown (4:1).³⁵⁰

Paul underscores the idea of eschatological completion in his athletic imagery in Philippians. He uses both σκοπὸν (goal), a *hapax legomenon*, and βραβεῖον (prize) at 3:14. The word order of the verse further emphasizes the priority of the goal and prize in Paul’s thought. Forefronting the directional movement of the Philippians toward these celestial objects—running “toward the goal” (κατὰ σκοπὸν) and “to the prize” (εἰς τὸ βραβεῖον)—in the verse emphasizes the eschatological character of the Philippians’ calling (κλήσεως). The use of κατὰ as a directional preposition is unusual, and it seems to draw the verse toward the more usual sense of κατὰ as “according to.”³⁵¹ Such an interpretation has been set up by the preceding verse in which Paul forgets the things “behind” and looks forward to the things “ahead.” The thought is reinforced a few lines later in v. 19 when Paul claims that the end (τέλος) of civic gluttons is “destruction” (ἀπώλεια). Unlike his formulation in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27, Paul does not explicitly say

³⁵⁰ Roman Garrison, “Paul’s Use of the Athlete Metaphor in 1 Corinthians 9,” *SR* 22.2 (1993): 207–17.

³⁵¹ Jean-Noël Aletti, *Saint Paul, Épître aux Philippiens: Introduction, traduction et commentaire* (Paris: Gabalda, 2005): 257.

the goal and prize are eschatological and discrete from this world here, but one presumes that Paul sees them as being resurrected with a glorified body and given citizenship in the heavenly *politeuma*. Given the use of the term κλήσεως in other contexts such as Hebrews (3:1), where the word refers to the present vocation of the Roman Christians to whom the letter is addressed, it seems that the athletic imagery that constructs an individual's sense of citizenship is what is impelling the Philippians' vocations toward the eschatological. That is to say, when Paul imputes a different citizenship for the Philippians than their original or perhaps secondary Roman citizenship, it necessarily follows that the temporal location of this citizenship will be in the future, not the present.

In the race toward perfection, there is a clear physical demarcation of the current world order in which the Philippians live and the future *politeuma* they will inhabit after Christ has transformed their bodies at the *eschaton* (3:20; cf. 1:27). Osiek has characterized Paul's construal of the Philippian Christians as "residents in an alien land."³⁵² Paul refers to the prize as one of "God's upward calling," with the directional modifier seeming to impel the believer upward from earth to heaven. Paul's reminder that the Corinthians' citizenship is in heaven at 3:20 only deepens this impression of a literal journey through the cosmos, which would correspond to Paul's understanding of himself in 2 Corinthians as having been caught up to heaven. Here, as in 1 Corinthians 15, the Pauline body has Stoic resonances as it both possesses *pneuma* in the present and yet becomes purified and more *pneumatic* as it rises to meet the more perfect celestial fire after its resurrection.³⁵³

³⁵² Carolyn Osiek, *Philippians, Philemon* 31.

³⁵³ Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul* (Oxford: Oxford, 2010).

At Philippians 3:20, Paul posits that an individual's body fully participates in the present civic body in which it finds itself. Paul claims that Jesus "will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself" (3:20). Christ is here conceived of as the imperial leader who has moved beyond the initial military triumph of crushing his opponents under his feet and has progressed into subsuming them into the social hierarchy of the body politic. However, such an eschatological dimension to Christ's triumph means that, in the present, the Philippians' bodies are part of the body politic of the contemporary world order. The bodies of Paul's opponents display all the negative attributes of urban parasites at 3:19: "Their God is their stomach; their glory is in their 'shame.'" This virtually ensures that the Philippian citizen-warriors, whom Paul has already instructed at 1:27 to stand "with one spirit (ἐνὶ πνεύματι) for the faith of the gospel," will be victorious over their indulgent and undisciplined opponents in the *agōn* where their battle is Paul's (1:30) and to die is κέρδος (profit, 1:21).

The citizenship requirements Paul places on the body mean that the Corinthians are envisioned both to conduct themselves as worthy of citizenship status in the present world order even as they wait to be transformed into citizens of the heavenly *politeuma*.³⁵⁴ The verb *politeuesthai* at 1:27 indicates a public "walk" or lifestyle that includes the rights and public duties of free and full citizenship. While Paul refers to his own citizenship at 16:37, he has also commenced the letter by referencing his imprisonment, a condition that indicates a suspension of the rights of a citizen. Paul's choice of the term *politeuesthai* is likely influenced by the desires of his audience at

³⁵⁴ Osiek, *Philippians, Philemon*, 47–48; Ben Witherington, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, 100.

Philippi, since it is used only in this letter (cf. *politeuma* at 3:20). By contrast, Ephesians 2:12 utilizes the word *politeia*, a civic body in which one could be less actively involved than a *politeuma*. In Hellenistic and Roman Jewish literature, the verb denotes the practice of a Jewish way of life (LXX Esther 8:12P; 2 Macc 6:1, 11:25; Josephus, *Vita* 12 and even Acts 23.1). In Polycarp's letter to Philippi (5.1) and in the Epistle of Diognetus (5.9), the same terminology of "worthy Christian citizenship" appears. It would appear that Paul wants the Philippians to exercise their citizenship in a manner "worthy" of the heavenly *politeuma*, exhibiting its future constitution, as Barth has suggested, in their present citizenship.³⁵⁵ The Philippians reconfigure the notion of citizenship as they are living out its norms.

In sum, Philippians 3:12-21 constructs the Christian athlete as a citizen on two levels: the terrestrial one of the present world order and the eschatological one of the heavenly *politeuma*. The race of faith is presented in the language of unity common from political discourse. The Philippians are to be "in one spirit" (ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι) in their race and not to be intimidated by opponents. Such a depiction exhibits the use of athletics for community-building in antiquity. The themes found in 1 Corinthians—engaging in the race of faith as a community, facing opponents—are also present in Philippians. However, the configurations of these elements are not to be found in 1 Corinthians—Paul does not encourage the Philippians to race for a single prize, exhorting them to fully inhabit the athletic cultural apparatus in which citizens sought to compete and demonstrate their excellence to each other. Moreover, Paul envisions the Philippians as

³⁵⁵ Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 97–98.

specifically competing against faith opponents rather than shouldering that burden himself as he does in 1 Corinthians 9.

4.2.2 *Romans*

The military motif—not the athletic motif—is the dominant motif in Romans. Nonetheless, in Romans 9:16-33, Paul uses the image of the footrace to illustrate that salvation is a result of grace. An analogy exists, according to Paul, in the Exodus tradition, where the Israelites escape slavery under Pharaoh not through their own effort but through the intervention of God. This is why “Gentiles, who did not strive for righteousness, have attained it, that is, righteousness through faith; but Israel, who did strive for righteousness that is based on the law, did not succeed in fulfilling that law” (9:30-31).

Southall interprets this as a race in which personified righteousness is “the athlete in the lead being pursued by those behind him (or not in the case of Gentiles).”³⁵⁶ Personification, as many scholars have noted, is a recurring feature of Paul’s rhetoric in Romans. Paul personifies Sin, Death, and the Law. Creation is also personified, with Paul explaining his previous statements on the presence of Sin and Death in Creation by recourse to personified Creation. According to Paul, the suffering of non-human Creation in order to share in the glory of the children of God can be thought of as analogous to the suffering of divine sons and daughters in order to share in the glory of the Son of God.³⁵⁷ While the Nomos (Law) is personified in previous chapters, Romans

³⁵⁶ David J. Southall, *Rediscovering Righteousness in Romans*, 199.

³⁵⁷ Cf. 4 Ezra 7:11–16. See Joseph R. Dodson, *The ‘Powers’ of Personification: Rhetorical Purpose in the Book of Wisdom and the Letter to the Romans* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008): 165.

9 seems to revert to using the Law and the Righteousness based on it in non-personified terms.

If there is a vestige of personification in Romans 9, it might be that of personified Creation in the importance of lived space. Paul's main emphasis seems to be on the idea of propelling the body through physical terrain. At 9:33, he cites a passage from Isaiah that uses the concept of a "stumbling stone"—which Leviticus forbids Israelites to set before the blind (9:14)—to construe God has continuing to place a stumbling stone in Zion. This notion of a countryside race with hazards is confirmed by the macarism at 10:15 adapted from Isaiah 52:7: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"³⁵⁸ Paul removes the mountainside location of Moses' feet in Isaiah 52:7 and the identification of the feet as those of God's messenger on Sinai. Every believer is able to inhabit the feet of the runner in the countryside, dislocating Moses and his authority.

Paul's emphasis on the physical terrain does not restrict his athletic references in this chapter from being interpreted as belonging to the realm of the athletic stadium. Similar depiction occurred in contemporary retellings of Greek myths like Ovid's version of the mythological runner Atalanta, who challenged all her potential suitors to a footrace in order to elude marriage. In a reference to the Amazon Camilla, Atalanta runs dry-shod over the sea and over cornfields (645-55).³⁵⁹ Her *talaria*, "ankle-wings," belong to the iconographic tradition of Athenian hero Theseus and the god Hermes. Atalanta, in choosing to fetch the golden apples, performs a journey in counterpoint to a hero such as

³⁵⁸ While the left foot is the stronger foot for most people, aesthetic representation of athletic feet in ancient Mediterranean art shows no preference for one foot over the other. See A. Pelzer Wagener, "On 'Putting the Best Foot Forward,'" *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 66 (1935): 73–91.

³⁵⁹ Julia T. Dyson, "Lilies and Violence: Lavinia's Blush in the Song of Orpheus," *Classical Philology* 94 (1999): 281–288, 283.

the quintessential Greek hero Herakles, who learns to restrain desire and retrieves the Apples of the Hesperides.³⁶⁰

Running was intertwined with nationhood in Greek culture, and it featured in a number of races during the Roman period. The most famous example, according to Philostratus, is the race held at Plataea, commemorating the victory over the Persians in 479 BCE. Philostratus' account includes the ritual requirement of sacred bodies in that those men who run the race a second time and lose must forfeit their lives, victorious bodies being necessary to display the glory of the Greek state.³⁶¹ Though Pausanias, like Philostratus, is writing during the time of the Roman occupation of Greece, he relates that the victor of the race in armor is ascribed the title "Best of the Hellenes." As with other gymnastic training, running exhibits a desire to prepare the body for war in order to defend the Greek state and way of life against barbarians.³⁶²

³⁶⁰ Apples are a common love token, see *Daphnis and Chloe* 3.34.2, where the apple stands for Chloe. Apples were also connected with love spells, see Christopher A. Faraone. Ovid foreshadows Atalanta's move toward domesticity by comparing her blush to a purple awning over a white atrium (10.595–6).

³⁶¹ Statius presents a subversive image of this demand for victory placed upon male bodies in his depiction of Parthenopaeus being granted a rerun by an audience swayed with sympathy by his tears at losing a race: "Parthenopaeus himself dirties his face and wet eyes with heaps of earth, and adds the grace of tears to his beauty" (*Thebaid* 6.621–3). This demonstrates the boyhood of Parthenopaeus—highlighted by the "virginal" aspect of his name—and the distance between athletic competition and real battle. See Lovatt 68–69.

³⁶² Plato originally laments that the athletics of his day has devolved from selfless preparation for war to individualistic competition (*Rep.* 3.403 and 4.410). See the discussion of Pfitzner 26. Philostratus, in the second century CE, describes athletes like Polymestor, Glaucon, and Polydamas in military terms: "They fought on account of their walls and nor did they fail but, thought worthy of memorials and trophies, they made a warlike training from gymnastics and did gymnastic deeds in war" (*Gymnasticus* 43). Zahra Newby notes the connection between athletics, citizenship, and freedom in Philostratus and Pausanias. See Newby 170.

The nationalistic associations of running seem to be driving Paul's discussion of the progress in Romans 9:30-33. Paul claims that the Gentiles have found justice though they have not followed it (v. 30), but "Israel, by following after the law of righteousness, has not come into the law of righteousness" (v. 31). While recent commentators have seen righteousness as a personified figure in Romans, Israel is not said to be following (Lady) Righteousness, but the law of righteousness. Israel does not fail to come into justice; rather, Israel does not attain the "law of righteousness." Paul's concern seems to center on the covenant, or we might even say national charter, of Israel.

Paul's reference to the stumbling block at 9:32 further develops this point. Although Paul mentions the stumbling block in the context of a scriptural proof about Zion several verses after drawing an example from the Exodus from Egypt, the "stumbling block" (τῷ λίθῳ τοῦ προσκόμματος, λίθῳ προσκόμματος, πέτρῳ σκανδάλου) also would have had connotations set by contemporary athletic equipment used for footraces in the stadium. The problem is not a stone in the middle of the wilderness that emerges in the runner's field of vision as if out of nowhere; the stumbling stone obstructs Israel's run from the very beginning. It is a question of starting point. Unlike Gentiles, who are not in the race whatsoever and yet have won, Israel is hampered by the departure point of the law. The situation is analogous to the starting blocks that have the potential to become stumbling blocks in an older or less formal race course once the race has begun.³⁶³ Israel cannot acquire the law of righteousness because of the inherited conditions by which it began the race. God has set the starting blocks that have become stumbling blocks for Israel,

³⁶³ The Roman period saw the introduction of the *hysplex*, starting gates, in both Greek and Roman settings. This structure of starting gates appears also to have been used for chariot races. The purpose of the *hysplex* was to prevent disqualifications of competitors for false starts. Virgil describes this structure as an egalitarian device: "as the bar dropped and lowered a level threshold" (*ut ruit atque aequum summisit regula limen*, 593).

illuminating how works cannot help and may even hinder an individual's spiritual progress. The implicit associations of the stumbling block with the Greek stadium reinforce the individual's reliance on grace, because a race cannot be run without taking off from the starting blocks. That the Gentiles lack customs by which to acquire the traits of nationhood, such as athletic training, becomes more evident in Romans 10, where Paul reminds his audience that Moses promised to shame the Israelites by a "non-nation" (ἐπ' οὐκ ἔθνει). Such ethnic markers are again invoked at places like Romans 15:8, where Paul differentiates between Gentiles and ethnic Jews. Belonging to the *ethne* of Israel is defined as possessing the marks of circumcision (cf. Rom. 3:30; 4:12 [2x]). Paul does not simply reference Jewish Christians here.³⁶⁴

My argument about Paul's development of athletic motifs as markers of citizenship perhaps explains the long-noted problem of Paul's peculiar formulation of Christian life in Romans 9. Räisänen has called Romans 9:30-31 an *ad hoc* "attempt to account for what has actually happened," since it is apparent throughout the letter that Paul does not posit a lack of self-discipline in attaining righteousness.³⁶⁵ While it is true that Paul's theology of grace as developed in Romans means that "human piety is not a factor when God elects his people," as Westerholm phrases it, what Paul is defining in Romans is a non-people. The Christian athlete of Philippians and 1 Corinthians is replaced in Romans by the non-athlete. Where in 1 Corinthians we would find the spiritual rock of Christ following the Israelites through the desert as a type for the Corinthians to follow, implying a continuity between Israel and the Christian house-churches, we find in

³⁶⁴ Carl N. Toney, *Paul's Inclusive Ethic* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008): 107.

³⁶⁵ Heikki Räisänen, *Challenges to biblical interpretation: collected essays, 1991–2000* (Leiden: Brill, 2001): 107.

Romans an attempt by Paul to create a disjuncture between Israel as a nation and the Christian community, perhaps as a result of the Jewish activities of some in the Roman house-churches.³⁶⁶

4.2.3 1 Corinthians

Themes of citizenship also permeate Paul's athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. Paul does not restrict his comments to the race of faith in the athletic metaphors of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. The combination of athletic events—boxing and running—has indicated to interpreters that Paul is speaking more generally of an *agōn* in an official set of athletic competitions such as those at the Isthmian Games. However, the verb *τρέχειν* appears as a conscious metaphor in Romans 9:16 and Galatians 5:7, and thus it is probable that Paul intends to invoke running as a discrete image in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. For Paul, as for the sage of the diatribe and in Philo, the runner affords a particular illumination of the *agon*.³⁶⁷

Given this imagery of the race as life itself, it is possible to read, as Sumney has, the athletic metaphors of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 extremely generically as helping to introduce the next section's comparison of the Corinthian Christians to Israelites wandering

³⁶⁶ Räisänen sees Paul's focus in Romans 9–11 as explaining how the gospel "represents a triumph for God," despite all appearances to the contrary. See H. Räisänen, "Analyse eines geistigen Ringens," *ANRW* II.25.4, 1987, 2891–2939; *Paul, God and Israel. Romans 9–11 in Recent Research, in The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, ed. J. Neusner et al. (Philadelphia 1988): 178–206; "Romans 9–11 and the 'History of Early Christian Religion,'" *Texts and Contexts: Biblical Texts in their Textual and Situational Contexts*, ed. T. Fornberg and D. Hellholm, (Oslo 1995): 743–765.

³⁶⁷ Pfitzner 99.

through the desert.³⁶⁸ However, the athletic metaphors also correspond to Paul's argument for his voluntary renunciation of status in 1 Cor. 9:1-23. In 1 Corinthians 11, the Corinthian Christians are to inhabit the role of the runner, but Paul must discipline his body with a boxing exercise regimen to ensure he has the stamina to win his race. Only Paul is mentioned having preached to others, yet the possibility of his failure implies that there is some parity in the spiritual endeavor in which he and the Corinthians are engaged. Paul and the Corinthians both participate in the race of faith. Clearly, the Corinthians are to emulate Paul's self-discipline in training their bodies to finish the race; Paul's calls to imitation are repeated throughout the letter, and he presents himself as an example, though he does not go so far as to say he should be directed imitated in this particular instance. Why should the Corinthian Christians then not be supposed to emulate the spiritual authority of Paul, particularly when the Strong are expected to provide the theological example for the Weak at the Corinthian worship meal?

9:24—All Run in the Stadion For a Singular Prize

“Do you not know that all runners in the stadium (ἐν σταδίῳ) run but only one takes the prize (βραβεῖον)? Paul's emphasis in this verse is clearly on civic identity derived from participation in athletic events and not on simple demonstration of *arete* or athleticism. Paul shows no concerns for which type of race is being run. A *stade* was a

³⁶⁸ Sumney takes the desert experience as primary for interpreting the athletic metaphors. He thinks that the themes of perseverance and self-discipline in 9:24–27 also appear in Paul's admonitions against falling back into the idolatry of the Israelites in the desert. Sumney finds parallels between the Corinthian Christians and the Israelites in the wilderness in that they both received baptism, partook of spiritual food, and are associated with Christ. This, for Sumney makes, the athletic metaphors an introduction to Paul's dietary restrictions rather than a conclusion to Paul's renunciation of rights as apostle. More recently, Poplutz has emphasized the placement of the athletic metaphors within the textual unit of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1, the section dealing with idol meat.

200 meter race; twice a *stade* was a *dialous*; the *dolichos* was 4,800 meters; and the *hoplitodromos* was 400 or 800 in full armor. It is not clear whether Paul's runners are competing in the *stade* or running around the stadium. What is clear is that the runners that Paul envisions are not competing in the *hoplitodromos*, a race in full armor that was added last at the Olympics and was typically held on a battlefield in commemoration of a military engagement of some significance as at Plataea, where Roman period Greek men recreated the Greek triumph of 479 BCE.³⁶⁹ Paul, therefore, is invoking the civic connotations of the athletic event both in the choice of athletic activity and in the choice of location.

This individualistic approach advocated by Paul in his reminder that only one takes the prize contrasts with the communal ethic that permeates the running metaphors used for cultic service and ritual life in early Jewish and Christian sources. In the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifices*, the metaphor of running extends from earthly participation in religious life to the heavenly activity of angels. The metaphor "running along a path" is used for the cultic life of the faithful (4Q405.23.i.11). Josephus talks about "an immense crowd running together" from all over Israel at the Pentecost feast (*Wars* 2.43). Ignatius exhorts his audience to "run together as to one temple of God, as to one altar, to one Jesus Christ..." (*Mag.* 7). This language echoes scriptural references to running while discussing cultic life (Num. 16:46-47; Num. 17:12; 1 Sam. 20:6; 2 Chron. 35:13; Hag. 1:9). Habakkuk 2:2, connecting the literary and the physical like Greek *paideia*, describes running toward a vision: "Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets, so that

³⁶⁹ The *ludi circenses* comprised of the *quadriga*, the *biga*, boxing, wrestling, and running. These games began with a *pompa*, a procession of divine and ancestral images. In this way, athletic activity was construed as an honor for the state and its families.

he may run who reads it....”³⁷⁰ The reception of Habakkuk within the *pesharim* of the Qumran community is typically taken to continue the meaning of Habakkuk, that is to say, the idea that running is a metaphor for the orientation of the faithful practitioner.³⁷¹ Paul’s injunction to run is comparable to the ideas in Jewish and Christian sources in that he is exhorting believers to run toward a spiritual *telos*, but it differs in that he highlights the salvation of particular individuals in the run rather than emphasizing the communal race of faith.

9:24—Run So That You May Attain

Paul concludes v. 24 with the exhortation, “Thus, run so that you may attain.” Paul defines his use of καταλάβητε earlier in the verse with his reminder to the Corinthians that “only one takes the prize?” (εἷς δὲ λαμβάνει τὸ βραβεῖον). Paul utilizes a verb based on λαμβάνω both here and in Philippians 3:12 (καταλάβω) as the idea of “attaining” in athletic contexts. Other letters from Paul or Pauline circles use this verb to employ the idea of “overtaking” (1 Thess. 5:4) or “apprehending” (Eph. 3:18). The semantic range of καταλαμβάνω associates athletics with the καταλάβητε educational cultural apparatus. Yet, significantly, the achievement of the Philippians and Corinthians is not couched in terms of *nike*, which had been thoroughly appropriated in its personified form by the imperial cult’s dedication to Victoria. Rather, the Corinthians seek an

³⁷⁰ John Marshall Holt takes this as the running one undertakes after one has been correctly oriented spiritually, comparing 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. See “So He May Run Who Reads It,” *JBL* (1964): 298–302, 302.

³⁷¹ Holt 302; Brändl, *Der Agon bei Paulus*, 266. A more developed use of the athletic metaphor of running to describe the individual believer’s zealous attitude toward spiritual development is found in the Talmud (*Ber.* 6b). While running *from* the synagogue with large steps is expressly forbidden, it is quite permissible to run *to* the synagogue:

This is only when one goes *from* the synagogue, but when one goes *to* the synagogue, it is a pious deed to run. For it is said: Let us run to know the Lord. R. Zera says: At first, when I saw the scholars running to the lecture on the sabbath day, I thought they were desecrating the sabbath. But since I have heard the saying of R. Tanhum in the name of R. Joshua b. Levi: A man should always run to listen to the word of the halakah even on the sabbath. R. Zera says: The merit of attending a lecture lies in the running.... (*Ber.* 6b)

imperishable crown that has been explicitly distinguished from the civic crowns of the present world order. The second person plural subjunctive καταλάβητε is a function of the result clause, but it also corresponds to Paul's discussion of the possibility of his own disqualification in 1 Cor. 9 and of exodus typology in 1 Cor. 10. The subjunctive indicates that it is possible that some of the runners who are being exhorted to run will not attain the coveted crown, just as Paul does not dismiss his own potential for disqualification and as some Israelites died as a result of improper commensality during the exodus from Egypt. As in Philippians, improper training and education leads to a failure to attain the imperishable prize of citizenship in the heavenly *politeuma*.

Τρέχετε further complicates the problem of the level to which the Corinthians have set themselves on the path of attaining citizenship in the heavenly *politeuma*, that is, salvation. As Pfitzner points out, it could either be understood as an imperative or an indicative. Galatians 5:7 uses the indicative for the race of faith, suggesting that the successful running of the past has ceased in the present as a result of being hindered by an unknown entity (Ἐτρέχετε καλῶς: τίς ὑμᾶς ἐνέκοψεν ἀληθείᾳ μὴ πείθεσθαι;). For Pfitzner the imperative that is nearly unanimously read at this verse seems to separate the image in v. 24 from Paul's previous discussion of *enkrateia* and his own apostolic rights. If Paul were including the Corinthians in his apostolic *enkrateia*, then Paul should say, "So you are running so as to receive the prize." The ambiguity of identification of Paul's signification in 1 Cor. 9:24 is further exacerbated by the shift in person that occurs in the space of three consecutive verses: the second person plural (τρέχετε) in v.24, the first person plural (ἡμεῖς) in v.25, and the first person singular (ἐγώ) in v. 26.

The shift in person indicates the inclusiveness of the athletic event and Paul's use of it as an example. Running was the sport in which female citizens most often participated. Thus, when the Corinthian Christians heard Paul exhort men and women to run with the example of "all" runners in the stadium, they would have been able to envision both genders participating in single gender races from real experience and in mixed gender races from mythographic imagination.

Prior to the Roman colonization of Corinth, women were already participating in Greek athletics. Pausanias repeatedly mentions Cyniska, a fifth-century BCE princess of Sparta (3.8.1-2; 3.15.2; 5.12.5; 6.1.6). A Corinthian inscription (25 C.E.) gives evidence that a contest for *certamen virginum* was held at Corinth. It is possible that it refers to Lucius Castricius Regulus' expansion of the Isthmian Games to include a running contest, probably a *stade*, for unmarried women.³⁷² An inscription from Delphi (47 C.E.) gives evidence for first-century CE women participating in the Panhellenic games, including the Isthmian Games:

Hermesianax, son of Dionysios, of Caesarea Tralles, [Athens and Delphi],
(dedicated) to Pythian Apollo his own daughters having the same citizenship:
Typhosa successively winner of the 200 meters at the Pythian games under the

³⁷² Athletic events including running for girls seem to have continued throughout the Greek East. Athenaeus' *Deipnosophists* suggests the connection of running and wrestling and the equality of citizens through education (and possibly marriage and procreation): "on the isle of Chios it's quite pleasant to walk through the gymnasia and on the tracks and see the boys wrestling with the girls in free style" (13.566e). Scanlon has categorized this as an example of the "maiden at the goal," that is, the usage of sports to whet youthful appetite for marriage and sexual intercourse. See Thomas Scanlon, *Eros and Greek Athletics* (Oxford: Oxford, 2002): 219. The multiple number, though, suggests that Athenaeus' descriptive goal is much different than that of Juvenal's reference to Palfurius Sura, the son of a man of consular rank, who, during the reign of Nero, unusually wrestled a Lacedaemonian maiden in an athletic contest (4.53). A lost fourth-century AD inscription copied in 1491 by Michael Souliardos refers to a statue in parian marble dedicated to Nikegora, "victor on the track in the race for unmarried girls." See Allen Guttmann, *Women's Sports: A History* (Oxford: Oxford, 1991): 30.

presidencies of Antigones and Clemochida, and at the Isthmian games under the presidency of Iuventius Proclus. First of the Virgins; Hedeia winner of the race for war-chariots at the Isthmian games under the presidency of Menoeta; she carried away the prize for young lyre-players at the Sebasteia in Athens under the presidency of Novus son of Philinius...; Dionysia winner of the 200 meters at the Isthmian games under the presidency of Antigonos and at the Asklepieian games in sacred Epidauros under the presidency of Nicoteles.³⁷³

The Corinthian Christian women also would have participated in the athletic events as competitors and administrators. Female footraces at Olympia, the Heraia, were games of great antiquity continued into the era of Roman colonization of the Peloponnese. Competitors would run 5/6 of the Olympic course for men.³⁷⁴ Excavated running female figures as early as the sixth century BCE match Pausanias' second century CE description.³⁷⁵ All would attain their goal, but the crowns went to a select few. Though, as Uta Poplutz rightly cautions, most of the victory lists in Roman Greece bore male names, prizes of sacrificial meat and inscribed icons afforded runners in the Heraia the same public honor normally attributed to men in an agonistic society.³⁷⁶ The venue was the most prestigious athletic arena in the ancient Mediterranean. The presence of matrons meant the ritual created community among unmarried and married women. Paul might therefore be drawing not only upon the inclusiveness of running but the community-building aspects of it in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. While Paul encourages each individual Corinthian believer to “run so as to win,” his metaphor of the race for the imperishable crown would have resonated for Paul's listeners with the races held for games marking transitions in the life stages of an age cohort in contemporary Greece.

³⁷³ G. Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 3rd ed., n. 802.

³⁷⁴ Paus. 5.16.2–4.

³⁷⁵ Nancy Serwint, “The Female Athletic Costume at the Heraia and Prenuptial Initiation Rites,” *American Journal of Archaeology* (1993): 403–22.

³⁷⁶ Uta Poplutz, *Athlet Des Evangeliums. Eine motivgeschichtliche Studie zur Wettkampfmetaphorik bei Paulus*, HBS 43, (Freiburg: Herder, 2004).

Mythopoetic evidence associates the footrace with a woman's defense of her own sexuality. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, we learn that the vegetation adorning Roman triumphs and Augustus' door acquired its prominence at the Pythian Games from the thwarting of Apollo's desire for the nymph Daphne. When Daphne finally changes into a laurel tree to escape Apollo, he informs her that she will be his tree and crown the victors of contests. The tree seems to acquiesce to this proposal, nodding her head in assent.³⁷⁷ Daphne's myth, like the myths of other nymphs who attempt to run from rape, connects running with the desire for disciplining and directing sexuality.³⁷⁸ Similarly, the myth of Atalanta centers on the maiden's evasion of marriage with the challenge of prospective suitors to a footrace that promised marriage for victory and execution for loss to the fleet-footed girl.³⁷⁹ Christopher Faraone has suggested the myth portrays Atalanta's acquiescence to her union with Hippomenes because apples were used to excite sexual desire in a woman.³⁸⁰

When Paul tells the Corinthians to run, he sets the only basic sport for all of the community. Paul does not diverging from the empowered female attitude demonstrated by female chariot victors, as Jerome Murphy-O'Connor has insinuated; Paul was

³⁷⁷ On the possibility of Daphne retaining agency in tree form, see the discussion of tree-human overlap in Emily Gowers, "Trees and family trees in the *Aeneid*," *Classical Antiquity* 30 (2011): 87–118.

³⁷⁸ Amy Richlin, "Reading Ovid's Rapes," in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, ed. Amy Richlin (Oxford: Oxford, 1992): 158–79.

³⁷⁹ Various initiated by Atalanta (Apollod. 3.9.2; Ov. *Met.* 10.560–72) or her father (Hyg. *Fab.* 185). Concerning the general myth, the earliest Hesiodic fragments were retold by Apollodorus 3.9.2; Theocritus 3.40–42; Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 185; Ovid, *Meta.*, 10.560–680; Libanius, *Progymnastrata*, 33, 34; Servius, *In Vergilii carmina commentarii* 3.113.

³⁸⁰ Christopher A. Faraone, "Aphrodite's KESTOS and Apples for Atalanta," *Phoenix* 45 (1990): 238.

participating in it.³⁸¹ Women do not have to envision themselves being athletic to save their men, as Roman heroine Cloelia did. They are running for a single crown, which means they can imagine winning it themselves for themselves just as men can run for themselves for their own glory and for the glory of their cities. Distinction in the *polis* was a means by which the aura of citizenship could be conferred onto women even though they lacked legal standing as citizens. Paul uses the motif of a footrace to ensure women are included in the Christian community.

1 Cor. 9:25

In v. 25, Paul again invokes the stadium context by adducing ascetic requirements, which indicated high level athletic training. According to Paul, every competitor (πᾶς δὲ ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος) in the contest practices refrains (ἐγκρατεύεται) from all things (πάντα). The purpose of this self-restraint is not simply spiritual betterment. The “perishable crown” (φθαρτὸν στέφανον) suggests that the athletic conditioning to which Paul refers either results in a victory in the games or is necessary for participation in the first place. At the Olympic Games, for instance, competitors had to take an oath and engage in a 10 month training period in order to lessen advantages possessed by individuals with better access to food and trainers. Paul models Christian restraint of Roman Greek restraint by insisting that Christians strive for imperishable crowns just as athletes strive for perishable ones. Paul’s use of the third person plural for the corruptible and the first person plural for the incorruptible signals that this is not a one-to-one correspondence. Yet, that means that Paul’s argument is not just centered on the restriction of certain foods as it would be if he were modeling the community more

³⁸¹ Murphy-O’Connor, *St. Paul’s Corinth*, 15.

directly to athletic *enkrateia*. He is not merely encouraging restraint from the idol meat as in the preceding section and inequality in food distribution as in the succeeding section. Paul's phrase ἡμεῖς δὲ ἄφθαρτον implicates both the apostle and the community in the same imperishable state of honor. Christians are citizens, but theirs is a different citizenship.

1 Cor. 9:26

The next verse continues Paul's emphasis on the accoutrements of citizenship. Paul combines the two images of running and boxing in v. 26, using them to encourage purposeful action, running to a goal and punching an opponent. He also reverts back to his own example and the first person singular, not implicating the Corinthians in any failure. Just as the crown is defined apophatically with an adjective that simply eviscerates the perishable nature of the civic crown with an alpha privative, Paul refers to his activity by what it is not. He does not run "as though not to a goal" (ὥς οὐκ ἀδῆλως) and he does not box "as though not thrashing the air" (ὥς οὐκ ἀέρα δέρων).³⁸² While Pfitzner notes that Paul's sense is better preserved by the Vulgate rendering 'in certum' in the sense of "I do not run as one who has no fixed and certain goal," the semantic range of ἀδῆλως includes concepts of (the lack of) intelligibility. Such a word choice coheres well with Paul's emphasis on *paideia* and cultural knowledge. Likewise, ineffectual philosophical speech is said to be "talking into the air" (εἰς ἄερα λαλεῖν) much as Paul is

³⁸² This athletic terminology is exceedingly common in Greek and Roman literature during the Roman period. The boxing matches in Vergil's *Aeneid*, for example, yield *verberat ictibus auras* (5.377) and *Entelius vires in ventum effudit* (5.446).

careful to differentiate himself from one who merely boxes into the air rather than hitting his mark.³⁸³ Running is put on par with boxing as a cultural activity.

That Paul mentions an event besides running in v. 26 is significant, because it opens the image from the traditional focus on the racecourse as a metaphor for life to a consideration of other agonistic events. Typically, athletes were not expected to compete or place in all events, as illustrated by the lament of Tydeus in Statius' *Thebaid* that he could not enter everything (6.826-30). Nonetheless, this piece of evidence works with Paul's mention of the *stadion* and the crown to reinforce that Paul's image of the athletic games is sustained throughout these verses and is not diluted with other athletic imagery or other metaphors. The footrace in the stadium is not compared to other such races, as the recreation of victory at Plataea; it is being compared with boxing in elite athletic events in the Roman Greek cultural apparatus at Corinth.

1 Cor. 9:27

In 9:27, the theme of *enkrateia* is reintroduced, but *enkrateia* now has status implications that are diametrically opposed to those in v. 25. Johannes Weiss has identified the two verbs ὑποπιάζω and δουλαγωγῶ as a "Hebraizing parallel double expression."³⁸⁴ Pfitzner, noting the usage of δουλαγωγῶ in Luke 18:5 in the sense of "wearing out," sees Paul moving away from the imagery of the athletic games. Whether δουλαγωγῶ means that Paul is saying "I enslave my body" or "I wear my body out," neither is appropriate for the context of elite physical conditioning in the preceding

³⁸³ Lucretius 4.929.

³⁸⁴ Johannes Weiss, "Beitrage zur paulinischen Rhetorik," *Theologische Studien, Festschrift für B. Weiss* (Göttingen 1897): 169.

verses. The double-expression of the subjection of the body resonates with the degraded position of Paul's body in the spectacle metaphors of 1 Cor. 4 and 15 and the interchangeability of gladiatorial games and boxing in Roman athletic events. It does not correspond to the beauty of the elite male runner like Statius' Parthenopaeus. Paul claims, "ὁπωπιάζω (I hit myself in the eye)." Whereas before he was not shadowboxing, now we learn that his victim is himself. As in his attribution of the ultimate authority of the spectacle as none other than the God of Jews and Christians, Paul's self-inflicted suffering denies the contemporary cultural apparatus of any jurisdiction over his body.

Paul's assurance that disqualification will result only from a lack of training attributes greater fairness to the athletic competition than the Greek and Roman tradition itself admits. In the foundational epic of Greek and Roman cultural life, the *Iliad*, Athena favors Odysseus over Ajax by making Ajax slip, an interference about which Ajax complains bitterly. Vergil's *Aeneid* accentuates this tradition by bringing the interference down to the mortal realm, rather than attributing it to the will of the gods. Nisus uses his fall to trip the competitor, Salius, who would prevent his beloved Euryalus from taking the victory. Statius gives us another instance of the innocent disqualification in the footrace when he has Parthenopaeus felled by Idas pulling on the hair that Parthenopaeus keeps long because it has been pledged to Diana in return for safe return from war. In Silius' *Punica*, all competitors are worthy of winning (16.486-7).³⁸⁵ For Paul, the divine footrace will have no such possibility of innocent disqualification, but not because the Corinthians are insufficiently beautiful or noble. Rather, Paul illustrates the need for training by his own extreme example, enslaving himself instead of losing the possibility

³⁸⁵ Lovatt 56–57.

of the crown just as he stood exhibited in the spectacle as one condemned to die in the spectacle as an apostle instead of ranking himself among the elite spectators in 1 Corinthians 4.

1 Cor. 10:1-13

In 1 Corinthians 10:1-13, Paul relates exodus typology to the Christian race of faith. Paul's hermeneutic that interprets the Exodus as a type for his contemporary faith community is in line with contemporary Jewish interpretation such as that of Philo, who saw the Exodus as an *agōn* in which some athletes "let their hands sink like athletes who give up opposition and decide to run back to Egypt to the enjoyment of the passions."³⁸⁶ However, Paul focuses on the fact that the Israelites were "baptized into Moses" and had available to them Christian Eucharist in "spiritual drink and food." Baptism into Moses appears to have been a pre-Christian tradition in Judaism for proselytes that continued to be practiced alongside of Christian baptism and sundry Greco-Roman initiatory ablutions.³⁸⁷ Paul's use of the middle voice with ἐβαπτίσαντο conforms to the Jewish custom of baptizing oneself, but it also critiques the desire of the Corinthians for receiving status by virtue of being baptized by someone who was perceived as possessing charismatic authority at the beginning of his epistle.³⁸⁸ Rather than having status conferred by a spiritual authority, the Israelites "all baptized themselves into Moses" in

³⁸⁶ *Congr. Erud.* 164f. See Victor C. Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agon Motif: Traditional Athletic Imagery in the Pauline Literature*, 42.

³⁸⁷ Lierman.

³⁸⁸ Jeremias.

the sense that Christians should all be baptized into Christ. Baptism seems to involve “striking up a personal relationship” in a mystical manner.³⁸⁹

Paul’s exodus typology in 1 Cor 10:1-13 leads him to instruct his ἀγαπητοί in v. 14: “flee from table-fellowship with idols” (φεύγετε ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας). This returns him to the discussion of commensality with cults in Corinth connected with idols that he left in order to defend his rights as an apostle against apostolic rivals in 1 Corinthians 9:1-23 and to urge community emulation of his apostolic role in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. Sumney argues from this that “9:24–27 is best understood as the introduction to the stories that serve as the foundation for the instructions about sacrificed food in chapter 10, not as the conclusion to Paul’s presentation of himself as an example of giving up rights.” Sumney’s reasons do not include the construction of nationality in 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 as being opposed to that of Roman citizenship in the Roman colony of Corinth. Rather Sumney and others have focused on the food sacrificed to idols.³⁹⁰ However, I think three points argue against these conclusions. First, Paul’s exhortation toward an “imperishable crown” modeled on—but disparate from—the civic “perishable crown” takes the first step toward constructing an alternate civic identity. Second, the exodus typology of 1 Cor. 10:1-13 features the ethnogenesis of the Israelite people as that of the Christian *politeuma*. Third, the instruction to “flee” idols as though fleeing from Egypt reiterates the construction of an identity to a social body with affiliations outside the parameters of the contemporary political situation in which community members found themselves.

³⁸⁹ Lierman.

³⁹⁰ Jerry L. Sumney, “The Place of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 in Paul’s Argument,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119 (2000): 329–333, here 333. Cf. Fotopoulos, *Food Offered*, 226–27; Toney, *Paul’s Inclusive Ethic*, 181.

4.2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analyzed the correspondence of the race of faith in 1 Corinthians with the motif's Pauline instantiations in Philippians and Romans. While contemporary Roman usage of the motif could include chariot racing, Paul's thought prefers to present the race of faith in its most egalitarian mode, human bipedal activity. In Philippians 3:13-14, the race of faith appears as a formal footrace, while, in Romans 10:5, an apostolic example of the activity as a messenger occurs (cf. Romans 10:15), which could recall the importance of runners in conveying political news such as military victories.³⁹¹ The race of faith takes on a collective aspect in Romans and 1 Corinthians, where it is a pursuit of the migrating people of Israel as proto-Christians (Romans 9:16, 1 Corinthians 10). Running throughout Paul's usage of the motif is an association with civic education and national identity.

In 1 Corinthians, the race of faith appears after a transition from a rehearsal of customary apostolic rights (*exousia*) such as having a wife (1 Cor. 9:1-6) to support for these rights with analogies from military service, farming, and shepherding (1 Cor. 9:7), Jewish scriptures (1 Cor. 9:8-12), and from temple practices (1 Cor. 9:13-14). After an explanation of why he has renounced said rights (1 Cor. 9:15-23), Paul exhorts the Corinthians with athletic metaphors (1 Cor. 9:24-27) in which the Corinthians are only partially to imitate his example. While Paul boxes his apostolic rivals for the Corinthians' attention, the Corinthians are to compete only in the race of faith that is the

³⁹¹ A comment from Eusebius may show the persistence of the association of message-carriers and politicians: "Even now the Jews still customarily call 'apostles' those who bear encyclical letters from their rulers" (*commentary on Isaiah* 18:1 = PG 24.212).

common pursuit of all Christians. In these contests, Paul might be disqualified, but he nonetheless exhorts them, “run so as to win.”

This rhetorical move vacates the apostolic role, a move that continues as Paul goes on to discuss the possibility of disqualification of the baptized from the race of faith by using exodus typology. The Corinthians are to see themselves as citizens of the egalitarian *politeuma*. Paul constructs this identity by direct invocation of civic honors (the perishable/imperishable crown) and implied ethnicity constructed through the process of fleeing Egypt and the idols of the contemporary Corinthian marketplace of Greco-Roman associations. Civic honors have already entered into Paul’s discussion in 1 Corinthians 4 concerning the social position sought by the Corinthians, that of kingship, and the actual position of the apostle, social and physical death in the arena. Paul contrasts the pedagogues that the Corinthians have with the singular father that he is. These pedagogues could have a dual identity as influential members of non-Christian Corinthian society and as Paul’s rival teachers. Paul, in 1 Corinthians, is dealing with the Corinthians’ dual impulses to both eschew the Christian community for table-fellowship with idols and to prefer the teachings of Christian leaders, particularly the Jerusalem church, to whom they send a delegation. Paul’s assignment of boxing to the apostolic condition is consonant with his framing in 1 Corinthians 4 and 15 of the arena as the domain of the apostle, given the interconnection of boxing and combat sports during the Roman period. The footrace, which does not jeopardize bodily integrity, is the preferred metaphor for the individual’s pursuit of the imperishable crown in Christ’s games.

Paul’s enshrinement of the footrace as an egalitarian metaphor for Christian experience would have resonated with associations of the footrace in Roman Greek

Corinth. Both women and slaves at Roman Corinth would have felt particularly included by the footrace motif. The footrace was an activity in which women were typically depicted both mythologically and historiographically. In myth, Daphne tries to outrun Apollo, manifesting sufficient resistance to his romantic overtures to warrant being the etiology of athletic laurels. Atalanta's footraces to delay her marriage were described in early imperial Roman literature with features that assimilated her to Greek heroes such as Theseus. In actual Roman Greek religious practice, women ran the Heraia at the stadium at Olympia. While women's victories did not receive the same level of visibility through public commemoration of athletic achievements, the footrace would have been recognizable to Paul's listeners as an athletic event for which both men and women trained. Moreover, though slaves would not have had access to the gymnastic training, Paul refers to all Corinthians as training. He chooses to depict the act of evangelism and Christian life as a footrace rather than the chariot race, which had imperial connotations.

5. The Imperishable Crown

In the previous chapter, I explored how Paul uses the athletic event of running to disperse status throughout the community in his athletic metaphors of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. In this chapter, I will show how the second image in his exhortation to “run so that you may attain” in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27—the imperishable crown—also suggests a democratization of status distribution. While scholarship has tended to take the “imperishable crown” in 1 Corinthians 9 as a mere symbol of the eternal, similar to those in the afterlife envisioned by martyrologies, I want to suggest that the distinction between a perishable and imperishable crown plays off a number of coronic associations constructed by the political culture of Roman period political states.³⁹² These have been brought into analyses of usages of the crown in other Pauline letters and New Testament literature, but they have not been explored in Paul’s construction of the image of the crown in 1 Corinthians. Like Paul’s use of the crown in Philippians, the crown in 1 Corinthians could resonate with athletic imagery or military triumphal imagery and participate in the awarding of the civic crown for benefactions.³⁹³ Like Revelation, the associations of the crown in 1 Corinthians could extend to a long tradition of use of the

³⁹² Erwin Goodenough notes that the adoption of the crown as a symbol by both Judaism and Christianity was marked by enculturation: “Such is the process of assimilation: the crown seems to have become Jewish, as it became Christian, by shedding completely its pagan mythology but keeping its basic value unchanged.” See Erwin Goodenough, “The Crown of Victory in Judaism,” *The Art Bulletin* 28.3 (1946): 139–159.

³⁹³ Richard S. Ascough, *Paul’s Macedonian Associations: The Social Context of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003): 153. For Philippians, Aletti holds that the athletic metaphor in 3:14 only becomes clear with the mention of a prize (τὸ βραβεῖον). Aletti 257. Without a prize, there is no athletic contest, just the verb διώκω indicating following toward a goal (κατὰ σκοπὸν), with κατὰ being used unusually to indicate motion rather than attribution.

crown in religious and funerary contexts in both the Hellenistic and Roman periods.³⁹⁴

As Paul's possible references to crowns in 1 Corinthians include not only the explicit *stephanos* of 1 Cor. 9 but also the implied crown of the kingship Paul imputes to the Corinthian at 1 Cor. 4, I argue that the civic crown could have been under consideration as well in 1 Corinthians.

The crown in 1 Corinthians, unlike those of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians, establishes an economy of religious competition. Presumably, this agonistic ethic serves as a response to the more contentious relationship that the Corinthians have with Paul and each other. Whereas the Philippians and 1 Thessalonians share economic and spiritual capital more readily, the Corinthians will share status neither with Paul nor with their fellow congregants. While the Philippians and Thessalonians are willing to let themselves be Paul's laurels, he must appeal to the Corinthians by crowning them while disqualifying himself. The athletic metaphors of 1 Corinthians are thus not simply "local color," an element to prove Paul's status as someone with the perquisite cultural knowledge to offer advice on life at Corinth. Nor do they restrict their concern to individual discipline. The intent behind Paul's athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians, I submit, is engagement with the civic apparatus and the Corinthians' anxiety over social status. Civic bodies handed out both vegetal and gold crowns for taking part in the enrollment of male citizens at both the supervisory and subordinate level. That Paul distinguishes between the perishable crown of the civic athlete and the imperishable crown of the Christian athlete indicates that he is attempting to draw a distinction

³⁹⁴ Gregory M. Stevenson, "Conceptual Background to Golden Crown Imagery in the Apocalypse of John (4:4, 10; 14:14)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114.2 (1995): 257–272. It is interesting to note that one of the labels given by modern Italian to the Catholic rosary is *la corona* ("the crown").

between the current world order and the heavenly *politeuma*.³⁹⁵ If there is indeed a connection between Paul's renunciation of rights and his advocacy of abstaining from idol meat, this implies that Paul's athletic metaphors, which fall between these two ideas in 1 Corinthians, play a role in orienting the Corinthians within the political state. The Corinthians are to renounce their worldly privileges and displays of status and sophistry. In exchange, they will contend for an exclusive and imperishable crown, the kind that might be awarded to ephebes or to wealthy patrons such as Junia Theodora by cities. Yet, they are not to think of themselves as better than the upper echelons of Corinthian society. As Paul demonstrates by his own example, they are to direct their attention to the perfection of their own bodies. Their receipt of a crown upon demonstrating *enkrateia* illustrates the performance of a process of self-transformation on the order of Heracles Crowning Himself, a statue depicted along with other statuary of long-standing

³⁹⁵ Scholarship that puts the *stephanos* and the *diadem* in opposition errs in bifurcating the athletic and royal realms artificially, particularly in the imperial period when the emperor styled himself as "first among equals" and the mythologization of the emperor included such myths as Apollo colonizing Daphne by outracing her and then having her accept the honor of being his official emblem of victory. For a seminal example of the artificial juxtaposition, W. Ernest Beet, "The Crown of Life: Revelation II.10," *The Expository Times* 10 (1899): 230. "In fact, an examination of the relevant literary and archaeological evidence indicates that the golden wreath was capable of expressing at least four different concepts: victory, royalty, divine glory, and honor." For a history of scholarship and a discussion of the golden crown in antiquity, see Gregory M. Stevenson, "Conceptual Background to the Golden Crown Imagery in the Apocalypse of John (4:4, 10; 14:14)," *JBL* 114 (1995): 257–272, 257–258. There is semiotic overlap among the *stephanos* (2:10, 3:11, 6:2, 12:1), the *diadem* (12:3, 13:1, 19:12), and *stephanos krusous* (4:4, 10; 9:7; 14:14). *Stephanos*, while primarily denoting a wreath of foliage, can indicate the radiate crowns of Helios and Apollo (Philo, *Leg.* 95, 103; *PGM* I.4.634–41) and the original crown of the Jewish high priest (Josephus, *Ant.* 3 172; *JW* 5 235; Philo, *Mos.* 2 114–16; *Sir.* 45:12).

repute in a series of second century Corinthian coins, and the more general motif to which Heracles Crowning Himself belonged, the athlete crowning himself.³⁹⁶

In this chapter, I will explore how Paul's development of the crown in 1 Corinthians departs from his use of the image in his other epistles to create an image of individual achievement, related to the democratization of cultic practices in Second Temple Judaism and resistant to the increasing social stratification of traditional civic religious structures. While the race of faith and the crown are clearly intertwined in 1 Corinthians, they are not directly connected in any other Pauline epistle. Whereas the race of life also features in Philippians and Romans, the crown appears elsewhere in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians. In his correspondence to the churches of God in Thessalonica and Philippi, Paul implicitly contrasts the crown of benefaction that is given to donors and the crown that he receives from the community in the form of community members himself. Such an arrangement inverts the normal modes of patronage and prestige. In his correspondence to the Corinthian house-churches, Paul departs from the construction of the crown that appears in his other correspondence and depicts the crown in terms of the athletic apparatus and its importance in constructing the citizen *habitus*. Paul's reference to the Corinthians as having many pedagogues, his ascription of a desire to kingship to them, and his vision of the Corinthians in the most prestigious event of the Roman Greek

³⁹⁶ The athlete crowning himself takes numerous forms, including the *Diadumenos* that ties a fillet around his head. The motif indicates the achievement and honor that attend self-mastery. In addition to appearing on Corinthian coinage, Heracles' self-mastery was a popular motif in ancient kingship literature. This motif was adopted in descriptions of Judah by the *Testament of Judah* and the writings of early Church Fathers. See Esther Menn, *Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38) in Ancient Jewish Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 1997): 208–211. The appearance of Heracles Crowning Himself in kingship literature would have made the image of the athletic crown of self-discipline in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27.

athletic games work in conjunction to make the crown a symbol of an alternate political reality, the true discipline individuals should undertake.

5.1 1 Thessalonians

The first Pauline image of a crown that we have comes in 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20, where Paul calls the Christians at Thessalonica “our hope or joy or crown of boasting” (ἡμῶν ἐλπίς ἢ χαρὰ ἢ στέφανος καυχήσεως) at v. 19. Paul’s use of the first person plural pronoun suggests that the community is not his personal accomplishment, but that of an unspecified group of Christian missionaries to which he belongs. The first person plural pronoun features again in the next verse where Paul refers to the community as “our glory and joy” (ἡ δόξα ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ χαρά). The crown, the only physical descriptive noun, appears to be equivalent here to the abstract concepts of hope, joy, and glory. That the crown is interchangeable with hope indicates that this honor has an eschatological or more general future element. The community’s status as Paul’s “glory and joy” is only partially realized. As Gundry Volf has indicated, Paul may not be assured of the salvation of all of the Thessalonians; he fears being “robbed” of his crown, his community.³⁹⁷ Yet, at the same time, this partial realization of the community as the “glory and joy” of Paul and his co-workers means that in some sense the community already exists as Paul’s crown in its present manifestation in Thessalonica. The crown in 1 Thess. 2:19, as in Phil. 4:1, has a twofold aspect in that it refers simultaneously to the present and future situations of the Corinthians.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁷ Gundry Volf 271–3. As Ascough puts it, Paul’s “concern is a matter not of his credibility but of his honor as founder and (spiritual) representative of the community” at the parousia.

³⁹⁸ Pfitzner argues that “the picture of the crown in the NT is always prospective and not retrospective, seen more as a promise and possession of the future than as a present

The associations that the crown takes in 1 Thessalonians are slightly ambiguous. The future connotations of the crown as the “hope” of Paul indicate that the crown to which Paul refers is not the athletic, perishable one of the *polis*. However, in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27, Paul clearly models the “imperishable crown” on the “perishable crown” of the athlete, so it is not impossible that Paul means to invoke a vision of himself as a successful athlete in these verses. Yet, the interchangeability of the crown with other abstract concepts and the lack of a development of the image of the crown suggest that its function may be no more than the proverbial “crown of boasting” found in Prov. 16:31 (cf. Ezek. 16:12; 23:42 LXX).³⁹⁹ The crown Paul describes to the Corinthians clearly exists in post-resurrection time, whereas the crown being invoked in the minds of the Thessalonians belongs to the present.

The information Paul provides in 1 Thessalonians 4:10-17 has been thought to yield the interpretative key for understanding his image of the crown in 1 Thessalonians 2. Ascough, among others, has attributed a civic importance to what Paul describes as “our hope and joy and crown of boasting” (ἡμῶν ἐλπίς ἡ χαρὰ ἡ στέφανος καυχήσεως,

reality.” Pfitzner 105–6. Yet, the perspective of older scholarship that the use of the present tense in instantiations of the crown in places like 2 Tim 3:7–8 (“I have contested the good contest, I have finished the race... henceforth there is laid up for me the wreath of righteousness”) include both present and future aspects and might be present in the image of the crown in 1 Thessalonians. Pfitzner himself, when commenting on this verse, notes that “similar thought is found in Prov 12:4, 16:31 and 17:6 (a wife, old age, and children as a man’s crown), and the phrase στέφανος καυχήσεως in 1 Thess. 2:19 also appears in Prov. 16:31, Ezek. 16:12 and 23:42.”

³⁹⁹ Bockmuehl, in his commentary on Philippians, highlights a tendency in early Christian literature for the heavenly crown or prize *not* to refer to the Hellenistic games (cf. 2 Tim. 4:8; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10). See Bockmuehl 223. Ascough reads the “crown of boasting” (1 Thess. 2:19) in light of voluntary associations. Ascough, *Paul’s Macedonian Associations*, 153.

2:19).⁴⁰⁰ Noting that the benefactor of an association at Thessalonica requires members to wear a crown of roses during the ceremony at her tomb (*IG X/2 260*), Ascough imputes a similar usage to the crown in 1 Thess. 2 based on the evidence in 1 Thess. 4, where Paul concludes his letter by praising the Thessalonians for their generosity toward all believers in Macedonia and by assuring them of the hope of the resurrection. Crowns reflect the practice within associations of honoring patrons who have contributed benefactions in order to support *philotima*.⁴⁰¹ Following Deissmann's seminal work, numerous interpreters have noted that the custom of the Hellenistic formal reception constitutes part of the interpretative understanding the Thessalonians would have had.⁴⁰² The imagery of the crown is saturated with civic connotations in 1 Thessalonians.

5.2 *Philippians*

Paul's reference to the crown in Philippians 4:1 mirrors his reference to the crown in 1 Thessalonians. Traditionally, Paul's letter to the Philippians is dated after both those of 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians, so the continuity of Paul's image from 1 Thessalonians to Philippians suggests that the valences of the crown in these letters would have been known by Paul's audience in Corinth despite Paul's use of a different image of the crown in his first complete letter. The Philippians also contributed financially not only to their own community, but to other Pauline house-churches (4:15; cf. 2 Cor. 11:8-9), suggesting that the Philippians might have some interest in the

⁴⁰⁰ Ascough.

⁴⁰¹ Ascough 153.

⁴⁰² Ben Witherington, *1 and 2 Thess: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, 91; Bruce, *1 and 2 Thess*, 57. A. Deissmann, *Licht*, 314–320; cf. A. Oepke, 'parousia,' *ThWNT*, vol. V (1954): 856–869; W. Radl, *Ankunft*, 177–181. Holleman cautions that "it should be remembered that the term parousia is also a very common term for any arrival or appearance." Joost Holleman, *Resurrection and Parousia: A Traditio-historical Study of Paul's Eschatology* 99; Pfitzner 104–7, 153–54 also rejects Deissmann's proposal for 4:1.

theologies of Pauline house-churches. Paul refers to his addressees as his “joy and crown” (χαρὰ καὶ στέφανός), exhibiting a sense of ownership of the Philippians. While the crown’s singularity may help to encourage unity among a church divided among different (female) leaders, it should not be interpreted as being singular in response to the divisions in Paul’s community at Philippi. Based on the tension evinced by 1:4 and 1:7-8, Craddock wonders whether Paul has “been very close to some members while others felt slighted.”⁴⁰³ Paul’s vision of the Philippians as his crown may be sincere, particularly given the remarkable lack of adversaries Paul encounters. At Philippi, Paul finds brothers and sisters (1:14, 15) instead of those who preach another gospel (Gal. 1:6) or another Jesus (2 Cor. 11:4), though he still admonishes them to beware dogs or evil workers (Phil. 3:2).

Interpreters have argued that Paul’s claim to ownership of a *stephanos* that is, in fact, a community is a play on the role of public benefactor.⁴⁰⁴ There is a linguistic basis for interpreting μου τῆς χάριτος in Philippians 1:7 as “my benefaction” rather than “my grace.”⁴⁰⁵ Paul suggests that the Philippians being found “pure and blameless for the day of Christ” accrues glory and praise for himself. This sentiment is consistent with Paul’s statements elsewhere to the effect that, on the Day of Christ, the blameless state of his addressees will be a source of boasting for him, as in Phil. 2:15-16 and 1 Thess. 2:19, where Paul asks, “For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?” In Philippians 4, Paul reiterates the Philippians’ position

⁴⁰³ Fred B. Craddock, *Philippians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1973): 20.

⁴⁰⁴ Danker 1982:468–71. Frederick W. Danker and Robert Jewett, “Jesus as the Apocalyptic Benefactor in Second Thessalonians,” *The Thessalonian Correspondence*, ed. Raymond F. Collins (Leuven: Leuven, 1990): 486–98.

⁴⁰⁵ The Vulgate misses this translation, rendering the verse *gaudii mei*.

as his joy and crown, and he uses the financial language of benefaction that permeated voluntary associations in Philippi in referring to “the interest that accrues to the account” of the Philippians (Phil. 4:17).⁴⁰⁶

Ascough finds additional support for interpreting the crown as one of benefaction in the use of the term *politeuma*, which occurs as a noun in Phil 3:20 and in verbal form in Phil 1:27. While he acknowledges the terms’ political connotations of “commonwealth,” “state,” “citizenship,” “colony of foreigners,” or “colony,” Ascough also notes the use of the term for voluntary associations in Roman Egypt.⁴⁰⁷ This ranges from *politeuma* indicating a general assembly dedicated to the god (“the area of the *politeuma* of the blessed Harthotes the Great of the supreme goddess Sachypsis”) to a gender specific gathering for a feast, when ritual time permitted women to have their own governance.

⁴⁰⁶ Ascough has identified metaphors taken from business language in Philippians. Several inscriptions describe the interest accrued use for the benefit of those who originally gave the money (*CIL* III 703; also *CIL* III 707; cf. *CIL* III 704; *CIL* III/I 656). Ascough 113–115. Though Paul’s use of the commonplace technique “of rivalry among those who wish to benefact the association, knowing that each will receive thanks in proportion to their benefaction” (*IDelos* 1519) can be found in 2 Cor. 8, it is absent from Philippians. Paul is merely grateful for the support. Paul may not be employing hyperbole when he speaks of the generosity of the Macedonians who have given not “according to their means” (*kata dunamin*) but “beyond their means” (*para dunamin*, 2 Cor 8:1–5; cf. Rom 15:26–27). What is clear is that the benefaction of the Philippians is a recurring theme in Paul’s letters and an important aspect of their community.

⁴⁰⁷ See W. Ruppel, “Politeuma. Bedeutungsgeschichte eines staatsrechtlichen Terminus,” *Philologus* 82 (1927): 268–312, 433–54, also summarized in H. Strathmann, “Polis, Ktl.,” *TSNT* 4 (1967): 519–20; P. Boettger, “Die eschatologische Existenz der Christen. Erwägungen zu Philipper 3.20,” *ZNW* 60 (1969): 244–63; A.T. Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet: Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension in Paul’s Thought with Special Reference to His Eschatology* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1981): 96–100; G. Lüderitz, “What is the Politeuma?” in *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy*, ed. J.W. van Henten and P.W. van der Horst (Leiden: Brill, 1994): 185–88; Spicq 717; Aletti 273–4.

Thus, Ascough believes that the Philippians understood themselves as providing coronal honors to Paul as a voluntary association.⁴⁰⁸

The problem with adducing the term *politeuma* along with the financial language in calling the crown in Philippians one of benefaction is that one would then have to call the heavenly *politeuma* a voluntary association. It is much clearer to find one's citizenship in heaven than one's voluntary association in heaven. Moreover, benefactions could also take place at a civic or inter-civic level. An important official Greek inscription from Corinth, the only such one found there in the first century C.E., attests the multiple political bodies that could provide honors to individuals. The inscription praises Junia Theodora, who was a Roman citizen and a generous patron living in Corinth (c. 43 or 57 CE). Her name appears on five separate Lycian decrees or official letters that were compiled on this single inscription erected in Corinth.⁴⁰⁹ In the first decree, a letter from the Federal Assembly of Lycian Cities, the letter promises to send her a crown of gold, a standard honor for benefactors, "for the time when she will come into the presence of the gods" (4 ll.9-11). The second decree shows similar concerns for her funerary needs and anticipated apotheosis in its resolution to give her five minas of saffron for her burial and "honor her with a portrait painted on a gilt background."⁴¹⁰ The unified inscription shows a resident of Corinth being hailed as a patron and given eternal honors by individuals politically organized in a federation comprised of other cities. Tacitly, then,

⁴⁰⁸ See Lüderitz, "Politeuma," 190; for texts "Politeuma," 189.

⁴⁰⁹ These are: 1. a decree of the Federal Assembly of the Lycian cities; 2. a letter from the Lycian city of Myra to the magistrates of Corinth; 3. a decree of the Lycian city of Patara; 4. a letter and decree of the Federal Assembly of Lycia; 5. a decree of the Lycian city of Telmessos.

⁴¹⁰ See the extended discussion of Junia Theodora in Bruce Winter, *Roman Wives*, 186.

Junia Theodora was also being honored by the citizenry of Corinth itself, since the Corinthians permitted the inscription to be officially erected.

The inscriptions of decrees honoring Junia Theodora make a good comparison for Paul's rhetoric to the Philippians because they, too, participate in intercity benefaction, if on a smaller scale. While Junia Theodora's coronal honors come by virtue of her benefaction, the Philippians' intercity benefaction inverts the normal benefaction relationship in that the givers do not receive a crown. Rather, the Philippians become Paul's crown and in so doing become a community with borders that reach beyond Philippi.⁴¹¹ As in the construction of Junia Theodora's identity by multiple cities and multiple temporal periods (present and eschatological), the crown that the Philippians constitute is an eternal one.

This multiplicity of civic identity suggests that the Philippians would have interpreted the two instances of *politeuma* in Paul's epistle broadly as having to do with civic bodies rather than simply voluntary associations. An orientation toward the Roman colony of Philippi on the part of Paul is suggested by three unique elements in Philippians. First, of course, is the contested term *politeuma*.⁴¹² Second, Philippians is the only letter where Paul scrupulously lists his own social honors and achievements as a Pharisaic Jew (3:5-

⁴¹¹ For this reason, I would nuance Zeba Crook's assertion "to name a city, especially but not even a major city, after a person would have the same effect, though multiplied, as offering a benefactor a crown on an inscription," though I agree with its general thesis. To name a city after a person focuses the identity of the city and the individual in a way that is foreign to the construction of ethnic identity in antiquity. Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004): 223.

⁴¹² Writing on the *politeuma* in Philippians, Spicq has defined the term as uniting a group of citizens of common origin in a polity whose organization exists between an independent colony and state. See C. Spicq, *Notes de lexicographie*, vol. 2, 717. As Aletti observes, the *politeuma* in Philippians shifts the referent from origin to destination. See Jean-Noël Aletti, *Saint Paul Épître aux Philippiens* (Paris: Gabalda, 2005): 273.

6). Such a Jewish identification would have reinforced the associations of *politeuma* with the military origins of the institution in Ptolemaic Egypt, a structure that continued to provide Alexandrian Jewish elites such as Philo with considerable influence and autonomy. The Jewish associations of a *politeuma* would not be with a voluntary association restricted to a city or a guild. Finally, Paul addresses the overseers and deacons in his salutation only in Philippians (1:1).⁴¹³

I think that, in its conjunction with the crown motif, Paul's use of the term *politeuma* also relates to the project of Paul's construction of an alternate cultural apparatus than that operating in the Roman cities in which his house-churches were located. In Ernst's translation of the verb at 1:27 as "Gemeinde sein," we see that Paul is creating a community.⁴¹⁴ He equips it with elements such as wreath-like crowns familiar from the *habitus* of the Roman *polis* at Philippi with which the Philippians would have been familiar. These crowns were worn by political leaders who had made a contribution to political life, particularly in plebeian cultural discourse.⁴¹⁵ When the Philippians

⁴¹³ For a recent discussion of this issue, see Joseph H. Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005): 117–123.

⁴¹⁴ Josef Ernst, "Anfechtung und Bewahrung. Das Bild einer Christlichen Gemeinde nach dem Philippienbrief," in: *Das Evangelium auf dem Wege zu Menschen*, ed. O. Knoch, F. Messerschmid, and A. Zenner (Frankfurt: Knecht, 1973): 65. Cf. Davorin Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians in the Light of Disunity in the Church* (Leiden: Brill, 1995): 55.

⁴¹⁵ Pfizner 106, Geoffrion 206–7; Dem. *Cor* 83–86. The (laurel) victory crown's use to indicate significant political honor that just fell short of kingship may be seen in the crowning of Cippus as victor (*festam... coronam* 615) rather than the king he was predicted to be in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Cf. Ov. *Met.* 10.598 (*festa corona*), Tr. 3.1.43 (*festa [sc. laurus]*), Sil. 12.641 (*festa lauro*). The festal crown here may be the same laurel crown that Cippus wore before, so Galinsky 184, Luntstrom 75, and Santini 294. However, we are not told that it is made of laurel, so Barchiesi 252. Raymon Marks, "Of Kings, Crowns, and Boundary Stones: Cippus and the hasta Romuli in *Metamorphoses*," 15 107–131, 119. Cippus could be a product of plebeian apologetics, endowing the Genucci with a mythical ancestor equal to those of their patrician counterparts. Wiseman 108–9. After

envisioned themselves as Paul's crown, they would have cast Paul ironically in terms of a benefactor, underscoring the alterity of the Christian *politeuma* in its renunciation of standard forms of acquiring cultural capital through euergetism.

The Philippians, I suggest, would have understood the crown in light of its contemporary sacerdotal use. Crowns also had priestly connotations in the early Roman Empire, indicating responsibilities and honorific participation in a religious cult recognized by the state or the imperial cult itself.⁴¹⁶ In the processional relief on Augustus' Ara Pacis in Rome, for example, the emperor and state officials are shown wearing crowns. This custom appears to have been replicated at Philippi.⁴¹⁷ Golden wreaths and crowns had sacerdotal functions in Jewish religious practice as well. Several ancient witnesses attest the practice of wearing crowns among priests (*T. Levi* 8:1-11; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5).⁴¹⁸

Lucius Sextius was first elected consul (367 BCE), Lucius Genucius continued the political innovation of plebians becoming consul (362 BCE).

⁴¹⁶ After 196 BCE, there were four major colleges of priests: the *pontifices*, *augures*, *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, and *epulones*. After 47 BCE, it was no longer normal to hold only one priestly office, a change in cultural attitude to be attributed to Caesar's election as *augur* and *quindecimvir* when he was already *pontifex maximus*. Caesar's election to multiple priesthoods, however, also underscores the inherently political nature of these priesthoods. There was no separation of church and state that left the decision of a "just war" to the *fetiales*, one of the lesser groups of priests, so that by a *foedus*, a treaty (which Ennius writes was pronounced *fidus*), war might be averted or ended in exchange for restitution and (re-)establishment of good faith. While Roman priests could be plebeian, Roman Greece saw the gradual gentrification of priesthoods and participation in the ephebeia, which introduced young citizen males to the major cultic sites of the polis.

⁴¹⁷ Bormann, 193–199.

⁴¹⁸ Hasmonean coins bear the title "high priest" in Paleo-Hebrew surrounded by a wreath. The crown worn by the Jewish high priest was a golden one bearing a special relationship to God (Exod. 28:36; 39:30; Lev. 8:9). When Alexander appointed Jonathan as the high priest he sent him a purple robe and a golden wreath. Josephus notes that the high priest's crown is of gold because God is light and therefore the color of the crown is "that sheen in which the Deity most delights" (Josephus, *J.W.* 3.187). The commander of the heavenly hosts of angels wears a golden wreath in the roughly contemporary Jewish text

That Paul is concerned with Roman religious practice in Philippians may be seen by his repeated references to the viscera used for divinatory purposes by Roman priests.⁴¹⁹ At 2:1, he refers to the σπλάγχνα of compassion that constitutes the “consolation of Christ.” Paul has already described the nature of this compassion at 1:8 with the exceptionally vivid phrase “For God is my witness how I long for all of you in the bowels of Jesus Christ” (μάρτυς γάρ μου ὁ θεός, ὡς ἐπιποθῶ πάντας ὑμᾶς ἐν σπλάγχνοις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). While Paul uses the term “bowels” of a person with the same metaphorical sense as referring to one’s heart in Philemon (1:7, 12, 20) and 2 Corinthians (6:12), no other letter follows the term “bowels” with the genitive Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ so that it appears that the individual is stationed in the bowels of another person.⁴²⁰ Just as Christ empties himself, it would appear that Paul empties himself in participating in the

Joseph and Aseneth (14:8–9; cf. Apoc. Zeph. A; Apoc. Abr. 11:2). The one “like a son of man” boasts a golden wreath in Revelation 14:14, surely implying that the harvester of the earth is an angelic being like the son of man in Danielic tradition.

⁴¹⁹ Mantological practice associated entrails and kingship during the early Roman period. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, for example, Cipus makes an animal sacrifice when he sprouts horns on his head (571–76). An Etruscan haruspex interprets the entrails as signifying that the horns mean that Cipus will become king should Rome receive him (577–85).

⁴²⁰ Most interpreters ignore the literal meaning of the term, leaping straight to its association with the emotive and mantological organs such as the heart in order to read the term as meaning “compassion” or “consolation.” Jean-Noel Aletti, however, includes the literal meaning in his discussion of 1:8: “Le mot grec σπλάγχνα, traduit littéralement ‘entrailles’, désigne métonymiquement une tendresse, compassion, ou miséricorde forte, qui prend tout l’individu et le porte à faire l’impossible pour l’autre. En disant que sa tendresse est celle même des entrailles du Christ, il laisse entendre non seulement qu’il les aime fortement et constamment, mais aussi et surtout de l’amour même des entrailles du Christ, il laisse entendre non seulement qu’il les aime fortement et constamment, mais aussi et surtout de l’amour même du Christ, ou encore que c’est le Christ lui-même qui les chérit par lui.” Jean-Noel Aletti, *Saint Paul Épitre aux Philippiens* (Paris: Gabalda, 2005): 50. In a cultural context in which sacrificial meals were served and mantological practice included extispicy, it is likely that ancient audiences would have had more of a connection with the literal meaning of σπλάγχνα than modern interpreters, who normally encounter intestines in their food only in the cooked and sanitized forms of haggis and menudo.

lower end of the somatic economy of the body of Christ. Paul, the priest who wears the Philippians as a crown more valuable than gold, also inhabits the viscera of the sacrificial animal, Christ.

Athletic games were often linked to religious festivals and ideology in Greek and Roman tradition, so the extended discussion of athletics in Philippians 2:2-14 (cf. 2 Clem. 7:3) does not necessarily disrupt the interpretation of the crown as a priestly symbol. By at least the second century C.E., stephanitic games dedicated to deities were called “sacred games.”⁴²¹ Given that Paul’s famous statement that “to live is Christ and to die is gain” (v. 22) comes several verses after he longs for the community from within the bowels of Christ (v. 8) in Philippians 1, it is possible that Paul is creating conceptual overlap among the spectacle as funerary games, the athletic games as commemorative funerary games, and the sacrificial duties of priests.⁴²²

At the heart of both Greek athletic competitions and Roman gladiatorial games, of course, lay a triumph over death, the redemption of the human sacrifice that is the nature of mortality.⁴²³ An athletic victory crown does not simply commemorate the prowess of the individual athlete nor does it simply emulate the success of a previous great athlete. The crown points past the individual wearing it to the memory of another individual to be honored by the athletic accomplishments of the victor. In this way, the immortality attached to the patron of athletes, Herakles, is achieved in these games. The athletic games in the *Iliad*, the centerpiece of the Greek canon even in antiquity, are funerary in

⁴²¹ Harold Arthur Harris, *Greek Athletes and Athletics* (Bloomington: Indiana, 1966): 252–53. Cf. Plutarch, *Amat.* 753d, *Aem.* 33, Diodorus Siculus 4.4.4.

⁴²² Loh interprets the crown in Philippians as the martyr’s crown (164–65) based on Rev. 2:10, 3:11, cf. Phil. 4:4.

⁴²³ Thomas Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators* (London: Routledge, 1992).

nature. Moreover, the most proximate games to Corinth were thought in the Roman period to give crowns that were tokens of mourning for the boy Palaimon, whose cult was well attested in Roman Corinth on coinage, statuary, and temples.⁴²⁴ According to a scholiast of a sacrificial roast in Aristophanes' *Peace*, "priests and prophets were crowned with laurel as a symbol of their craft."⁴²⁵ Both the crown of the priest-prophet and the crown of the victorious athlete were dedicated to the god.⁴²⁶

Such a connection is made in the next chapter, where Paul expresses the desire not to have run in vain at 3:16 and then joins the Philippians in their rejoicing if he has been "made a victim upon the sacrifice and service" of their faith in 3:17. Here in chapter 2, however, with the *σπλάγχνα* of compassion, the Philippians are the priests, and Paul is the victim. If the crown is a priestly crown, it must represent the dialectic of sacrificing priest and sacrificed victim present in Philippians, just as the crown itself is comprised of the Philippians as the joy upon Paul's head.

Athletic and priestly imagery are intertwined in the two subsequent and final chapters of Paul's letter to the Christian community at Philippi. In Philippians 3, the athletic Paul presses on according to the goal (*κατὰ σκοπὸν*), that is, the prize of eternal vocation (*τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἁνῶ κλήσεως*). According to Aletti, it is only the terminology of the prize

⁴²⁴ Pausanias records statues in the Temple of Poseidon and on the Lechaion Road. Melikertes/Palaimon and his dolphin were a favorite subject on the coins of Corinth from early on. See Mary E. Hoskins Walbank, "Image and Cult: The Coinage of Roman Corinth," in: *Corinth in Context: Comparative Studies on Religion and Society*, ed. Steven J. Friesen, Daniel N. Schowalter, and James C. Walters (Leiden: Brill, 2012): 151–198, 182. Plutarch, Dio Chrysostom, and Pausanias indicate that the crown given during their period of writing was a pine one.

⁴²⁵ In Aristophanes' *Peace*, a servant is instructed: "Do a good job or roasting the victim, for here comes someone who is crowned with laurel" (1043–44). See David Sansone, *Greek Athletics and the Genesis of Sport* (Berkeley: University of California, 1988): 84.

⁴²⁶ Pliny, *N.H.* 18.2.6; SIG3 762.

that makes the athletic metaphor evident. The athletic metaphor is only applied to Paul, who emphasizes his movement forward to the prize in both v. 12 and v. 14 and simply his forward movement in v. 13. Paul instructs the Philippians to share the same mindset, but he does not offer himself explicitly as an example as he does in 1 Corinthians. By the end of chapter 3, Paul's focus shifts to Jesus, who will conform (σύμμορφον) the dishonored bodies of Philippians and Paul to his own glorified body (τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ).⁴²⁷

Paul's crown in Philippians 4 fashions him as a priest in competition with the imperial cult. At 4:1, Paul instructs that the Philippians, who already are his joy and crown (χαρὰ καὶ στέφανός), to stand in the Lord (στήκετε ἐν κυρίῳ). Paul's community is the proof of his apostolic witness.

Communal hierarchies and factions are subsumed under the ethic of unity and participation in the community as having already been inscribed in the book of life. They strive toward a goal they are, for every foreseeable reason, assured of making. Paul fashions himself as a priest, delighting in the "fragrant sacrifice, pleasing to God" (θυσίαν δεκτὴν, εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ), that Epaphroditus has brought (4:18). Paul himself is the arbiter of the sacred laws, exhorting the Philippians to observe the lessons he has taught them, the traditions he has handed on, and all that they heard and seen in him. The point, however, is not the priestly authority of Paul, but the reception of the true "God of Peace"—which presumably operates in rivalry with the false, imperial claim to peace (4:9).

⁴²⁷ Aletti and French interpreters have argued that this comes in the wake of persecution.

Paul's priestly crown appears to invoke the crown of benefaction. There is an interdependency between the Philippians and Paul—he will not have honor if they are not also present at this eschatological goal for they define honor. The community is to help Euodia and Syntuche to be of “one mind,” and Paul expects that they, Clement, and “the rest of his coworkers” (τῶν λοιπῶν συνεργῶν μου) have their names inscribed “in the book of life” (ἐν βιβλῳ ζωῆς).

5.3 1 Corinthians

While the athletic metaphors of Philippians and Romans resonate with those of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27, the athletic crown in 1 Cor. 9:24–27 differs from the benefactor crowns of 1 Thessalonians and Philippians. Whereas Paul's house-churches in Thessalonica and Philippi constitute Paul's crown in the present and are expected to remain so in the future, the Corinthian Christians are in a race where only one receives a crown. They might have as much of a chance as Paul of gaining the imperishable crown of the heavenly *politeuma* in the future. Yet, Paul still plays off of the associations of the civic crown by insisting that one who wins will receive an imperishable crown rather than a perishable crown. Funerary portraits in Roman antiquity regularly depicted the deceased with the laurel crowns of athletes who had won the race of life. Funerary practices such as the *rosalia*, an Italian festival in which the dead received rose crowns, spread across the Roman Mediterranean and had analogues in adjacent cultures such as the rose wreaths mentioned in Wisdom.⁴²⁸ To eschew a vegetal crown for an

⁴²⁸ Van Nijf notes that, since there is scant evidence of the *rosalia* prior to Roman colonization in Macedonia, “self-commemorators who introduced *rosalia* into their

imperishable one would have had implications of civic crowns depicted in ephebic or benefactor inscriptions.

In 9:24, Paul uses the proverbial commonplace that there are many runners in a race, but only one can take the prize (βραβεῖον).⁴²⁹ Then, in verse 25, he distinguishes among prizes based on their perishability—the Roman Greek athletes with whom the Corinthians are familiar exert themselves for a perishable crown, but a group of individuals with whom Paul identifies by using the term “we” (ἡμεῖς) run for an “imperishable” (ἄφθαρτον) one. It is difficult to know what Paul means. For Fitzmyer, the “‘we’ may be editorial, or refer to Paul and Barnabas as examples of runners, or to Christians in general, with whom Paul would identify himself.”⁴³⁰ Conzelmann opines that Paul is employing a proverbial phrase evinced by Lucian’s *Anacharsis* 13, where Solon responds to Anacharsis’ query whether all runners receive prizes by informing him that only one does (4:15). He finds it logical that all runners would participate in the race and receive the crown. However, the ἡμεῖς does not refer to those who obtain the prize; it only pertains to those who are competing for the prize. Thus, it would seem that the possibility exists that some of the Corinthians might not win the crown of the race or, perhaps, the crowns of the multiple events of an athletic competition such as the Isthmian Games. This exegetical possibility is reinforced by the exodus typology that immediately

funerary arrangements were thus making a deliberate statement of (assumed) Roman cultural identity.”

⁴²⁹ Conzelmann observes that “wreaths and suchlike” are a symbol of the race of faith in a multitude of Jewish and Christian sources. Wis. 5:15f; Philo, *Leg. all.* 2.108; 2 Tim. 4:8; 1 Pet. 5:4; Jas. 1:12; Rev. 2:10.

⁴³⁰ Fitzmyer 373.

follows the athletic metaphors of 9:24–27 in the next chapter.⁴³¹ Paul interprets the deaths in the wilderness as a product of sin and a sign for the contemporary churches of God, whom he references with the first person plural, that sin will lead to exclusion from the race of faith.⁴³²

In 9:25, Paul reminds the Corinthians of the discipline (*enkrateia*) needed to achieve elite status as an athlete. Every competitor (ἀγωνιζόμενος) refrains (ἐγκρατεύεται) from everything (πάντα). Whereas the athlete does so for a perishable crown (φθαρτὸν στέφανον), the Christian does it for an imperishable one (ἄφθαρτον). Paul’s “imperishable crown” would have played off the crowns awarded at athletic events. At the Isthmian Games held in Corinth during the time of Paul’s correspondence, winners received a pine crown, though a celery one had been offered in recent memory.⁴³³

Absent from Paul’s construction of the crown in 9:25 is an indication of the individual responsible for awarding crowns, a role that would have been recognized as important and conspicuously missing from Paul’s formulation. Crowns were awarded by officials and on behalf of certain groups. A common image in Corinthian visual culture would have been that of Herakles Crowning Himself.⁴³⁴ This image was dispersed

⁴³¹ Jerry L. Sumney, “The Place of 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 in Paul’s Argument,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119.2 (2000): 329–333.

⁴³² Adela Yarbro Collins, “The Function of ‘Excommunication’ in Paul,” *Harvard Theological Review* 73 (1980): 251–263.

⁴³³ Oscar Broneer, “The Apostle Paul and the Isthmian Games,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 25 (1962): 2–31.

⁴³⁴ The most elaborate *cippus* is that of Tiberius Octavius Diadumenus in the Vatican. “The principal relief exhibits a decorative reproduction of the famous Diadumenos of Polycleitos, representing a youth binding a fillet round his head. The selection of this subject was probably dictated by the fact that the person to whom the tombstone was erected bore the cognomen of Diadumenos. The inscription AD PINUM, on the right side, and the pine-tree on the left side, indicate the region in which Diadumenos dwelt, a region named after a pine-tree to be found there.” W. Helbig, *Guide to the Public*

throughout the Mediterranean world. It is possible that a statue of Herakles Crowning Himself stood in Corinth, as indicated by second century BCE coinage of Herakleia and Baktria and a bronze struck under the reign of Commodus that occurs in a series reproducing coinage well-known to the Corinthians, including the Aphodite of Acrocorinth.⁴³⁵ In this visual representation of the patron deity of athletes, the apotheosis of Herakles is reflected not only in his reception of the crown of immortality, but in the fact that he has transcended the entire athletic apparatus: Herakles is both competitor and judge, both *ephebe* and elder. Having overcome his emotions and learned *enkrateia*, Herakles is the ideal king. Paul's previous reference to the Corinthians' aspirations to kingship in 1 Corinthians 4 coupled with his instructions on discipline and the singularity of the crown in 1 Corinthians 9 would all have resonated with the cultural commonplace of Herakles Crowning Himself represented in visual cultural at Corinth and kingship literature throughout the empire.

This leads to my next point that Paul's imperishable crown implicitly differentiates itself from the eternal crowns of Roman Corinthian culture. The opposition Paul sets up in 9:25 is between the crown of Roman Greek culture and the crown of God. Paul defines secular crowns as perishable, while religious crowns are imperishable. The uneasy relationship that Jews and Christians experienced with the crown can be found already in Wisdom where the rose crowns of the unrighteous (2:8) are contrasted with the traditional crowns from God (5:16). According to *Jubilees*, Abraham founded the Feast

Collections of Classical Antiquities in Rome (1895) I 77. See *CIL* VI 10035. Eugene S. McCartney, "Canting Puns on Ancient Monuments," *American Journal of Archaeology* 23.1 (1919) 59–64, 60.

⁴³⁵ C.C. Vermeule, "Herakles Crowning Himself: New Greek Statuary Types and Their Place in Hellenistic and Roman Art," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 77.2 (1957): 283–299.

of Tabernacles with instructions that the ritual demanded participants “with wreaths upon their heads” (16:30).⁴³⁶ The passage in which these instructions, unattested elsewhere, are found (16:28-30) connects the festival with the solar calendar and emphasizes its eternal aspect.⁴³⁷ By evoking imperishable crowns and setting them in the civic religious context of the stephanitic athletic games, Paul is recalling the alterity of the image and its value in the contested world of the present rather than the eternal world of the future. The bestowal of crowns by the state and civic bodies was a means by which to imply that the state and civic bodies had the power to decide who was worthy of deification. Crowns bestowed by the citizen body and the competitions for its glory often meant that civic honors were translated into eternal rewards. The scholiast on Aristophanes illuminates this phenomenon at the local civic level: “The crown is given to the dead as to those who have won in the contest of life.” Portraits of the dead often envision the dead wearing a crown, usually of laurel, which represents the “crown of life” bestowed upon individuals whose virtues have won for them apotheosis.⁴³⁸ At the level of Roman imperialism, the state prerogative to crown is evident in the crown of thorns worn by Jesus. Goodenough translated the crown placed on Jesus’ head at his execution as a “crown of acanthus” (Mark 15:17, Matthew 27:29, John 19:2-5) to convey a sense of ironic representation of the immortal athlete.⁴³⁹ Cohen sees this irony as being related to the kingship attributed to Jesus and the greater prominence given to royal headdress by

⁴³⁶ This was possibly the reason Plutarch called the celebration bacchic (*Quaestiones Graecae* 4.6).

⁴³⁷ Hindy Najman, *Past Renewals: Interpretative Authority, Renewed Revelation and the Quest for Perfection in Jewish Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2010): 53–54.

⁴³⁸ Franz Cumont, “Un fragment de sarcophagi judeo-païen,” *Revue archeologique*, 1916:1–16.

⁴³⁹ E. R. Goodenough and C. B. Welles, “The Crown of Acanthus (?),” *The Harvard Theological Review* 46.4 (1953): 241–242.

the Hasmoneans.⁴⁴⁰ With either translation, Jesus' crown of thorns is meant by the Roman legal apparatus to highlight his dead status and to subvert the glory of his personal eschatology.⁴⁴¹

Paul's claim that the individual does not receive a perishable crown but an imperishable one also critiques the funerary associations of many pagan athletic competitions. That there is cultural resistance to the state's claim to control of the deceased even after death can be seen in the narrative subversion of the spectacle in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* or the *Golden Ass*. For Apuleius' antagonist-cum-protagonist, Lucius, the crown symbolizes redemption to humanity and participation in the eternal life. Having narrowly missed being exhibited as part of the spectacle, Lucius has a redemptive vision of Isis. Lucius' crown has the roses of a funerary crown and the palm leaves of a military triumph, while also being radiate like the imperial god Apollo's crown: Lucius gains "a crown of flowers with white palm leaves spouting out on every side like rays" (11.24). Apuleius' protagonist thus overcomes the imperial stranglehold on the economy of immortality. The individual athlete in the pagan games wins only a temporary crown in honor of another person, but the individual athlete in the Christian *agōn* receives a permanent crown.

5.4 Democratization

⁴⁴⁰ Stuart A. Cohen, *The Three Crowns: Structures of Communal Politics in Early Rabbinic Jewry* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1990): 16.

⁴⁴¹ The crown of thorns implies athletic victory not for the individual, but for the entire city or society. See Annette Weissenrieder, "The Crown of Thorns: Iconographic Approaches and the New Testament," ed. de Hulster, Izaak J. and Rüdiger Schmitt, *Iconography and Biblical Studies: Proceedings of the Iconography Sessions at the Joint EABS / SBL Conference, 22–26 July 2007, Vienna, Austria* (AOAT, 361; Münster: Ugarit, 2009): 113–138.

As I have shown in the previous sections, the crown in 1 Corinthians departs from the crown of benefaction in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians. While the crown of benefaction in these other letters functions to promote unity among a divided polity, the athletic crown of 1 Corinthians actually goes in the other direction—it encourages the individual to think of his or her own salvation rather than that of the community, a point that is reiterated by the exodus typology of Israelites who sinned and died in the desert.⁴⁴² The reminder that only one attains the prize, though a rhetorical commonplace, serves Paul's purposes in its emphasis on the call to individual holiness rather than individual competition for baptism by charismatic leaders or for acknowledgement within the worship setting as charismatic prophets. The notion that this crown is equally available to everyone, regardless of access to *paideia* and inscription into the *ephebeia*, would have given cultural capital to the Corinthians.

Yet, the veneer of competition obscures the fact that Paul uses the possibility of his own disqualification to establish disqualification, not failure to win the one crown, as that which would eliminate one from the heavenly *politeuma*. This has the effect of softening his instructions of excommunication in 1 Corinthians 5:5 and 6:19-20, where the purity of

⁴⁴² Philippians, for example, exhorts the Philippians to reflect on Paul's lessons, church traditions, and Paul's own example (4:9) only after extolling "virtue and merit" wherever they are found. This notion that virtue is accessible to all has been noted by Bockmuehl to start as early as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and is, I would add, a feature of Plato's *Apologue of Protagoras*. It was a position held by Roman Stoics such as Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. See Bockmuehl 251. Paul's project in Philippians still is in conversation with democratizing elements of Roman philosophical and political discourse, but the idea is meant to end the infighting among women leaders Euodia and Syntyche, Clement, and the rest of the community rather than truly subverting claims to status and privilege as at the Corinthian worship meal where food is being distributed unevenly.

the community is under scrutiny.⁴⁴³ At 9:24, Paul underscores the presence of many runners in the stadium. All runners compete, but only one comes away with the benefit for the exertion. The Corinthians are to take this advice to heart as they strive for the imperishable crown. Paul himself does not go so far as imagining him losing in the same contest to the Corinthians, but he speculates that it is possible for him to be disqualified.

Paul's vacation of the role of authority figure runs counter to the prevailing trends of distribution of cultural capital in Roman Greece. These trends saw the restriction of the *ephebeia* and many religious offices to native Greek elite families and the lengthening of services of some of these offices to lifetime terms after the Roman conquest. Visual evidence from this time period underscores the shift in focus from the collective citizenry of Classical and Hellenistic Greece to a small cadre of elite families in Roman Greece. In the evidence of portraits accompanying ephebic inscriptions from the first to third centuries CE in Athens, we find that it is common for there to be scenes of *ephebes* to crown their κοσμήτης, the magistrate responsible for the *ephebeia* during that year. In an example dated to the reign of Trajan, four figures surround the *cosmetes*, with the central two crowning him. The name labels identify these two figures as the sons of the *cosmetes*, Aristoboulus and Lucius. While there is some individual variation through the

⁴⁴³ Adela Yarbro Collins notes the similarity of 1 Corinthians 5:5 and 6:19–20. Both contexts point to a Pauline belief in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the body of each individual Christian as a temple. Yet, at the same time, Paul's construction of the Corinthian Christian community resonates with the community of holiness envisioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls. See Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Function of 'Excommunication' in Paul," *Harvard Theological Review* 73 (1980): 251–263, here 260.

centuries, the basic idea is fixed: the communal hierarchy is reified by the crowning of the authority figure.⁴⁴⁴

Paul's metaphor of the athletic games is actually taking the Corinthians from their former position of submission to him to a position of equal stature. As in his renunciation of apostolic rights earlier in the chapter, his relinquishment of a supervisory role at the athletic games is a move of enfranchisement of the Corinthian prophets—male and female—and democratization of the religious experience. As in individual apotheosis that is evoked in Roman Greek depictions of Herakles crowning himself, the Corinthian athletes are able to envision themselves as attaining the crown individually. Yet, they are able to distance themselves from the cultural context of Herakles crowning himself as they envision themselves as receiving a winner's crown from among a large group of unspecified competitors. Their victory does not concomitantly assign honor to Paul or another apostle as a gymnastic official (cf. 1 Cor. 4:15). The imperishable crown is won in a traditional agonistic context, prior to the Roman period emphasis on euergetism that we see reflected so clearly in Philippians and 1 Thessalonians.

When Paul advocates an individual race to individual honor acknowledged by a crown, this seems as though it would be in harmony with his experience in the movements of nascent rabbinic Judaism in the context of Hellenistic politics. The phenomenon of the “democratization” of Second Temple Judaism has been well-described by Shaye Cohen. During the Second Temple period, Jews “developed new rituals, broadened the application of many of the laws of the Torah, and in general

⁴⁴⁴ Zahra Newby, *Greek Athletics in the Roman World: Victory and Virtue* (Oxford: Oxford, 2005): 171.

intensified the life of service to God.”⁴⁴⁵ The Deuteronomistic command to place the words of God upon their heart, hand, forehead, and doorpost (Deut. 6:6-91), for instance, acquired a literal application by the second century BCE. The mandate of the Shema was interpreted as being fulfilled by wearing tefillin, phylacteries (Matt 23:5), and affixing mezuzot to the doorposts. Cohen proposes a threefold purpose to this innovative process: (a) orienting each Jewish believer toward the sacred each and every moment of life; (b) having the Jew not only believing in but participating in the sacred; and (c) democratizing religion. Cohen calls this “a radical transformation of the legacy of the Torah.”

Paul’s exhortation of the Corinthians in the mode of individual prophets seems to correspond with this Jewish transformation to a more consciously inhabited religious practice in the Second Temple period. The Corinthians are expected to think of themselves as discrete units in competition with those within and without the community for a prize. This prize is a permanent one, and it is singular. The theological imperative implicit in Paul’s language mirrors the Jesus parable in which one sells all one has in order to buy a pearl of great price. Family ties, the source of honor and identity in antiquity, are obliterated. Without full commitment to spiritual training, no salvation can be assured.

In the image of the individualistic pursuit of the crown, Paul’s radical individualism disperses power throughout the community. Not only is each believer invested in a race of faith, as in Second Temple Judaism, but apostolic power is meaningless. This instantiation of the democratization of religious experience would have contrasted with the shift toward oligarchic control of religious cultural capital in

⁴⁴⁵ Shaye Cohen, *From Maccabees to Mishnah*, 65.

Roman Greece. The *ephebeia*, which Aristotle described as being the primary means of learning the meaning behind the civic sacred spaces (shrines, temples, caves, and altars), became restricted after the fourth century BCE. Whereas it had once been possible for every Athenian young man to become an epebe and gain access to the Boule, the number of young men who could afford ephebic instruction dwindled. Around the Augustan era, there was a change in the internal regulation of several “democratic” priesthoods. Instead of being annual positions, they became lifetime positions, like the inherited priesthoods associated with a *genos*. The priestess of Artemis Kalliste was one such position that switched from being annual to lifetime. These changes consolidated power in the hands of a limited number of Greek families who then cooperated with the occupying Romans. In this manner, the venerable Greater Panathenaea shifted from being held in honor of Athena to being held in honor of the imperial cult.⁴⁴⁶ At Corinth, Livia was honored by the Isthmian and Caesarean games.⁴⁴⁷ Paul was thus pushing against the cultural movement away from democratic participation in civic structures that was occurring in early Roman imperial Greece as Roman colonization progressed.

Democratization of religious experience—that is to say, the emphasis on the experience of the individual rather than an emphasis on hierarchy—can be found in 1 Corinthians. While the crown imagery of 1 Thessalonians and Philippians is status inversive in that it subsumes individual recognition for undifferentiated communal unity, Paul nonetheless the crown as a community in relation to him. One is left to wonder if Paul’s female co-workers Euodia and Syntuche also receive this crown and if the

⁴⁴⁶ Elena Muniz Grijalvo, “Elites and Religious Change in Roman Athens,” *Numen* 52.2 (2005): 255–82, here 264–5.

⁴⁴⁷ Mary E. H. Walbank, “*Pausanias, Octavia and Temple E at Corinth*,” *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 84 (1989): 371.

gladiatorial valences of the language used to describe them highlight class inversion.⁴⁴⁸

In 1 Corinthians, Paul detaches the community members from his own identity by encouraging them to focus on their own performance rather than that of their competitors or even his own. The image of this individual crown thus implodes Paul's discussion of taxonomy later in the letter, a situation reinforced by Paul's use of exodus typology that focalizes on the community and ignores the prophetic role of Moses in 1 Corinthians 10.

Perhaps the easiest way to see how the coronal element of the race of faith in 1 Corinthians imbues the individual with significance is through comparison with later Christian texts, such as Acts, that feature the motif. In Acts, written in the second century C.E., Philip is induced by the spirit to run to the eunuch's chariot (8:29). The author of Acts models Philip on the biblical prophet Elijah, who, according to the LXX, has the hand of the Lord upon him (χεῖρ κυρίου ἐπὶ τὸν Ηλίου).⁴⁴⁹ Both Elijah and Philip are associated with Samaria (1 Kgs 18-21; Acts 8:5); they both are divinely sent to out-of-the-way places (1 Kgs 17:8; Acts 8:26); they display great physical speed (1 Kgs 18:46; Acts 8:27, 40). Finally, both are transported to other locations (2 Kgs 2:11; Acts 8:39-40).⁴⁵⁰ Elijah, as a lowly runner, surpasses the elite chariot, demonstrating the prophet's transcendence of imperial power and the precedence given to the divine herald over the temporal ruler. Philip, as a lowly runner, enters into the Ethiopian eunuch's chariot in order to read him Scripture, namely, a passage from the Book of Isaiah concerning the sacrificial lamb imputed to have Christological significance by the early church. Acts

⁴⁴⁸ For the gladiatorial depiction of Euodia and Syntyche, see Markus Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians*.

⁴⁴⁹ J. Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998) 274; J. Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967) 79; J.G.D. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1996) 115.

⁴⁵⁰ Cf. Ezek. 3:12.

frames this not as running but as “guiding” the chariot of the Ethiopian eunuch (8:31). Thus, rather than following the script of Elijah in 1 and 2 Kings overcoming imperialism, Acts presents a picture of Christianity getting into the imperial chariot.⁴⁵¹ There is no crown to endow the individual with honor after a successful race of faith and to transport the believer to the cultural apparatus of the heavenly *politeuma*; rather, the focus shifts to the imperial chariot and how to influence its driver.

Paul, on the other hand, assiduously avoids such imperial collaboration. In 2 Corinthians 11:31 (cf. Acts 9:23-24), his description of being lowered through a window in the wall at Damascus inverts the values represented by the *coronam uralis*, the wall-shaped crown awarded to the first soldier to scale the enemy’s wall.⁴⁵² Judge has suggested that Paul is actually parodying this honor-laden feat. His readers would have been primed to recognize his allusion by other features of the epistle. The first of these is the opening of the epistle, where Paul depicts the apostle as a man at war demolishing fortresses, taking captives, and overcoming opposition. Second, the inversion of values from the broader cultural milieu is a recurring feature of 2 Corinthians. Such a rhetorical farce occurs in his account of his illness as a “thorn in the flesh” given to him by an “angel of Satan.” The goal of this thorn is to keep him from being “elated,” a condition in which the pseudo-philosophers who populate the texts of Roman authors such as

⁴⁵¹ Here, we might compare what Bruce Lincoln has noted about the continuation of the *Republic*’s call for rule by the philosopher-king in the *Phaedrus*, where Plato depicts the soul as a chariot that must be properly guided. The image directs itself toward political involvement rather than away from it, toward something like the heavenly *politeuma*. See Bruce Lincoln, *Theorizing Myth* (Chicago: Chicago, 1999): 152.

⁴⁵² Aul. Gell. 5.6.3; Liv. 26.4; Suet. *Aug.* 25. Paul’s flight from Damascus also resonates with the flight of Demosthenes criticized by Dinarchus (*Against Demosthenes* 71, 80–82): “Is it fitting that... you are ordering others to take the field when you yourself deserted the battle-line?”

Lucian seem to have found themselves quite often.⁴⁵³ Lucian chastises these charlatans for being “silly” and censures the stories for being “absurd,” but they appear to have been given a considerable purchase in the Greco-Roman marketplace. Paul’s habit of overturning social values in 2 Corinthians would have prepared his audience to recognize the subversive aspect of his predicament of being forced to flee by being lowered in a basket over the city wall from the ethnarch of the Nabataean king, who had garrisoned the city of Damascus specifically in order to arrest him. Paul, during a military campaign, triumphs over his enemies by accomplishing the reverse mission of the military engagement that the soldiers employed by the Nabataean king should have accomplished. Not only does Paul fail to win the mural crown, but the Nabataean soldiers also fail to scale the wall to arrest him.⁴⁵⁴ Paul’s account in 2 Corinthians 11:31-33 is a flight from the imperial crown.

Conclusion

When Paul introduces the image of the crown in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27, he specifically models the crown of faith on the crown already known to the Corinthians. Athletes compete for a perishable crown, but Christian athletes compete for an imperishable crown. Strictly speaking, the Corinthian Christians hearing Paul’s message should have known that there were imperishable crowns connected with civic activities for the elite. That the Corinthian Christians placed themselves in this lofty social rank is indicated by Paul’s accusation that they already consider themselves kings. Paul contrasts the humble position of the apostolic workers, being led last in the procession

⁴⁵³ H.D. Betz, “Eine Christus–Aretalogie bei Paulus,” 290–303; *idem*, *Apostel Paulus*, 85–86, 92–93.

⁴⁵⁴ Metzler 78.

into the spectacle as those condemned to die, with those with whom the Corinthian Christian would wish to align themselves: hegemonic powers both terrestrial and celestial. He continues his abdication of status in 1 Cor. 9:24–27 when he encourages the Corinthians to run so as to win while doubting his own capacity to stay in the race. As 1 Corinthians progresses, the coronal imagery shifts from the implicit crown of kingship to the explicit crown of athletic discipline. The crown in 1 Corinthians allows the Corinthian Christians to accrue honor in the heavenly *politeuma* equally. To a community used to paying tribute to other individuals both within and outside of the community, Paul writes that they should think of their own spiritual attainment, a move toward individualism that frees them of the comparison.

The image of the crown is found in the chronologically preceding and succeeding letters of 1 Thessalonians and Philippians. Paul invokes the gold and often immortal crown of civic benefaction in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians. In these letters, too, Paul requires believers to work toward unity. However, the configuration of unity in these epistles is different in that the community is a collective that constitutes an honor; individual members are not distinguished by honor. The communities at Thessalonica and Philippi are envisaged as Paul's laurels, a recognition of the communities' choice of Paul as a spiritual leader and support of Paul's ministry in their respective communities and as an apostle to the "churches of God."

The unified collective constructed by the crown in the Thessalonian and Philippian communities runs counter to the most extensive evidence that we have for early hierarchical configurations of these churches. In Philippians, we find influential female leaders Euodia and Syntyche at 4:2. Paul uses gladiatorial language to describe them,

suggesting that they operate in apostolic capacity as opposed to the communal crown at 4:1. Yet, their characterization as being at odds with each other suggests that it is just such types of factions that Paul is trying to overcome in constructing the community as undifferentiated honor. Paul's placement of the Christian experience in the "bowels" of Christ further rearranges the distribution of honor in the body of Christ and subverts attempts to replicate the strife found in the Roman body politic in the Christian one.

The coronal imagery of 1 Corinthians both denies and lends the community honor. In 1 Corinthians 4, Paul eschews the current model of *paideia* in which the Corinthians would like to style themselves. Admonishing the Corinthians for assuming elite status on the order of kings, Paul emphasizes that the highest role in the church, the apostle, mandates being led to the spectacle in a military triumph to be exhibited last as the "dregs" of society. Yet, a few chapters later, Paul builds on his claim that he is the father of these vain Corinthians with so many pedagogues by allowing the Corinthian Christians honors modeled on the system of *paideia* in place in Roman Corinth. The imperishable crown is of the same form as the perishable one; the difference between the two crowns is their durability. Just as disciplining oneself for a prize one might not win is thought to yield cultural capital in the Roman colony of Corinth, so too is spiritual asceticism a worthwhile pursuit.

6. Creation in the Corinthian House-Churches and the Roman Empire

Having considered Paul's construction of the Body of Christ by means of the educational and athletic apparatuses in the Roman colony of Corinth, we can now turn to Paul's understanding of the ontology of the body and the proper mode of attiring the body that arises "naturally" from gender differentiation. In his seminal *The Corinthian Body*, Dale Martin has pointed to the vast corpus of ancient medical treatises that suggested that the gender and class of an infant could be enhanced through the careful shaping of his or her body by parental surrogates such as nurses and pedagogues.⁴⁵⁵ Certainly, the responsibility that these individuals had for the bodies of their charges was well-known from archaic times to the Roman period in the famous recognition of Odysseus by his nurse based on his birthmarks. However, for Paul, gender differences are not inscribed onto the body. Rather, they have been established at the moment of the creation of the species. Nature itself—or so Paul calls the short hair of men and the long hair of women—reflects this creational gendering.⁴⁵⁶ Paul appeals to gender difference to undergird his instructions on attire in the worship setting, not Roman legislation or social custom. In this chapter, I will analyze the implications that Paul's appeals to creation in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 have for his understanding of belonging to the heavenly *politeuma* rather than secular *politeumata* or the Roman Empire more broadly.

Paul's linkage of clothing norms to creation is not new; Augustus' legislation was already heralded in such elite cultural productions as Horace's *Secular Hymn*, performed

⁴⁵⁵ Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale, 1995): 25–29.

⁴⁵⁶ Gordon D. Fee, "Praying and Prophesying in the Assemblies: 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*, ed. Ronald W. Pierce, Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, and Gordon D. Fee (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004): 158–59; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000): 805.

at the Secular Games to celebrate the new fashions of the renewed Golden Age. But Paul proceeds as if Augustan moral legislation were unknown. I will argue that Paul is deconstructing hierarchies and creating unity not to foist a homogenous group ethic onto the fractious Corinthian polity but to critique the imperial political structures that were legitimated by cosmogony. In the next chapter, I will situate Paul's conclusion that neither he nor the (other) churches of God have the veiling practice present at Corinth within Roman imperial legislation and cultural discourse regarding veiling.

Most scholarship on the creational motifs in 1 Corinthians has focused on beliefs on the primal androgyne in the Corinthian community prior to Paul's epistle and how Paul's response interacted with the Corinthians' existing views. Fundamental to this line of inquiry is whether or not the primal androgyne can be realized within existing gender relations in Corinth and within the patriarchal institution of marriage in the Roman Empire. Whereas in Philonic scholarship, the primal androgyne is thought to privilege masculine rational thought over female embodied sense-perception, the primal androgyne in Pauline thought is thought by most scholars to be an ideal articulated in Galatians that Paul cannot sustain in 1 Corinthians.⁴⁵⁷ Boyarin and Fiorenza, for example, agree that the task Paul accomplishes in 1 Corinthians is not the reinscription of gender differences but the reinstatement of patriarchal marriage.⁴⁵⁸ If there is a hope for the reenactment of

⁴⁵⁷ Lone Fatum, "Image of God and Glory of Man: Women in the Pauline Congregations," *Image of God and Gender Models in Judeo-Christian Tradition*, ed. Kari E. Borresen, (Oslo: Solum, 1991): 50–133; Dale Martin, *Sex and the Single Savior: Gender and Sexuality in Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006): 218; Benjamin Dunning, *Specters of Paul: Sexual Difference in Early Christian Thought* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania, 2011): 8.

⁴⁵⁸ Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory*, 211; Daniel Boyarin builds on this in noting that "to marry" was expressed in the same way in Greek as "to enslave." Daniel Boyarin, "Paul and the Genealogy of Gender," *Representations* 41 (1993): 1–33, here 19–20.

the primal androgyne on earth, it is only in ecstatic moments of worship and in celibacy. Sterling, however, argues for the reinscription of gender differences by showing affinity between Paul's use of intertexts from Genesis and Philo's interpretation of the creation narratives in Genesis.⁴⁵⁹ Such a construction, in this line of scholarly thought, removes from celibacy its potential to prevent the realization of gender differences and corresponding inequalities.

I argue that Paul is not concerned with the primal androgyne. Rather, Paul's main concern is the political and cultural implications of veiling, which were legitimated by imperial creational imagery and restoration of the "household." Whereas Philo theorized about the primal androgyne using texts beyond the Genesis creation accounts such as Exodus, Paul limits his discussion solely to the creation narratives that intersect with imperial discourse. Paul presents the anthropogony of the Genesis creation narratives as

Boyarin presents Paul as the least liberated of three options on the primal androgyne: gnostic, Philonic, or Pauline. For Gnostics, liberation from gender difference is immediate and permanent. Philo permits transcendence of gender only during the ritualized moments of ecstasy experienced by celibates. Boyarin adduces the instruction on hair length and probable interpolation silencing women in 1 Corinthians to find a primal androgyne in Pauline thought that exists "only momentarily in the ritualized ecstasy of baptism." Boyarin is "thus inclined to agree with Tertullian's view that the notion of Paul giving celibate women the power to teach, preach, and baptize that is functional, social equivalence to men seems hard to credit." In contrast, for Boyarin, most "post-Pauline tradition seems to have adopted a version of the first option—namely, that celibate women *could* attain a permanent state of the erasure of gender, a development that has had profound effects on the later discourse of gender in European culture." See Boyarin, "Paul and the Genealogy," 16–17.

⁴⁵⁹ Sterling believes that the Corinthian prophets would have held a conception of the prophetic state as "closest to transformation into pure mind" and thus held a comparable position to Philo's definition of the prophetic self by connecting Moses' call to the mount with the creation texts: "For he is called on the seventh day, in this (respect) differing from the earth-born first molded *anthropos*, for the latter came into being from the earth and with a body, while the former (came) from the ether and without a body." Gregory E. Sterling, "'Wisdom among the Perfect.' Creation Traditions in Alexandrian Judaism and Corinthian Christianity," *Novum Testamentum* 37 (1995): 355–384, 382.

a paradox: the ontology of men and women differs (men are the image of God, but women are the glory of man), but the reproduction of men and women is interdependent. Paul's representation of gender thus diverges from many Jewish, Greek, and Roman anthropogonies that envisioned male and female coming from the same basic material or a prototypical primal androgyne. As Paul explicates the custom of female veiling during prayer and prophecy in the churches of God, he distances the Corinthian house-churches from the Roman imperial cultural discourse that connected socially determined female marriage veils with the preservation of the Roman Empire.⁴⁶⁰

Creation Narratives

The creation narratives of Genesis 1-2 are undoubtedly the primary intertexts of Paul's instruction on veiling in 1 Corinthians 11:1-16, being referred to in vv. 3 and 7-12.⁴⁶¹ 1 Corinthians 11:9 is the only verse that explicitly refers to creation, with Paul

⁴⁶⁰ The female veiling mandated by the Augustan *lex Julia*, for instance, was praised by Horace's hymn for the Secular Games, which celebrated the continued existence of the Roman Empire. The notion that female veiling protects the inviolability of the state continues today in the cultural practice of wearing hijab in post-1930s Iran. Propaganda compares females wearing the *hijab* to males fighting in war. H.E. Chehabi, "The Banning of the Veil and Its Consequences" in Stephanie Cronin (ed.), *The Making of Modern Iran: State and Society Under Riza Shah 1921-1941* (London: Routledge, 2003): 203-221; Franz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism* (New York: Grove, 1965); Gail Corrington Streete, *Redeemed Bodies: Women In Early Christianity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009): 119-120.

⁴⁶¹ Jacob Jervell, *Imago Dei: Gen 1,26 im Spaetjudentum, in der Gnosis und in den paulinischen Briefen* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1960): 292-309; see also Morna Hooker, "Authority on Her Head: An Examination of 1 Cor. XI,10," *NTS* 10 (1964): 411; E.E. Ellis, "Traditions in 1 Corinthians," *NTS* 32 (1986): 493; F.F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* (London: Oliphants, 1971): 105; G. Trompf, "On Attitudes Toward Women in Paul and Paulinist Literature: 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and Its Context," *CBQ* 42 (1980): 205; and A. Feuillet, "L'Homme 'Gloire de Dieu' et la Femme 'Gloire de l'Homme'," (1 Cor., XI, 7b)," *RB* 81 (1974): 182; B.A. Pearson, *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology in 1 Corinthians. A Study in the Theology of the Corinthian Opponents of Paul and Its Relation to Gnosticism* (Missoula: SBL, 1973): 15-26; Richard A. Horsley, "Wisdom of the Word and Words of Wisdom in Corinth," *CBQ* 39

noting that man was not created for woman but woman for man (καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐκτίσθη ἄνθρωπος διὰ τὴν γυναῖκα, ἀλλὰ γυνή διὰ τὸν ἄνδρα). This refers to Gen 2, where God realizes that it is not good for the man to be alone, rejects interspecies pairing, and makes another human for Adam by removing one of his ribs while he slept. However, verses 7 and 8 anticipate Paul's use of the verbal form of "creation" at v. 9 by use of literary echoes that refer back to Gen. 2. Immediately following his direct invocation of creation, Paul seems to draw upon the Jewish interpretative tradition of the cohortative in Gen 1 as God speaking to his angelic cohort.⁴⁶² Paul says that women must cover their heads "because of the angels" (v. 10). This combines the two creation narratives, because Paul's instruction on veiling arises "because of this" (διὰ τοῦτο), by which he refers to his preceding thoughts on Gen. 2, and yet, he concludes that women veil to put authority over their heads "because of the angels", which could refer alternatively to the angels present at creation or the creational languages of angels spoken by the women during prophesy. Verse 11 continues this conflation by stressing the interdependence of men

(1977): 224–39, here 224–25 and "Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos: Distinctions of Spiritual Status Among the Corinthians," *HTR* 69 (1976): 269–288, here 280–88; and Gerhard Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten: Eine religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung von 1 Korinther 15* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1986): 72–209; Gregory E. Sterling, "'Wisdom Among the Perfect': Creation Traditions in Alexandrian Judaism and Corinthian Christianity," *Novum Testamentum* 37 (1995): 355–384.

⁴⁶² The plural in Gen 1:26b could be an instance of *pluralis deliberationis*, in which God consults himself. However, the plural could also indicate a plurality of divine entities, which pre- and post-Pauline Jewish tradition construed as God and his angels. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls, for instance, explanations such as that found in 4Q416 2 iii lines 15–18 indicate an equivalency between God and angels, husband and wife, in the act of creation of humanity: "Honor your father in your poverty, and your mother in your low estate. For as God is to a man so is his own father and as angels are to a man so is his mother, for they are the oven of your origin." cf. *Gen r* 8:4; *Num r* 19:3; *midr Ps* 8:2; *Eccl r* 7:23, 1; *b Sanh* 38b; *Tg Ps-J Gen* 1:26. For 4Q16, see the discussion of Benjamin Wold, *Women, Men, and Angels* (Tuebingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005): 149–150.

and women, while verse 12 harmonizes creation further by concluding Paul's thoughts on creation with the notation that "all is from God" (πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ).

1. Headship and Hierarchy

The first indication that Paul's discussion of veiling interfaces with Roman creation narratives comes immediately in the pericope. After bridging out of a discussion of idol meat by calling on the Corinthian Christians to imitate him and commending the Corinthian Christians for generally following his instructions, Paul proceeds to correct their understanding of veiling. He does this by supplying a hierarchy of heads in verse 3: Christ heads man; husband heads wife; God heads Christ. There are at least three major exegetical problems with this verse. First, as Fitzmyer has observed, this verse anomalously refers to metaphorical heads when vv. 4, 5, 7, and 10 are concerned with literal heads.⁴⁶³ Second, the verse seems to complicate one's mental image of the "Body of Christ"—Christ must be both the head and the body to God's head in this configuration. Unlike Paul's sustained treatment of the commonplace body metaphor in chapter 12, where Paul delineates between the more and less shameful parts of the body and then transmutes shame into vulnerability, here we have only the question of the source of identity or authority. A term for body never appears in verse 3; Paul keeps his focus in this passage on the head, using κεφαλὴ three times in succession in a single sentence. Finally, Paul gives the hierarchy in non-descending order. In this section, I will argue that these three problems can be resolved if we consider that Paul is dialoging with the imperial epistemology that set the emperor as the "head" of the household and the "source" of all felicity. Rather than having the *pater familias* model himself on the

⁴⁶³ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *According to Paul: Studies in the Theology of the Apostle*, 84–88.

pater patriae, Paul asks that men model themselves on Christ and God and that women model themselves on Christ. 1 Corinthians, as the only letter in which Christ is dependent on God, redeems women insofar as Paul is Christologically centered. One can only read the subordination of women in this passage insofar as one reads the subordination of Christ to God in this passage. As the latter concept is completely alien to Paul's thought, the former formulation seems equally untenable.

Heads (1 Cor. 11:3)

For a passage centered so obviously on the "head" through the use of paronomasia, the meaning of κεφαλή in the passage remains mysteriously murky. Commentators beginning with Johannes Weiss have wanted to remove the problematic hierarchy in verse 3 by making it a later interpolation.⁴⁶⁴ Scroggs and Murphy-O'Connor have argued for the coherence and originality of verse 3 along with the rest of Paul's argument on head-coverings, but they avoid translating κεφαλή hierarchically in terms of an individual

⁴⁶⁴ A. Loisy, *Remarques sur la littérature épistolaire de Nouveau Testament* (Paris: Émile Nourry, 1935): 60–62; W.O. Walker, Jr., "1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and Paul's Views Regarding Women," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 94 (1975): 94–110; id., "The 'Theology of Women's Place' and the 'Paulinist' Tradition," *Semeia* 28 (1983) 101–12; id., "The Vocabulary of 1 Corinthians 11:3–16: Pauline non-Pauline?," *Journal of the Study of New Testament* 35 (1989): 75–88; L. Cope, "1 Corinthians 11:2–16: One Step Further," *JBL* 97 (1978): 435–436; G.W. Trompf, "On Attitudes toward Women in Paul and Paulinist Literature: 1 Corinthians 11:3–16 and its Context," *CBQ* 42 (1980) 196–215; and W. Munro, *Authority in Paul and Peter: The Identification of a Pastoral Stratum in the Pauline Corpus and 1 Peter* (SNTSMS 45; Cambridge: Cambridge, 1983) 67–82, esp. 69–75; Christopher Mount, "1 Corinthians 11:3–15: Spirit Possession and Authority in a Non-Pauline Interpolation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124 (2005) 313–340. Critiques of this position have been offered by Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "The Non-Pauline Character of 1 Corinthians 11:2–16?," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 (1976): 615–21; id., "Sex and Logic in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 42 (1980) 482–500; id., "Interpolation in 1 Corinthians," 87–90; and Thiselton, "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," 520–21.

who rules over another person or people as in “head of household” or “head of state.”⁴⁶⁵ They interpret κεφαλή as “source” on a philological basis. According to Scroggs, the use of κεφαλή as authority in the LXX is exceptional (Judg 10:18, 11:8, 9, 11; 1 Kings 21:12; 2 Sam 22:44; Isa 7:8-9; Jer 31:7) and does not reflect the more common trend of using *archon* (seven times) or *archegos* (four times) to denote a leader.⁴⁶⁶ This understanding of an individual deriving identity from his or her head coheres nicely with the changes in the Roman period in portraiture. Roman portraiture departed from Greek conceptions of identity in that Romans thought that the head sufficed to convey personal identity, while the Greeks had held both head and body were necessary to establish an individual’s identity.⁴⁶⁷

Many commentators, however, have translated κεφαλή in terms of “authority.” Fitzmyer has undertaken a thorough critique of the position that *kephale* means “source” or “origin.” He notes that the numerical instances of the occurrence of *kephale* in the LXX increase when meanings like “top” or “preeminent” are included. More significantly, Fitzmyer draws on occurrences of the term in contemporary Greek literature like Josephus’ *Jewish War* and the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Josephus refers to Jerusalem as “the head of the whole nation.” In the *Shepherd of Hermas*, Hermas is told that his family, sick with sin, will not be healed “unless you, the head of the household,

⁴⁶⁵ Robin Scroggs, “Paul and the Eschatological Woman,” *JAAR* 40 (1972): 283–303; Scroggs, “Paul and the Eschatological Woman Revisited,” *JAAR* 42 (1974): 532–37; Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, *1 Cor.* 121.

⁴⁶⁶ Robin Scroggs, “Paul and the Eschatological Woman: Revisited,” *JAAR* 42 (1974): 534–35; Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Sex and Logic in 1 Cor. 11:2–16,” 492. Cf. Caroline Vander Stichele, “Authenticiteit,” 290–304; Raymond F. Collins, *1 Corinthians* (Collegeville: Order of St. Benedict, 1999): 405.

⁴⁶⁷ Sheila Dillon, *Ancient Greek Portrait Sculpture: Contexts, Subjects, and Styles* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005): 30.

be afflicted” (*Sim.* 7.3). Finally, of course, Fitzmyer observes that most exegetes translate *kephale* in Colossians (2:10) and Ephesians (1:22, 4:15, 5:23) in the sense of “authority.”⁴⁶⁸

These philological analyses suffer from a lack of consideration of the imperial ideology operative in Corinth, a Roman colony. According to the ideology of the imperial cult, the emperor was both the source of life and the authority of the empire. Numerous Asian inscriptions from the early principate make this clear. The first decree of the Asian League concerning the new provincial calendar (Priene: 9 BCE) establishes the emperor as the source of peace and harmony and the ordering principle of the lives of those ruled:

since Providence, which has divinely disposed our lives, having employed zeal and ardour, has arranged the most perfect (culmination) for life by producing Augustus, whom for the benefit of mankind she has filled with excellence, as [if she granted him as a savior] for us and our descendants, (a saviour) who brought war to an end and set [all things] in peaceful order; [and (since) with his appearance] Caesar exceeded the hopes of all those who had received [glad tidings] before us, not only surpassing those who had been [benefactors] before him, but not even [leaving any] hope [of surpassing him] for those who are to come in the future; and (since) the beginning of glad tidings on his account for the world was [the birthday] of the god...⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁸ Fitzmyer notes that in the LXX *kephale* translates the Hebrew “head,” some 281 times, of which the subcategory meaning leader occurs in at least 3 places in Exodus and at least 11 times in Judges (e.g., Judg. 10:18; 11:8,9, 11). Murphy-O’Connor, against his own argument, concedes that 2 Sam 22:44 exhibits this meaning. Fitzmyer shows that a wider range of passages than those cited by Murphy-O’Connor bear the meaning chief, leader, leadership especially in conjunction with the sense of preeminent or top. Fitzmyer concludes: “a Hellenistic Jewish writer such as Paul of Tarsus could well have intended that *kephale* in 1 Cor 11:3 be understood as ‘head’ in the sense of authority or supremacy over someone else.” Fitzmyer mostly agrees with the consensus established by Weiss, Robertson and Plummer, Wendland, Allo, Lietzmann and Kuemmel, Grosheide, and Hering.

⁴⁶⁹ *Docs. Aug.* 98b (ll. 32–41).

In the letter of the Roman proconsul to the Asian League (Priene: 9 BCE), we learn that individuals identify with the birthday and life of Augustus:

It is subject to question whether the birthday of our most divine Caesar spells more of joy or blessing, this being a date that we could probably without fear of contradiction equate with the beginning of all things, if not in terms of nature, certainly in terms of utility, seeing that he restored stability, when everything was collapsing and falling into disarray, and gave a new look to the entire world that would have been most happy to accept its own ruin had not the good and common fortune of all been born: Caesar. Therefore people might justly assume that his birthday spells the beginning of life and real life and marks the end and boundary of any regret that they had themselves been born.⁴⁷⁰

Cosmological reliefs on the cuirassed statue of Augustus at Prima Porta provide evidence from elite visual culture of the pervasiveness of the belief in Augustus' salvation of humanity and cosmic power.⁴⁷¹ Such beliefs were a natural extension of the native Roman practice of the collective cult of ancestors, the *di parentes*. Contrary to the assertions by Deissman and Cumont that the imperial cult represented the "orientalization" of the populace, more recent scholarship has viewed the imperial cult as the traditional cult of the dead given a central focus in a single figure. Plutarch, aided by Varro (*Quaes. Rom.* 14), relates the ancient custom at funerals of sons declaring their father a god after finding the first bone in the ashes from his incinerated corpse. As *pontifex maximus* and *pater patriae*, the emperor simply stepped into the traditional role of the paterfamilias and amplified it in that he stood for the Roman people as he poured libations for the ancestral imagines.⁴⁷²

Given that the emperor's statue stood in the center of Corinth *capite velato* as he offered the cultic service due to the nations' gods, and given that Paul was writing from

⁴⁷⁰ *DocsAug* 98a (ll. 4–11).

⁴⁷¹ Figs 148a and 148b in Zanker, *Power*, 188–192.

⁴⁷² Duncan Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West*, 42.

Asia, it seems impossible to believe that the Corinthians would have been able to separate Paul's triad of heads from the semantic range of headship established by the imperial cult.⁴⁷³ I think that the main purpose of this verse is to invoke the headship of Christ and God as a rival philosophical system to the Roman imperial structure that saw the Roman emperor as the head of the Roman Empire and the head of the household as patterned on the imperial example. Such an allusion puts those in the community who think they are "kings" in their place.⁴⁷⁴ True identity comes from God and Christ, not from the emperor.

Hierarchy (1 Cor. 11:3)

In Paul's introduction of the hierarchical language that would have been common to his Roman Greek audience, there is already an indication of the inversion that is to follow. This hint is in Paul's non-linear presentation of the hierarchy: "But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man (παντὸς ἀνδρὸς), and the husband is the head of his wife (γυναικὸς), and God is the head of Christ (τοῦ Χριστοῦ)." Elsewhere in 1 Corinthians, Paul uses the rhetorical technique of *klimax* (*gradatio*). That Paul fails to do so here has been noticed by commentators such as Raymond Collins, but the absence has not been interpreted fully. If we wish to attribute hierarchical force to Paul's paronomasia using *kephale*, as most interpreters have, it seems to me that we cannot then dismiss the lack of *klimax* found in 1 Cor. 15 and elsewhere so easily. The only reason to avoid *klimax* and a properly descending hierarchy is a lack of emphasis on hierarchy. If

⁴⁷³ On the statue in Corinth, see Cynthia L. Thompson, "Hairstyles, Headcoverings and St. Paul," *Biblical Archaeology* 51 (1988): 105.

⁴⁷⁴ S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power: the Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984): 234.

Paul's syntactical deconstruction of hierarchy is intentional and not a product of carelessness, the Corinthians would be able to read it in terms of the hierarchies known to them from their social environments.

Paul sets up the expectation of a *klimax* in verse 3. The first two pairs, in order, seem to represent the hierarchical order that would have been normative in Roman households. The divine stands above man, and a husband ranks above his wife. If one reads the hierarchy without the nomenclature of marriage and the use of possessive pronouns, this ontological priority of the male becomes more pronounced: "Christ is the head of every man (παντὸς ἀνδρὸς), man the head of woman (γυναικὸς)." Conzelmann observes that, in the Hebrew Bible, "head" indicates sovereignty over a community or category rather than an individual. Likewise, for Conzelmann, Christological subordination "is also expressed in terms of a totally different complex of ideas."⁴⁷⁵ Thus, from both the lack of possessive pronouns and the idea of head as a categorical sovereign, we should see the reinscription of gender differences rather than the reinscription of the institution of marriage, defined earlier in the letter as for the purposes of sexual activity with one partner who is not a prostitute. For this reason, several interpreters have suggested that the phrase "man is the head of woman" is an oblique reference to the creation narrative of Gen 2:18-25.

However, in the last part of the triad of heads in verse 3, Paul subverts the expectation of the *klimax* that he has created. The last pair is not in sequence and seems to disrupt the flow of power implied by the chain of command descending from Christ to woman. God is identified as the head of Christ. The rhetorical disjuncture of

⁴⁷⁵ Conzelmann, *I Cor*, 183, n. 21 and n. 26.

subordinating the former supreme head has the effect of presaging the more thoroughgoing critique of the imperial household that is to come in Paul's discussion of the interdependence of man and woman. Later traditions of Pauline and other early Christian circles replicate the hierarchies of Roman society more precisely and indicate what a shock the Corinthians must have experienced at the last pair, out of order, in Paul's triad. Ephesians 5:23, for instance, uses a much clearer formulation that compares man to the spiritual Christ and woman to the embodied church: "For the husband is head of his wife just as Christ is head of the church, he himself the savior of the body." If Paul had wanted to reinforce hierarchical order, it seems he should have started the pairs with God as king and concluded with women as the least in the kingdom. That he does not do so should at least raise the possibility that he intends to disrupt or even dismantle the concept of "hierarchy," particularly since Christ and God are synonymous for Paul.

Inevitably, Paul's use of headship language would have recalled the headship language that undergirded imperial propaganda and cult. Augustus, of course, began the Roman imperial tradition of regarding the emperor as *pontifex maximus* and the *pater patriae*, roles that were replicated within households by male heads of household. Moreover, the imperial claim to be Zeus would be fresh in the minds of those in the Corinthian house-churches from the synagogue as Caligula had attempted to erect a statue of himself in the Jerusalem Temple inscribed with the words "Gaius, the new Zeus made manifest" in retribution for the Jewish destruction of an altar to him at Jamnia in 40 C.E. (Philo, *Leg.* 346). Paul's remarks that the Corinthians craved kingship and sovereignty in 1 Cor. 4:8 would have primed the Corinthians to construe the heads in 1

Cor. 11:3 in terms of classic models of Greek governance and the recent innovations of the imperial cult.

2. Veiling (1 Cor. 11:4-7)

After establishing the hierarchy of Christian society, Paul addresses the issue of veiling. Paul assigns uncovered heads to men and covered heads to women in 1 Corinthians 11:4-7. His argumentation is based on theologically justified ontology.

Any man who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head—it is one and the same thing as having her head shaved. For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, she should wear a veil. For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and reflection of God; but woman is the reflection of man.

Paul's given order, as Oster and Gill have observed, would have directly contradicted the lived religious experience of the Corinthians, who saw statuary of the emperor *capite velato* in his role as *pontifex maximus* whenever they went to conduct business in the agora.⁴⁷⁶ Corinth was a Roman colony, and as such, the experience of imperial cult in the city environment would have been amplified. Unlike the Galatians, the Corinthians seem to be accused of worshipping pagan idols at Greco-Roman associations rather than attempting to circumcise themselves out of pressure from the synagogue. In fact, Paul reminds the Corinthians not to remove the marks of circumcision if they are called circumcised, an indication of a desire of some to enhance their participation in the gymnasium by going 'native.'⁴⁷⁷ Moreover, whereas Paul refers specifically to the

⁴⁷⁶ Oster, Gill.

⁴⁷⁷ In 1 Corinthians, the circumcision issue emerges in the context of Paul's claim that his "command" for all his churches is to remain as they are. His illustrations for this include

practice of the Galatians in his instructions to the Corinthians on collecting funds for and designating a delegation to the Jerusalem church (16:1), he justifies his denial of a veil to men and prescription of a veil to women based on the custom of the churches of God (11:16). Here, Paul is not pointing to a social norm, *contra* Engberg Pedersen; he is pointing to a theological construction of gender difference.⁴⁷⁸

Why is the theological norm necessary? Why can't Paul simply fall back on the social norm? I think Paul's long, convoluted answer is necessary because Roman religious practices included male veiling. These practices were not seen as arbitrary cultural signs; rather, they were justified by myths.⁴⁷⁹ Paul cannot simply expect the Corinthian Christians, who have been frequenting pagan temples, to understand or to accept his veiling prescriptions. Paul adduces Jewish creation myths, . I will suggest that one reason Paul supports his veiling argument using statements about gender differences that have been part of the natural order established by creation is that he wants to distinguish natural law from the visions of natural law articulated by Stoicism and the imperial cult.

Scholars who see Paul's argument as dismantling a local belief in the Jewish primal androgyne look to verse seven along with verse eight. It is presumed that the Corinthians, who doubted the need for physical resurrection, saw themselves as having already been baptized into their spiritual bodies. If the baptismal formula found in Galatians 3.28 was known to the Corinthians, they had been taught that Christ's body is

circumcision and slavery. For circumcision, a man is to not remove the marks of circumcision if he has been called circumcised.

⁴⁷⁸ Engberg Pedersen.

⁴⁷⁹ Assuming that cultural narratives can be categorized into fable, legend, history, and myth, we will remember that only myth makes truth claims, possesses credibility, and wields authority. See Bruce Lincoln, *Discourse*, 15–23 and 27–37.

neither slave nor free, neither Greek nor Jew, neither male nor female. Since the Corinthians saw themselves as already baptized into their post-resurrection post-gender status, scholars such as Meeks and Boyarin believe that they based their theology on the first creation account found in Genesis. The first creation depicts God as creating humans simultaneously. According to some Jewish interpreters contemporary with Paul, such as Philo, the first creation relates the spiritual ideal human. The second creation account, by contrast, implies that masculine rationality wrongly clings to feminine sense-perception in its portrayal of woman being created from man and man clinging to the extracted piece of his own flesh. As Paul invokes both anthropogonies in Genesis (1:26-31 and 2:4b-25) in 1 Corinthians 11:7-8, he overturns the return to the primal androgyne that the Corinthians have constructed based on an alternate reading of the two creation accounts in Genesis.⁴⁸⁰

I think that Paul does not so much as dismiss the primal androgyne as reverse it. In verse 7, Paul claims man (ἄνθρωπος) should not veil as he is the image (εἰκὼν) and glory (δόξα) of God (θεοῦ), but woman (ἡ γυνή) is the glory of man (δόξα ἀνδρός). Earlier interpreters construed this scenario as one where the woman needed to hide her own glory in order to reflect the man's.⁴⁸¹ However, it seems more likely that Paul is simply using two established phrases used in the Hebrew Bible to indicate that women and men

⁴⁸⁰ Jacob Jervell, *Imago Dei: Gen 1, 26f im Spaetjudentum in der Gnosis und in den paulinischen Briefen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960): 292–309. See also Morna Hooker, "Authority on Her Head: An Examination of I Cor. XI.10," *New Testament Studies* 10 (1964): 411; E. E. Ellis, "Traditions in 1 Corinthians," *New Testament Studies* 32 (1986): 493; E. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* (London: Oliphants, 1971): 105; G. Trompf, "On Attitudes Toward Women in Paul and Paulinist Literature: 1 Corinthians 11:3–16 and Its Context," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 42 (1980): 205; and A. Feuillet, "L'Homme 'Gloire de Dieu' et la Femme 'Gloire de l'Homme' (1 Cor., XI, 7b)," *Revue Biblique* 81 (1974): 182.

⁴⁸¹ Morna Hooker.

are different. Van Kooten notes that subsequent generations after creation in the Hebrew Bible refer to both men and women as being made in the likeness of man. Describing woman as being in the image of man, then, does not have to entail inequality in and of itself, it is only when the language used to describe the ontology of woman is contrasted with the language used to describe the ontology of man that it appears that the male has been privileged with fancier terminology. Men are to God what women are to men.

The important distinction is that women are not described as being the image either God or men. This, strangely, seems to assign men the corporeal role. Men, not women, are the icons. Where does the incarnation exist if not the *eikon*? Is not *doxa* the more abstract term? Likewise, when Paul later underscores the bodily interdependence of man and woman—just as woman came from man, man comes from woman (11:12)—man's issue into the physical world is what is being emphasized. Boyarin is correct that Paul is binding the Corinthians even more tightly to their native genders, but it seems that the emphasis on corporeality is somewhat subversive of elite cultural norms holding woman as the more physical of the two sexes.⁴⁸²

At the same time, however, Paul is confronting another powerful cultural notion in the ancient Mediterranean: the necessity for a woman to honor her husband's gods. Couples in the early Roman Empire were not supposed to have divided religious interests. This is evident from the joint priesthods couples held, and the prescriptions that a wife must sacrifice to her husband's gods and pray for her husband's well-being.

⁴⁸² Hal Taussig has noted the possibility that cosmic hymns—such as those found in John 1:4–18, Colossians 1:15–20, Philippians 2:6–11—were sung during the ritual meal of the Corinthians. See *In the Beginning Was the Meal*, 104–108. This is in line with the view espoused in some apocalyptic literature which understood resurrection language in reference to future hopes of cosmic restoration. Cf. Beker 1980: 101, 152–3.

Paradigmatic were literary portrayals of Roman matrons such as Propertius' Cornelia or Vergil's Creusa. What is more, the position of the ideal Roman wife was conceived of as Creusa-like-following dutifully several steps behind. Her husband was supreme head of the household and when they married she came to him *in loco filiae*.⁴⁸³ The domestic cult was to be guided by a likemindedness between husband and wife, and between gods and couple. As the archetypal Roman matron, Creusa comes to Aeneas in a vision in order to enjoin their mutual submission to their fated separation, leaving him again alone in the realm of the living with the consolation, "Let the love for our son be the bond that joins us." Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (8.679-724) presents the ideal couple of Baucis and Philemon as hosting the gods disguised as mortals so well with their simple hospitality in their rustic abode that they were rewarded with a boon. The couple chose to die at the same moment. In accordance with their wishes, the gods transformed them into connected trees when their human lives had come to a close. Paul seems to be setting up a relationship in which women, as the veiled worshippers, are worshipping the men as icons. This at once solidifies the marital configuration to be presented by the Pauline house-churches and distances the community from the worship of idols. To an outsider looking in on the Corinthian worship meal, the icons are the living men at the worship meal. Women, as the glory of men, are dependent on men, the image and glory of God. In many ways, this section is a development of the headship language.

3. Interdependence (1 Cor. 11:8-12)

Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for the sake of man. For this reason a woman ought to have a symbol of

⁴⁸³ Erich Segal, *Roman Laughter: The Comedy of Plautus* (Oxford: Oxford, 1987): 21.

authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman. For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman; but all things come from God.

Having adduced the first Genesis creation narrative, Paul refers to the second in verses 8 and 9: “Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman from man.” Here, Paul’s reasoning uses the second creation narrative in which Eve is fashioned by God from Adam’s rib after placing Adam in the garden, presumably “in the day that the Lord God made the heavens and the earth” or the first and only day of creation. Adam has looked for a mate from among the animal kingdom, and it has become apparent Adam needs intraspecies marital union rather than an interspecies partner. Unlike the author of 1 Timothy who claims that women must receive instruction silently as they will be saved through motherhood (2:15), Paul does not adduce Eve’s deception by the snake that led to the banishment of humans from the Garden of Eden.⁴⁸⁴ Instead, he emphasizes the interdependence of man and woman.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸⁴ Benjamin H. Dunning, *Specters of Paul: Sexual Difference in Early Christian Thought* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania, 2011). 1 Timothy seems to posit that a Roman practice (of elevating the social status of women who had born multiple children) will solve a Jewish etiology of the suffering of women in childbirth. Looking over the political uses of creation narratives for legitimation of imperial prerogatives in the centuries after Paul wrote to the house-churches in Corinth, Averil Cameron confidently asserts that “no one in late antiquity would have understood the post 19th century view of the story of the creation and Fall as ‘profound religious myths, illuminating our human situations.’” See Averil Cameron, “Remaking the Past,” *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1999): 1–20, here 4.

⁴⁸⁵ Else Kähler, *Die Frau in den paulinischen Briefen* (Zurich: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1960): 44; L. Ann Jervis, “‘But I Want You to Know...’: Paul’s Midrashic Intertextual Response to the Corinthian Worshipers (1 Cor 11:1–16),” *JBL* 112 (1993): 231–46; Judith M. Gundry Volf, “Gender and Creation in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16: A Study in Paul’s Theological Method,” in *Evangelium, Schriftauslegung, Kirche* (ed. J Ådna et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997): 151–71.

In this emphasis, 1 Corinthians 11 represents a development on 1 Corinthians 6, whose intertextuality with the second Genesis creation account subverts the latter's conclusion that a man leaves his mother to marry his wife. Paul admonishes the community to not "take Christ's members and make them the members of a prostitute" (6:15). A scriptural quotation provides his reason: "For 'the two,' it says, 'shall become one flesh'" (6:16). Instead, the Corinthians are to join themselves to the Lord in order to become one spirit with him (6:17). The "one flesh" of Genesis 2:24, though it has affinity with the Platonic notion of split male and female souls seeking reunion, is not applied in 1 Corinthians 6 or 1 Corinthians 11—Paul does not instruct men to avoid ritual prostitution and instead enact their own ritual marriage, a concept that surely would have resonated with a community that had been founded with members of the Corinthian synagogue.

Just as 1 Corinthians 6 opposed becoming one spirit with the Lord and becoming one flesh with a prostitute, 1 Corinthians 7 erases the distinction between married and single. Boyarin sees a fundamental harmony between the egalitarian baptismal formula in Gal 3:28 and Paul's reinscribing of gender differences in 1 Corinthians. Equality between men and women exists only in "momentary ecstatic androgyny" and is not experienced in corporeal existence.⁴⁸⁶ The categories of 1 Corinthians 7 approximate those of the baptismal formula in Galatians 3:28. The only exact correspondence is the differentiation of slave and free.⁴⁸⁷ All of the other terms in 1 Corinthians 7 speak to the question of whether or not one should marry. Jewishness is considered in male terms, that is, circumcision (7:17-20). Gender duality is exchanged for married or single (7:25-28)—

⁴⁸⁶ Boyarin 190.

⁴⁸⁷ Jackson 109.

though this might perhaps be an indication of the maleness achieved though virginity in Greco-Roman and Philonic thought. The overarching concern is not the reconciliation of fractious social groups but the undivided devotion available to the unmarried believer (7:32-35).

Paul's subversion of the second creation account has manifold ramifications. First, the imagery of a transformation of individual believers into a corporate divinity implies that gender differences do not affect salvation.⁴⁸⁸ Moreover, individuals need not marry—whether they had the legal ability or not, which was a real question for slaves and those of low-birth—in order to form pairs to procreate, in mimesis of God's creation of humanity.⁴⁸⁹

Finally, the Christian male is separated from the pagan male, whom moralists praised for satisfying his lusts lawfully with prostitutes rather than in illicit affairs (e.g., Horace, *Sat.* 1.2.32-35).⁴⁹⁰

Jewish antecedents in interpreting the Genesis creation narrative show an increased interest in veiling and cosmology. Ben Sira envisions Lady Wisdom veiling the earth

⁴⁸⁸ The corporate emphasis found in the Corinthian correspondence, if it was present in Paul's earlier instruction to the community, would help account for their lack of belief in the resurrection of the dead 1 Cor. 15. Paul's response that there would be no need to baptize the dead if the dead were not raised indicates an emphasis on pneumatic experience at Corinth. Nasrallah has proposed that Paul seeks to taxonomize pneumatic gifts at Corinth because there is, for him, an experiential chasm between the present and the eschaton. See Laura Nasrallah, *An Ecstasy of Folly: Prophecy and Authority in Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Harvard, 2004).

⁴⁸⁹ Slaves would have been subject to fulfilling the sexual desires of their masters. Paul's inclusion of slaves implicitly allows the house-slave who has been used sexually to participate in the Christian communal meal. This ambiguity has been well-documented: Harrill, *Manumission*, 122; Robertson and Plummer, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 144; Barrett, *First Epistle*, 167; Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 114; Fee, *First Epistle*, 306; Senft, *Premiere Epitre*, 95; Glancy 499.

⁴⁹⁰ For Roman moralists' approbation of prostitution, see Karla Pollmann, "Marriage and Gender in Ovid's Erotodidactic Poetry," 95.

like a dark mist in her wisdom (Sir. 24:3).⁴⁹¹ Mattila notes that this is a sapiential interpretation of scripture combining Proverbs 8:22-31, where Wisdom is created before anything else, and Genesis 1:2, where the breath of God and darkness were hovering over the waters of formless earth. In *Sir.* 24:5-6, Wisdom proceeds to take a tripartite cosmic journey—by surveying the heavens, the abyss, and the earth, Wisdom cements her claim to first knowledge of the cosmos.⁴⁹² The heavenly veil of Lady Wisdom separates human understanding from divine understanding—while mortals may see the concept of Wisdom, they cannot fully fathom her heavenly mysteries.

Associations between the heavenly curtain and the temple curtain burgeoned in the Second Temple period. Pelletier has suggested that for both Philo and Josephus the veil occluded the public view of the mystery of God's dwelling to reserve it for the priesthood.⁴⁹³ In one later rabbinic tradition, the cosmos is compared to the Tabernacle, and the heavenly firmament is identified as the inner veil of the Temple (*Num. Rab.* 12:13). In another, God veils himself: "He holds tightly the thick darkness about his throne so that the angel(s) will not see him; he spreads the clouds of his glory over it like a curtain" (*Tg. Job* 26:9).⁴⁹⁴ The veil does not have a completely prophylactic function, though, because angels and even occasionally demons can hear the secrets being contained by the veil (*b. Hag.* 16a; cf. *b. Sanh.* 89b; *b. Hag.* 15a; 2 Sam. 14:20).

If the Corinthians associated the veil with the Temple, the community could be taken to represent the Temple, in which case women would need to be attired for a place of

⁴⁹¹ Sharon Lea Mattila, "Ben Sira and the Stoics: A Reexamination of the Evidence," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119 (2000): 473–501.

⁴⁹² Mattila 487–88.

⁴⁹³ Pelletier, "La tradition."

⁴⁹⁴ On the rabbinic texts, see David M. Gurtner, *The Torn Veil: Matthew's Exposition of the Death of Jesus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2007): 89–90.

prayer in rules inscribed in the order of creation.⁴⁹⁵ The configuration of this creation vis-à-vis female veiling preceded Paul. However, I think it is much more likely that women would have been thought of as temples for Paul explicitly says that the body is a temple and this notion is congruent with the rest of New Testament literature, in which Jesus claims his body is a temple as part of a presumably *ex eventu* prophecy (cf. John 2:21, the Synoptics). Though she contends the veil is a vestige of patriarchal oppressive marriage, Schottroff has noted that the logic of this argument, that the body is a temple, is a feminist one because some Corinthian men evidently thought that they were free to continue in the patriarchal sexual practice of prostitution. To have women wear veils, by contrast, implies that women are temples of God. Men may or may not be. In any case, women are the only ones who are appropriately attired for worship.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* features a cosmogony with many affinities with the Genesis accounts as the orderly arrangement of the cosmos slowly devolves into a race of iron (127-150), a gigantomachy (151-162), and a flood (252-312). Like the Genesis account, Ovid conceives of a divine fabricator, comparable with the demiurge in Plato's *Timaeus* (cf. 30a2-6) and Stoic accounts of divine providence (cf. Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.58; Diog. Laert. 7.136-156). Paralleling Neptune's calming of the sea in Virgil's *Aeneid* 1, a *deus* pacifies the chaos of the civil war of the elements in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Both scenes can be read as allegories for the peace achieved by Augustus.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁵ Annie Jaubert, "Le Voile Des Femmes (I Cor. XI.2-16)," *New Testament Studies* 18 (1972): 419-430, here 428.

⁴⁹⁶ On the Augustan allegory, see Gregor Maurach, "Ovids Kosmogonie: Quellenbenutzung und Traditionsstiftung," *Gymnasium* 86 (1979): 131-149, here 134-140.

The unfolding of the generative power of love in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* begins with the recreation of humanity by Deucalion and Pyrrha, the sole survivors of the catastrophic flood (348-415).⁴⁹⁷ Ovid's account is a retelling of the myth known from Apollodorus (*Bibl.* 1.7.2; cf. *Scholiast on Hom. Il. i.126*). Apollodorus' second century BCE version adds an element of human desirability of civilization. Whereas other creation accounts have the deity creating humanity through an inaugural couple with an injunction to multiply, exhibiting fecundity, Apollodorus' version indicates that humans themselves request the addition of humans from the deity.⁴⁹⁸ The gesture is somewhat superfluous given the survival of those few people who managed to flee to the mountaintops. However, the recreation of a vibrant human society happens instantaneously rather than the slow accretion of numerical strength—and corresponding social diversity—as human reproduction runs its course over the centuries, expanding beyond the nuclear family unit. In Ovid, this volitional element to the reconstitution of the society is missing—an oracle tells Deucalion and Pyrrha to “throw the bones of their mother behind them” as they walked away from the temple. This is a development on Apollodorus' notation that people are metaphorically called people, *laos*, because they came from stones, *laas*. As husband and wife throw the stones behind them, humans emerge from the stones in the form of whichever gender has touched them (1.416-37). In this way, the earth is repopulated and the theme of postdiluvian love is introduced (*primus amor Phoebi*,

⁴⁹⁷ Stephan M. Wheeler, “Imago Mundi: Another View of the Creation in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,” *Amer. Journal of Philology* (1995): 95–121, here 116.

⁴⁹⁸ Tal Ilan 75: “The rabbis, for example, believed that Cain and Seth had no choice but to marry their sisters in order to beget sons (*Sif. Qedoshim* 10.11, 92d ed. Weiss; cf. *Book of Jubilees* 4.9–11).”

1.452).⁴⁹⁹ Ovid's *Metamorphoses* thus understands both men and women to function sacerdotally in the second creation of humanity. This corresponded with the priesthoods of Augustus and his wife, Livia. Yet, as Deucalion and Pyrrha were not an imperial couple but one without any divine lineage, it also reinforces the religious rites concerning the dead that were connected with the earth, such as the Parentalia. In 1 Corinthians 11, with its invocation of creation, both men and women pray and prophesy. However, while Ovid conceives of an Augustan husband-wife pair, Paul envisions a community of men and women, both within and outside of the spousal binary.

4QInstruction, one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, interprets the command to honor one's father and mother of the Decalogue with Gen. 1:26 in the simile "as the Father is to a man so is his father and as the lords are to a man his mother." Here, the cohortative injunction to create mankind in the divine image is interpreted as God and the angels creating men and women. God creates man, and angels create women. All participate in the divine image. On the one hand, Benjamin Wold sees this as a negative hierarchy in which men are able to be the more powerful God while women are relegated to being the less powerful angels.⁵⁰⁰ On the other hand, this is a notable improvement in the status of women from Jacob Jervell's notion that women cannot be in the divine image by their relation to angels. *4QInstruction* places both man and woman in the biblical narrative, endowing each of them with a role in creation and authority over a male offspring. Just

⁴⁹⁹ Wheeler 115–116. Interestingly, Victorian feminist Charlotte M. Yonge included this tale for its "beauty as a narrative" in her children's anthology of Greek myths and history. *Aunt Charlotte's Stories of Greek History for the Little Ones* (London: Marcus Ward, 1876): 12. On Yonge's work and the potential of classical studies knowledge to empower Victorian women, see Isobel Hurst, *Victorian Women Writers and the Classics* (Oxford: Oxford, 2006): 2, 42–45.

⁵⁰⁰ Benjamin Wold, *Angelology and Anthropology in Musar LeMuvin*, 149.

as 1 Corinthians 11 associates the veil with authority and angels, *4QInstruction* might be seen as giving women considerable agency, if not complete equality.

4. Argument from Nature (1 Corinthians 11:13-15)

Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head unveiled? Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is degrading to him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering.

The “nature” Paul is invoking clearly is not that of the Jewish religious world, modern or ancient.⁵⁰¹ Naziritic vows, established for Jewish men and women since the times of ancient Israel, involve growing the hair long, abstaining from wine, and avoiding contact with the dead.⁵⁰² However, it is the sanctity of the head with which the vow is particularly concerned, as evinced by the prescription of the rules governing naziritic vows in Numbers 6:1-21 coming directly after the prescription of the dishevelment of the hair of the suspected adulteress in Numbers 5:18. This becomes particularly clear in the potential for the consecrated head to become defiled not even by ritual contact but mere proximity with a dead person:

If someone dies very suddenly nearby, defiling the consecrated head, then they shall shave the head on the day of their cleansing; on the seventh day they shall

⁵⁰¹ Walker speculates that this verse is a non-Pauline interpolation based on the unlikelihood that Paul subscribed to this view based on the prevalence of long hair among males in the Jewish *habitus*. See Wm. O. Walker, Jr., “1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and Paul’s Views Regarding Women,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1975): 94–110, 108. The modern Jewish ritual interest in male hair and grooming may be seen in the Chasidic movement, whose men have long hair. A boy in the Chasidic movement has his head cut for the first time at the age of three.

⁵⁰² Earlier scholars such as Derrett claimed that the Nazirite vow was “exclusively masculine” and that there was no reason to connect it with the women of 1 Corinthians. See J. M. Duncan Derrett, “Religious Hair,” *Man* (1973): 101–102. Such a claim is neither true for the Torah, which clearly includes women, nor true for the Second Temple period, as Tal Ilan has clearly demonstrated.

shave it. On the eighth day they shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and the priest shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and make atonement for them, because they incurred guilt by reason of the corpse. They shall sanctify the head that same day, and separate themselves to the Lord for their days as nazirites, and bring a male lamb a year old as a guilt offering. The former time shall be void, because the consecrated head was defiled.

Shaving the head re-purifies the head. A similar understanding of this might be seen in Acts 21:23-26, where four men need to purify themselves and have their heads shorn in Jerusalem.⁵⁰³ Therefore, if the Corinthian men were following Roman hairdressing practices, their heads would be perceived as continually being cleansed by the ritual of the razor. There would be less of a need to protect the ritual purity of their hair.⁵⁰⁴

Naziritic vows remained popular in Second Temple Judaism among both men and women. The nazirites found in Acts are male. Paul is said to have shorn his head at Cenchrae after a vow, presumably a naziritic one (Acts 18:18). Moreover, the four individuals in Acts 21:17-26 in need of hair-shaving and purification are male.⁵⁰⁵ However, Jewish sources preserve the stories of female nazirites in addition to male nazirites. Three prominent Jewish women are identified as having taken the naziritic vow: Mariamne of Palmyra (*mNed* 6.11; *tNaz* 4.10), Queen Helene (*mNaz* 3.6; *Sifre Zuta* 6.5), and Queen Berenice (??? 2.313). Tal Ilan observes that the anonymous groups of nazirites found in rabbinic literature could have included women as well as men. In the

⁵⁰³ Stuart Chepey, *Nazirites in Late Second Temple Judaism*, 173–74.

⁵⁰⁴ Neusner notes that the nazirite achieves his most righteous state when he shaves off his hair, meaning that there is a ritual tension between the growing of beautiful locks and the shaving off of them for the deity. Neusner, “Vow–Taking, the Nazirites, and the Law,” 79–80.

⁵⁰⁵ Stuart Chepey, *Nazirites in Late Second Temple Judaism*, 173–74.

Mishnah, the nazirites from the diaspora who go to the Temple to be released from their vows only to find it in ruins could have included women.⁵⁰⁶

Long hair was an impediment to military operations, though it was a source of beauty. Hence, it was not Roman. Josephus uses this to his advantage by embellishing the story of Absalom's capture. In Josephus' version, Absalom's beauty makes him more visible to the enemy (*Ant.* 7.238), and the source of his beauty, his hair, becomes entangled in a tree as he rides his horse (*Ant.* 7.238). The acceptability of long hair in the epic tradition, though, appears to have retained its *puissance* throughout antiquity, as we see in Synesius' commentary on the now-lost *Encomium on Hair* of Dio Chrysostom (40-120 CE):

Dio of the golden tongue has composed a discourse entitled *An Encomium on Hair*, which is a work of such brilliance that the inevitable result of the speech is to make a bald man feel ashamed. For the speech joins forces with nature; and by nature we all desire to be beautiful, an ambition whose realization is greatly assisted by the hair to which from boyhood nature has accustomed us. In my own case, for example, even when the dreadful plague was just beginning and a hair fell off, I was smitten to my inmost heart, and when the attack was pressed with greater vigour, hair after hair was dropping out, and ultimately even two or three together, and the war was being waged with fury, my head becoming utterly ravaged, then indeed I thought myself to be the victim of more grievous injury than the Athenians suffered at the hands of Archidamus when he cut down the trees of the Achamians, and presently, without my so intending, I was turned into a Euboean, one of the tribe which the poet marshaled against Troy "with flowing locks behind."⁵⁰⁷

Josephus' disparagement of long hair seems to arise primarily from Roman military practice rather than Greek military practice as remembered in the epic tradition. Roman period Greek philosophers, of course, would not have the same military exigencies as warding off lice and plague, and they could afford to glory in the flowing locks of

⁵⁰⁶ It is only much later that the naziritic vow becomes gendered. See Samuel Morrell, "The Samson Nazirite Vow in the Sixteenth Century," *AJS Review* 14 (1989): 223–262.

⁵⁰⁷ *Contra* J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Religious Hair," *Man* (1973): 100–103.

themselves and their nation's ancestors. But even Roman period depictions of the fool indicate that Roman cultural elites thought the military-influenced trend for short hair on men could be taken too far and return to the realm of social lugubriousness from which it had ostensibly departed. The fool's baldness, however abetted by his own genetics, was produced by multiple trips to the barber, surpassing the single daily visit to the barber by a prototypical Roman male.

Thus, when Paul says that long hair is degrading, he is referring primarily to Roman cultural norms.⁵⁰⁸ This is a savvy rhetorical move for an apostle dealing with a community he characterizes as formerly having worshipped Greco-Roman idols. In the modern era, Levinas has argued that medieval Jewish thinker Maimonides' legacy was to have posited in *Guide for the Perplexed* a cosmic order beyond the world's law without borrowing notions from the world. What former Pharisaic Jew Paul has done is to create a world order that does not correspond to even his own continuation of Jewish practices, let alone Roman order.

The appearance of gender distinction was important to Romans. The appeals to nature of elite Roman authors were usually not meant to be taken literally, slavishly related back to ancient medical theory in every instance and with perfect consistency.

Rather, the idea seems to have been that a sufficient set of gender differences existed in

⁵⁰⁸ Natural law is not a normal concern of Paul's eschatological vision. Believers put on Christ at baptism like they are putting on a new skin, with a new set of rules. In the eschatological garment of baptism, according to the version of the baptismal formula found in Galatians 3, there is not male and female, Jew and Gentile, slave and free. The change from earthly, corruptible bodies to incorruptible likenesses of the divine image is envisaged as happening in the present in 1 Corinthians, despite the fact that 1 Corinthians 15 attempts to use proxy baptism to convince the Corinthians of the reality of the resurrection. This change from mortal human to divine image is seen both as taking place within the body of the individual believer and as taking place within the ecclesial body as all believers meld together into the image of Christ.

nature to support the cultural norm of maintaining gender distinctions in clothing and grooming. C.K. Barrett finds a parallel to 1 Cor. 11:14-15 in Epictetus, *Diss.* 1.16.9-14:

Let us leave the main works of nature, and behold her minor works. Is there anything less useful than the hair on the chin? What then? Has not nature used this also in the most fitting way possible? Has she not by means of it distinguished the male and the female? Has not the nature of each one of us immediately cried out from afar, I am a man; on this understanding approach me, speak to me, seek nothing else; here are the signs? Again, in regard to women, as she has mingled something gentler in the voice so she has taken away the hair [of the chin].... For this reason, we ought to keep the signs that God has given, we ought not to throw them away, nor to confound, so far as we can, the distinctions of the sexes.”

Lucian (*Dialogi meretricii* 5.3) similarly considers it “unnatural” for a woman to shave in the manner of the manliest athletes.

We know, however, that Paul has encouraged all Corinthians—male and female—to run so as to win in 1 Corinthians. If there is only one winner, then it might be a woman taking after the mythological Atalanta. Paul may be insisting that the Corinthians imagine themselves in Roman cultural practice, but he is not striking a strident tone on gender difference in the manner of the above authors. He does not remind the Corinthians about any other gender distinction common to discussions found in ancient Greek and Roman authors (voice, facial hair, etc.). Even the possible interpolation in 1 Corinthians 14 does not mention the woman’s weakness of voice. Rather, Paul concentrates on the element associated with beauty, namely hair, and insists on covering it.

Jubilees also assigns an active role to angels at the moment of creation. Rather than stating God’s pleasure at his newly created universe with the statement “and God saw that it was good,” the author refers to the angels’ delight in 2:3 “Then we saw his works and blessed him. We offered praise before him regarding all his works because he had

made seven great works on the first day.” Vanderkam proposes that Job 38:7 may be what the author of Jubilees means to depict: “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? ... when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?” The angels seem to be in a position of divine authority, witnesses of the first works of creation. At this point, we should notice what work Paul’s appeal to nature is doing vis-à-vis female head-covering. Contrary to interpreters who see Paul as reasserting Roman matrimony, Paul most manifestly does not say that women need to cover their heads because their eschatological liberty does not free them from their marital status. Paul’s logic is very clearly: 1) long hair is natural to women, 2) long hair covers the wearer, and therefore 3) women are covered. In other words, women are not covered because they are married; they are covered because it is an augmentation of their natural appearance. This actually uses the logic of creational order to separate the veil from matrimony. Just as Paul has referred to the veil as a woman’s *authority* so too is her hair, which is the natural equivalent of veiling, her *glory*. If the veil replicates the natural function of a woman’s head, then, the veil is a sign of *glory*.

Such a Pauline move is not outside the realm of Roman possibilities because veiled heads were also found at Roman rituals of sacrifice and prayer. The Roman emperor was ensconced in the Corinthian agora *capite velato* in his role as *pontifex maximus*. While the veil indicated an attitude of respect toward the gods, it also indicated a prestigious role in the ritual. A veil really could be *glorious*. The problem in 2 Corinthians with Moses’ veil is not that he was veiled but that the veil hid the state of his face—the veil implied that Moses retained his glory when, in fact, the glory was draining from his face. Paul is forced into this argument by his opponents’ accusation that his words are veiled.

Thus, as we have seen in this section, Paul's appeal to nature does not reinforce a husband's domination over his wife. Rather, the natural feminine state is posited to be a covered one. The veil is an extension of the natural long hair of women. It is a sign of glory for woman, not for man (either in his ontological state as a man or in his social role as a husband). I will now analyze Paul's concluding remark on this issue.

5. The Argument from Social Custom (1 Corinthians 11:16)

But if anyone is disposed to be contentious—we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

It almost goes without saying that someone in the Corinthian churches would have been likely to take issue with Paul's argument. This is not simply because his assertions directly contradict many facets of Jewish, Greek, and Roman customs. Troels Engberg-Pedersen has suggested that Paul knows his argument will be unconvincing and so uses his conclusion in 1 Corinthians 11:16 to introduce a good Christian principle: the Corinthians should not insist as Paul does not insist. This proposal has certain merits when one considers that 1 Corinthians is a letter of concord, written to a fractious community. Others have interpreted the contentious members of Paul's community to be the female prophets, despite Paul's lack of reference to a group.

However, I would like to call attention to the latter part of the argument: the churches of God. Later in 1 Corinthians, when referring to the collection taken for Jerusalem, Paul directs the Corinthians' practice very specifically to the churches of Galatia. Here, Paul speaks more generally of his customs and those of all the churches of God. It would seem that the Christian principle is as important as any insistence on Paul's part not to insist. Paul, I think, is supporting himself with the example of the churches of God not simply

because he recognizes that the Roman discussion on natural gender differences is largely at the service of social concerns but because he wants to differentiate himself and the Corinthian house-churches from the *Romanitas* that permeated a Roman colony such as Corinth. When the Corinthians enact Paul's veiling precepts at their worship meals, they are supposed to see themselves as participants in the churches of God, not the imperial cult.

6. Worship and the Communal Meal

Although the Christian put on the new cosmological order in baptism, Taussig points out that the communal meal would have been the time when the community was most cognizant of belonging to this new world order. The communal meal provided a "protected environment in which the relationship to the occupying empire could be reflected on in a visceral manner but without the high stakes of life outside the meal."⁵⁰⁹ Traditionally, a libation was offered to the emperor as well as the various deities who were patrons of the associations. By offering the libation cup to Christ instead of the emperor, and by singing cosmic hymns that put forth an order of creation vastly different from that promulgated by the emperor, the Corinthians were envisioning and participating in a *kosmos* that was "at least implicitly and often explicitly an anti-imperial one".⁵¹⁰

It is possible, as Taussig notes, that the meals of the associations of Christ-followers featured singing hymns whose texts have been preserved in the New Testament. These potential hymn texts include: John 1:1-4, 8-14, 16-18; Col. 1:15-20; Phil. 2:6-11.⁵¹¹

⁵⁰⁹ Taussig 123.

⁵¹⁰ Taussig 126.

⁵¹¹ Taussig 104–108.

Cosmology and cosmogony were an important feature of all of them.⁵¹² Additional passages in early Christian literature contain similar instances of (Luke 1:67-79; 2:19-32; Rom. 11:33-36; 1 Tim. 3:16; 6:15, 16; and Rev. 4:11). In the one in the Pauline collection of epistles, Philippians, Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection are presented with the same ironic tension that is so characteristic of Paul's ethic of status inversion/renunciation: Christ is equal to God, but he voluntarily renounces his status in order to take on "the form of a slave"—that is, a human of any social standing. And it is this humility that returns him to his divine status, so that every knee on earth should bow to him in acknowledgement of his own humble status. Taussig observes that the hymn would have been sung at the entire *symposion* and not simply the libation, presumably when the Eucharistic formulae were uttered. Thus, even though the Corinthians were renouncing their status, these hymns reinforced the focal point of the meal: the Eucharistic celebration. The Corinthians would have had an expectation of an extremely high status, that is, a share in the status Christ Jesus, whose body and blood the Corinthians were ingesting. They had a tendency to neglect the ironic tension and skip the humiliation of being a slave to immediately assume the exalted status of Christ: "already you are kings," Paul chides them. As Nasrallah notes, the timing of the eschaton is flexible precisely because it is functioning in rhetoric debates delimiting status. Paul pushes the eschaton further in the future to remind the Corinthians that participation in Christ means an ironic tension between slave and divine and not a complete triumph over slavery as a divinized individual.

⁵¹² Jack T. Sanders, *New Testament Christological Hymns: Their Historical Religious Background* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1971); Burton Mack, *Logos und Sophia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 11–18, 178–82.

What I want to argue is that Paul is slowly dismantling the Roman imperial ideology of veiling, marriage, and the return to the paradisaal, creational Golden Age. Unlike both Roman creation narratives and the Jewish creational narratives based on Genesis, men and women are different in substance in 1 Corinthians 11. Woman is no longer the same flesh as man; she is the glory of man, who is the *eikon* of God. Woman does not proceed from man, because man also comes from woman. Paul's language of headship and glory in 1 Corinthians plays into such Roman narratives as Apollo and Daphnis even as it subverts Roman constructions of power. 1 Corinthians was a letter written to Roman Corinth; it was not, in fact, written to be read as the logical successor to Galatians. The creational imagery and the construction of body in 1 Corinthians supports an interpretation that Paul is seeking to envision the Corinthians as citizens.

7. Conclusion

In the second century CE, Clement of Alexandria continued the tradition of the primal androgyne by differentiating between the equality of souls, which have no gender, and the hierarchy of the flesh, where people are given in marriage (*Strom.* 6.12.100). Unlike scholarship that has seen Paul's feminism as backsliding in the time that elapses between his composition of Galatians and 1 Corinthians, I have attempted to show that we can read the creation allusions of 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 as part of Paul's wider critique of the “rulers of this age,” the Roman emperors. This chapter has shown that Paul's argument from creation, nature, and social custom in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 retells the two creation stories in Genesis to destabilize hierarchies. Unlike Philo, Paul does not read a spiritual androgyne in the first creation account and an allegory for the negative tendency of

masculine rationality to cling to feminine sense-perception in the second. Rather, Paul agrees that man is dependent on woman because of the second account and human reproduction and sees this as a positive condition. Yet, the veil is assigned to only one half of the species and not on the basis of state-approved marriage and participation in cult.

Paul's intent is to oppose the Roman imperial religious connections between the revitalized, fecund creation of the Golden Age and the Roman imperial cult. These informed Roman constructions of marriage, established Augustus as *pater patriae* and guarantor of fertility, and resulted in the marital dress code of the *lex Julia*. Paul makes it very clear in 1 Corinthians 2 that his Christ-like figure operates textually and physically as a sign in rivalry with the "rulers of this age." In the Roman colony of Corinth, Paul's veiling prescriptions would have opposed the vision of a veiled Pyrrha and Deucalion that could be drawn both from Roman and Greek sources. Paul's configuration would have pushed back against the worship of idols by implying that the only icons were men—at once a compliment (in Greco-Roman terms) and something of an insult (in Jewish ones). In the next chapter, I will explore the status implications of Paul's instructions to veil according to gendered bodies and not according to social class.

7. Veiling the Body of Christ

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Paul's rationale for his re-introduction of the theological principle of gender differences in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 is based on the Genesis creation narratives. This teaching comes in response to Paul's disagreement with the current practice of veiling in Corinth at the time of his letter.⁵¹³ He commends the Corinthians in 11:2 (Ἐπαινῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς) for attempting to keep his precepts, which is a notable commendation given his direct pronouncement "I do not praise you" (οὐκ ἐπαινῶ) in 11:17 where the Corinthians are said to have socioeconomic schisms at the worship meal. However, he still must correct the unique practice of veiling at Corinth and give a convoluted argument to convince them of his practice's validity, despite the absence of the Corinthians' veiling customs at any of the other "churches of God."⁵¹⁴ It would seem that there is something about the Christian experience at Corinth that is triggering Paul's extended instruction on veiling, a concern that does not arise from the same missionary interference as circumcision.⁵¹⁵ His recourse to the Genesis creation

⁵¹³ I follow ancient interpretation here in taking Paul to refer to veiling and unveiling: Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.8.2; Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 3.11; Tertullian, *Cor.* ch. 14; *Or.* chs. 21–22; *Marc.* 5.9; *Cult. fem.* 2.7; *Virg.*; Augustine, *Ep.* CCXLV; Jerome, *Ep.* CXL VII.5. See Preston T. Massey, "The Meaning of κατακαλύπτω and κατὰ κεφαλῆς ἔχων in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *NTS* 53 (2007): 502–23. Mark Finney, "Honour, Head-coverings and Headship: 1 Corinthians 11.2–16 in its Social Context" *JSNT* 33.1 (2010): 31–58.

⁵¹⁴ As H. R. Niebuhr opined, "most, if not all, of the problems which Paul discusses in 1 Corinthians can be attributed to the influence of the Corinthian cultural setting on the Christians there." *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952): 10.

⁵¹⁵ It might, however, be argued that veiling and circumcision establish an individual's identity in as Christian as opposed to Jewish or Roman. In this view, veiling and circumcision are elements of the *habitus* that are more essential for identity construction than other elements, so that the individual who has a practice different from the accepted custom might be seen as constructing a more Roman or more Jewish identity. This can be seen in terms of Judaism in the letters of Ignatius, where the term *Christianismos* first

narratives and his call to imitation serve to establish him as a religious reformer on the order of Moses, Numa, or Augustus. In this authoritative role, Paul does not censure any members either as individual cases or as factions. His primary goal is to set the Corinthians' cultural orientation toward the practice of veiling.

In this next chapter, I will explore these cultural valences of veiling in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16. Elsewhere in his letters, Paul uses the commonplace metaphor of the body as a garment to elucidate the new initiate's baptismal identity (Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:27). For Paul, the individual receives a new garment, a new body, at baptism because of the equivalency between clothing and identity.⁵¹⁶ Clothing in the Roman Empire exhibited an individual's place in the social body by virtue of its regulation in legal code, in imperial propaganda in support of the legal code, and in religious practice in imperially approved cults. Yet, the place of clothing in 1 Corinthians 11 is not readily apparent and has been much debated by scholarship. Are the Corinthians attiring themselves as participants in the "new creation" when they dress for the worship meal?⁵¹⁷ Or are they conforming to the moral legislation of the Golden Age of Augustus, which required *matronae* to make themselves visible by wearing robes such as *stolae*?⁵¹⁸ Are the veils

appears. See Shaye J.D. Cohen, "Judaism without Circumcision and 'Judaism' without 'Circumcision' in Ignatius," *Harvard Theological Review* 95.4 (2002): 395–415, 398.

⁵¹⁶ For other examples of the body as a piece of clothing, see Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Euripides Herakles* (2 vols.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1895), 2:258: "Den leib als kleid anzusehen, ist eine aus orphischen kreisen stammende metaphor," citing Pindar, *Nemean* 11.15 (θανατὰ μεμνάσθω περιστέλλων μέλη); Empedocles 402 (σαρκῶν χιτῶνα); and Euripides, *Bacchae* 746 (σαρκὸς ἐνδυτὰ).

⁵¹⁷ Hal Taussig, *In the Beginning Was the Meal* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009).

⁵¹⁸ Bruce Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001). Finney deems it "most likely" that the angels are merely guardians of the natural order, and the natural order of women is that they should be veiled as honorable women among non-kin individuals. Finney claims that this is a "traditional" mode of presentation for women, that is, that women appear as

worn by women protecting the women and the association's honor from human informants or fallen angels?⁵¹⁹ Or, as older commentators have suggested, do the veils compensate for women's natural inferiority as the weaker vessel and raise them to equal status?⁵²⁰

I will argue that Paul's prescription of veiling practices at Corinth interfaces with Roman customs with which the majority of worshippers in the Corinthian community would have been aware. In the Roman world, clothing and grooming displayed one's place in the socioeconomic hierarchy, both by custom and by *fiat*. Roman interest in hair exemplified the artifice the Romans created in order to separate civilization from the natural, Roman society from the barbaric. As part of maintaining a militaristic appearance, Roman men during the late Republic and early imperial period visited

respectable matrons. He does not consider the ramifications of different social classes at Corinth. See Mark Finney, "Honour, Head-coverings and Headship: 1 Corinthians 11.2–16 in its Social Context," *JSNT* 33.1 (2010): 31–58.

⁵¹⁹ Theissen 1987: 171–72; Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale, 1995): The explicit association of the veil with prophylaxis against male lust is not Pauline; Tertullian is responsible for the express relation of female veiling with modesty to protect against unwanted masculine, angelic attention ("Apparel," 1.2; 2.10; "Virgins," 1.7). However, there is an overlap between angelic existence and masculinity during the Second Temple Period. Philo refers to Moses, for instance, as both "god and king of the whole nation" (*Mos.* 1.158). Many texts at Qumran indicate a belief in the presence of angels during worship and an overlap between heavenly and terrestrial existence. The extant manuscripts preserve no direct evidence for a belief in the angelomorphic identity of human participants. Supplying missing information for 4Q545 (*4QVisions of Amram*^c ar) from 4Q543 yields information that a certain Malachiyah is an individual "who will be god and called an angel." Lierman analyzes the potential angelization of this and other texts in Jewish literature. See Lierman 238–244. Nonetheless, even if these texts do suggest a belief in the angelization of men (and not humans), this angelization is not said to sexually threaten women until much later, in the treatise on veiling of Tertullian. In the Old Greek version of Esther, Esther tells Ahasuerus she thought he was an angel when she thought he was going to kill her: "I saw you like a divine angel, and my heart melted from the glory of your rage, Lord" (5:10).

⁵²⁰ Morna D. Hooker, "Authority on Her Head: An Examination of 1 Cor. XI.10," *NTS* 10 (1963/64): 410–16.

commercial barbering establishments daily.⁵²¹ For women, ornate hairstyles indicated extreme wealth. Veiled heads signaled power over one's own head, that is, not being enslaved and ranked among the foreigners captured in war in the social hierarchy.⁵²² Only high status individuals—male priests, female priests, elite women, and so forth—wore veils. Elite satires make the abnormality of a slave woman receiving the honor of a marriage veil quite clear.⁵²³ Therefore, I argue that Paul gave the Corinthian Christian women status when he gave them veils, and he denied the social construction of the Roman Empire by refusing men head-coverings. As the Corinthian Christians are participating in outside social events, they cannot completely extricate themselves from outside social values, as we see in the desire of the Strong to partake of food sacrificed to idols at banquets. Paul encourages the Corinthians to cohere along gender lines in order to lessen their attachments to factions based on socioeconomic status or ritual (that is, baptism).

7.1 Paul and Imperium

Paul's instructions on veiling in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 clearly interface with imperial Roman religion rather than with one of the mystery cults or local cults at Corinth. In 1 Corinthians 11:3–16, after reminding the Corinthians to imitate him in v. 1

⁵²¹ See Elizabeth Bartman, "Hair and the Artifice of Roman Female Adornment," *American Journal of Archaeology* 105/1 (2001): 1–25, here 3. Attention beyond this daily ritual was seen as effeminate; hence Philo's negative description of the grooming rituals of pederasts noted by Murphy-O'Connor in "Sex," 485–87; *CBQ* 50:268.

⁵²² Ramsay MacMullen, "Women in the Roman Empire," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 29.2 (1980): 208–218, 218.

⁵²³ *Sat.* 26. See Regine May, "Chaste Artemis and Lusty Aphrodite: The Portrait of Women and Marriage in the Greek and Latin Novels," in: Warren S. Smith, *Satiric Advice on Women and Marriage: From Plautus to Chaucer* (Ann Arbor: Michigan, 2005): 129–153, here 137.

and praising their enactment of received traditions in v.2, Paul invokes the structures of imperial Roman religion. Verse 3 focuses on headship, a position normally thought to be held by the emperor in the discourses of political theory and religious cult. Verses 4-5 address the cultic practice of praying and prophesying, creating a gendered distinction. Paul supports his prescriptions by recourse to cosmology, a religious move also made by the Roman imperial cult. In verse 10, Paul claims a woman should veil because she has “authority” over her own head. At verse 13, Paul uses the imperative *κρίνατε* to instruct the Corinthians “judge for yourselves.” He proceeds to inquire, against Jewish customs, whether *nature* does not teach them that it is against the natural order for men to be covered and women to be uncovered. Relating this specifically to hair conjures up the myriad cultic practices of Roman hairstyling that dictated short hair for men and long hair for women and cloaked both sets of customs with religious authority. Finally, Paul states that neither he nor the churches of God have a custom other than uncovered male heads and covered female heads, implying that the customs practiced in the Corinthian house-churches are Roman or local rather than Christian. With the references to authority, the judiciary, and the natural order independent of the Genesis creation, Paul decidedly has the Roman cultural apparatus in view in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16.

Paul disrupts whatever veiling practice had been in place at Corinth. He does not specify behaviors he considers erroneous, and all scholarly attempts to reconstruct them must be considered sheer speculation. Rather, Paul commends the Corinthians for adhering to the traditions he had brought them. Nonetheless, he feels as though he must correct their practice and their understanding of the rationale for the practice. Unlike a

contemporary priest and author like Plutarch, Paul does not feel a simple etiology will suffice. Rather, he grounds his veiling prescriptions in Scripture and social customs.

Presumably, the rigor of Paul's argumentation is demanded by the lack of correspondence of its claims about the "natural" to Roman customs extant in the colony of Corinth and throughout the cosmopolitan areas with which Paul's audience would have been familiar. In early imperial Roman religion, both men and women served as priests, but the latter sacrificed less frequently than men and frequently did so only in exclusively female settings.⁵²⁴ While there were many priestly offices held by men that conferred priestly status on their wives only by virtue of marriage, women priests who presided over sacrifice seem to have had the same foremost duty of performing sacrifices, whether fruit, wine, *mola salsa*, or livestock. In towns that appointed priestesses of the imperial cult, priestesses performed rites before imperial images of the living empress and the *divae*. Images of the imperial couple granted harmony in marriage to marrying couples, and garlands of imperial busts may have provided protection against fever. Headgear could be worn by both male and female priests.

As in his paternalistic language of 1 Corinthians 4:14-21, Paul calls on the Corinthians to follow his example in 1 Corinthians 11:1, a verse that serves as a transition from his instruction on the consumption of idol meat to that on veiling during prayer and prophecy.⁵²⁵ Castelli has noted that the paternal language has political implications and

⁵²⁴ "Priests and Priestly Roles in the Isiac Cults: Women as Agents of Religious Change in Late Hellenistic and Roman Athens," in A. Chaniotis (ed.), *Ritual Dynamics in the Ancient Mediterranean: Agency, Gender, Emotion, Representation* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011): 321.

⁵²⁵ Laura Nasrallah has identified the ongoing debates about the place of *paideia* in construction of Christian identity in the second century. See Laura Salah Nasrallah,

that Paul's calls to mimesis recall the extant hierarchy.⁵²⁶ Building off Betz, who sees the "contentlessness" of Paul's message as his source of authority, Castelli argues that "Paul's demand of imitation here is founded on an idea of non-reciprocity."⁵²⁷ The Corinthians are to imitate Paul as Paul imitates Christ: μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε, καθὼς καὶ γὼ Χριστοῦ (11:1). Christ is a transcendent figure in the theology of Paul, and it should therefore be impossible for Paul to fully emulate him.

The rhetorical goal of Paul's call to mimesis is to draw the Corinthians' attention past his example toward that of Christ. Paul imitates Christ; the Corinthians imitate Paul's Christian mimesis. At the beginning of 1 Corinthians, Paul has already reminded the letter's recipients that some of them had been assigning themselves to particular Christian leaders, a spiritual error. These assignments are not properly "factions" as he cites the Corinthians' slogans that use the first person singular nominative, indicating individual affiliation to a particular figure. The individual's sense of belonging to one particular master is underscored by use of the genitive. Each of the Corinthians declares "I am of Paul, I am of Apollo, I am of Kephas, I am of Christ" (ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι Παύλου, ἐγὼ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ, ἐγὼ δὲ Κηφᾶ, ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ). The problem is not that groups of the Corinthians are choosing affiliation, but that *each* of them links himself or herself with a different charismatic leader. The fault here is not the act of choosing an affiliation, but the act of choosing different affiliations. Christ is not divided, Paul tells us; he is spread out evenly among *each* of the Corinthians. At 11:1, Paul again uses the genitive as a

Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: The Second-Century Church Amid the Spaces of Empire (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2010): 28.

⁵²⁶ Hans Dieter Betz, *Nachfolge und Nachahmung Jesu Christi im Neuen Testament. Beiträge zur historischen Theologie* 37 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1967): 154–55; Elizabeth Anne Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power*, 102, 111.

⁵²⁷ Castelli 112–3.

simple affiliation. Paul, as he should be, is “of Christ” (Χριστοῦ). The Corinthians are being reminded of this call to be Χριστοῦ, not to be divided.

Paul’s rhetoric appears to be directed at building up a *politeuma* rather than protecting against the messengers of empire. Scholars such as Bruce Winter have argued that the phrase “because of the angels” indicates that Paul wishes the Corinthians to attire themselves for worship in such a way as not to arouse the suspicion of outside messengers from Roman Corinth. However, at the end of the passage, what is at stake is not the political discord of 1 Corinthians 1 but the jockeying for status exhibited in 1 Corinthians 4, with the aspirations of the Corinthians to gymnastic accolades. Paul concludes the pericope at 11:16 with the comment that if anyone wishes to seem “contentious” (φιλόνηκος) they should not insist because the custom they would champion is not found among any of the churches of God. The adjective φιλόνηκος differs from the more political “strife in you” (ἐριδες ἐν ὑμῖν) at 1:11, implying merely rivalry for honors rather than dangerous political discord. As Troels Engberg-Pedersen has argued, Paul’s point is that the Corinthians must not *insist*.⁵²⁸ Rather, they must conform to these veiling practices to show unity and, as in Paul’s instruction over food at the worship meal, to avoid shaming those of lower socioeconomic status.

Paul’s call to be “of Christ” establishes Paul as a rival to the civic training establishment in Corinth, proxies of the Roman emperor, and the emperor himself, who was ensconced in the Roman agora *capite velato*.⁵²⁹ The appearance of marked calls to

⁵²⁸ Troels Engberg-Pedersen, “1 Corinthians 11:16 and The Character of Pauline Exhortation,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 110.4 (1991): 679–689.

⁵²⁹ B.S. Ridgeway, “Sculpture from Corinth,” *Hesperia* 50 (1981): 429–35, here 432; Richard Oster, “When Men Wore Veils to Worship: The Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11.4,” *NTS* 34 (1988): 481–505; David Gill, “The Importance of Roman

imitation at 4:14-21 and 11:1 connects citizenship, with its accompanying educational apparatus, to clothing regulations. In this way, Paul mirrors the associations between clothing regulations and culture found formally in Horace's *Carmen Saeculare* for the Secular Games and more informally at the socially differentiated seating at every athletic performance. This association would have reverberated in the minds of the Corinthians, which were set on civic honors in a socioreligious system Paul rejected. Paul's aim was not to curtail the rights of women, but to rearrange the imperial constructions incorporating the Corinthians into the Roman body politic rather than the Body of Christ. This change would have benefited lower classes of men and women.

7.2 1 Corinthians 11:1–16, Tradition, and the Lack of Traditional Household Structures

Just as Paul does not call the Corinthians to agonistic display in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16, he omits the traditional Roman household structures found in the *Haustafeln*—husband/wife, parent/child, elder/youth, citizen/slave—after an initial discussion of headship that seems as though it should precede a sustained philosophical reflection on hierarchy. While scholars focus on the hierarchical nature of verse 3, what is perhaps more significant is that Paul proceeds to discuss the interdependency of man and woman by virtue of their dependence on each other to sexually reproduce the species without presuming that the recipients of his audience are implicated in a reproductive economy themselves. The fact of sexual procreation proves, for Paul, the reason that the hierarchy he gives in v. 3 does not pertain to human experience. God remains superior to and the

Portraiture for Head-Coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 41 (1990): 245–60.

source of man and woman, but man and woman need each other in order to come into being. God continues to be the head of humanity; however, man is no longer the head of woman. Paul avoids referencing the marital status and children of the Corinthians present in the community, meaning that both slave and free women are afforded the status of the citizen veil. The introduction of hierarchical language is part of Paul's program to overturn the status distinctions that have manifested themselves throughout the worship life of the Corinthians, including baptism and the worship meal. Paul's emphasis on tradition serves to juxtapose the demands of Christian veiling tradition and Roman veiling tradition.

According to v. 2, the Corinthians are practicing Christian traditions as taught to them by Paul. The contrastive *δε* in verse 2 implies that the Corinthians need not heed the preceding exhortation as its content is a *fait accompli*; the Corinthians are already followers of Paul, who is "of Christ." Despite these promising beginnings, verse 3 commences with another contrastive *δε* and introduces the language of headship.⁵³⁰ This hierarchy is typically translated with the presumption of marriage, given the discussion of procreation in subsequent verses: "But I want you to know that Christ is the head (κεφαλή) of every man (ἄνδρὺς), and a husband (ἄνῆρ) the head of his wife (γυναικὸς), and God the head of Christ." However, the hierarchy could also be read without the nomenclature of marriage and the use of possessive pronouns: "But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, man the head of woman, and God the

⁵³⁰ According to Horrell, Paul uses the word κεφαλή "not to talk about authority and subordination but *precisely because* he wants to talk about the way in which men and women must attire their κεφαλή in worship. Nevertheless, the theological legitimation which the κεφαλή analogy provides clearly gives man priority over woman." See *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence: Interest and Ideology from 1 Corinthians to 1 Clement* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996): 171.

head of Christ.” This latter reading accounts for Paul’s promulgation of celibacy and for the lack of possessive pronouns in the Greek. Moreover, it allows for the association of woman with man and Christ that is implied by the non-linear sequence of the hierarchy. The non-linear hierarchy in the text, I contend, permits conceptual slippage that does not emphasize that woman as wife is at the bottom echelon of a very rigid cosmic order. While there is still some conceptual subjection of the female in that man elides with God while woman only elides with Christ, Christ is still the centrifugal point of Paul’s theology and soteriology. Paul never presents a Jesus like the Markan mortal man with very human foibles like being moved with pity; he only knows the risen Christ who is God, an equivalency the sequence of “in Christ” (11:11) and “of God” (11:12) makes clear.

What is significant about Paul’s hierarchy in verse 3 is that it is not a household code, though it does presuppose more household structures than the picture of the historical Jesus we have from the gospels.⁵³¹ Paul focuses solely on the relationship of God, Christ, man, and woman. Further status distinctions are omitted. The household codes found in the four *Haustafeln* in the canonical New Testament differentiate among the community by age and status. Two of the four household codes —those of

⁵³¹ As Dale Martin frames the issue: “All our evidence pointing to the historical Jesus, therefore, indicates that he not only avoided marriage and family himself but also taught people to forsake those institutions and enter into an alternative, eschatological society. The household was part of the world order he was challenging.” See Dale B. Martin, *Sex and the Single Savior: Gender and Sexuality in Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006): 106. Nonetheless, as Caroline Johnson Hodge observes in her interpretation of Paul’s instructions for believers married to unbelievers, “Paul is not imagining that the whole household has converted with the head of the household, as we see in other early Christian texts.” See Caroline Johnson Hodge, “Married to an Unbeliever: Households, Hierarchies, and Holiness in 1 Corinthians 7:12–16,” *Harvard Theological Review* 103.1 (2010): 1-25, here 3.

Colossians (3:18-4:1) and Ephesians (5:21-6:9)—seem to elide wife, child, and slave. Such a configuration reflects the pedagogical role often assigned to husbands due to the often significant age differential between husbands and brides.⁵³² Likewise, the lack of a sophisticated structure in 1 Peter 2:18-3:7 means that its pattern of slaves (“accept the authority of your masters,” 2:18), wives (“in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands,” 3:1), and husbands (“in the same way, show consideration for your wives,” 3:7) does nothing to mitigate its conservative tone. However, when Titus 2:1-10 proceeds linearly from the *paterfamilias* to the slave, age is privileged over gender: both older men and women are given precepts, but younger women and men are to be encouraged toward precepts. The text is explicit that older women should encourage younger women, but it also seems to imply that older women should be involved in the urging of younger men. This gives older women authority over the young. By focusing exclusively on gender, Paul encourages the Corinthians to identify with their genders rather than with their socioeconomic ranks in verse 3. Up until 1 Corinthians 11:1–16, and immediately following this pericope, the main points of contention between Paul and the Corinthians have been socioeconomic and status-related rather than gender-related. Since Paul cannot request that the Corinthians share their idol food banquet invitations or give food to those going without, just as he must request to accompany the Corinthians’ tribute to the Jerusalem church rather than having any jurisdiction over its collection,

⁵³² Herodes Atticus, for instance, was married around age 40 to a bride of 13 or 14. See A.J.S. Spawforth, “Families at Roman Sparta and Epidaurus: Some Prosopographical Notes,” *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 80 (1985): 191–258, 192. Cf. Plut. *Mor.* ix.753a.

mandating a veiling practice along gender lines presents itself as the easiest way to promote solidarity among the members of Paul's fractious Corinthian church.⁵³³

7.3 Honor, Shame, and the Social Construction of Worship Veils in the Roman Context (1 Cor. 11:3-9)

7.3.1 The Attire of Men and Women During Prayer and Prophecy

In 1 Corinthians 11:4-5, Paul further deconstructs hierarchy in his discussion of the attire one should wear in prayer and prophecy. Paul gives instructions to men and women in tandem with each other, emphasizing the activity of prayer and prophecy through word order and parallelism of worship practices. Verse 4 literally reads: "Every man (ἀνὴρ) praying and prophesying (προσευχόμενος ἢ προφητεύων) with his head (κατὰ κεφαλῆς) has shame on his head (ἔχων καταισχύνει τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ)." Paul explains in verse 5 that "every woman (γυνή) praying and prophesying (προσευχομένη ἢ προφητεύουσα) with uncovered head (ἀκατακαλύπτῳ τῇ κεφαλῇ) brings shame onto her head (καταισχύνει τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς)." Notable in Paul's formulation is that Paul indicates a covered male head in worship by the phrase κατὰ κεφαλῆς, finding a "head" sufficient to invoke the image of a covered male head. Fitzmyer and others translate this as "having (something) down from (the) head," comparing the phrase to those in LXX Esther and Plutarch.⁵³⁴ This phrasing connects to Paul's preceding language of headship.

⁵³³ Rituals involving food and drink are commonly one of the more prominent means utilized toward this end. Anthropological research has variously shown how eating and drinking are not just physiological necessities but also communicative and performative acts. Food and drink are highly charged forms of material culture. A group becomes in a certain sense one body at the table.

⁵³⁴ Fitzmyer 411. Pace Garland (1 Cor., 511, 517), the English language will not tolerate the literal translation, "having down from the head." The phrase *kata kephales echon* is

If men do not wish to bring shame to their heads, Paul implies, they must avoid worshiping according to the imperial discourse on headship and hierarchy that he has introduced at v. 3. Women, however, do not bring shame to their heads if they worship *without* a head; they bring shame to their heads if they worship with head *uncovered* (ἀκατακάλυπτο).

The promulgation of unity among schisms that are socioeconomic through gender affiliation, I suggest, is the reason that Paul introduces the verb “put to shame” (καταισχύνω) in 1 Corinthians 11:4-5. These verses locate the veiling with which Paul disagrees in the ritual activity of praying and prophesying during the worship meal. Paul insists that the man who covers his head brings shame (καταισχύνει) to it and the woman who covers hers brings shame (καταισχύνει) to it. The men and women do not bring shame to their metaphorical heads—Christ and men, respectively—but, rather, the man brings shame to his head (τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ) and the woman brings shame to her head (τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς).⁵³⁵ The use of the gendered possessive pronouns implies that the metaphorical expression connotes not Christ and man but men and women themselves.

usually understood as meaning a veil or cover hanging from the head (BDAG, 511; BDF 225.2; IBNTG, 60), as in LXX Esth. 6:12 (“mourning with head covered”; cf. Plutarch, Mor. 200f: *kata tes kephales echon to himation*, “having a cloak (hanging) from the head; also Plutarch, Caesar 739cd; Brutus 991f; Cicero 885c. In Josephus, the passages usually cited (see Oster, “When Men,” 486 n.6) use the words, but apply them to someone else’s head.

⁵³⁵ Michael Lakey argues that verses 4–5a assign the blame to metaphorical heads, but the specter of shaving the female head lays the blame solely upon the woman and not her husband. This is incorrect, as it fails to account for the practice of shaving a new slave’s head and assumes that the woman has committed adultery. See 105. More consistent is the explanation that metaphorical heads are not invoked at all, an especially appealing solution since gendered possessive pronouns are used.

As Oster and Gill have argued, the Roman veiling during religious events underscores the inversion of customary honor-shame codes that occurs in these verses.⁵³⁶ Plutarch's discussion of the Roman symbolism of the veil (*Quaest. Rom.* 266-267; cf. Pliny, *HN* 28.17) provides an excellent example of how Roman ritual veiling was supposed to subvert in order to create ritual time. Plutarch gives two answers in response to the question why, at the funerals of their fathers, Roman sons wear veils while Roman daughters do not. First, "fathers must be grieved for by the males as though they were gods and by daughters as though they were dead, that the law has imposed what is proper on each, producing from both what is fitting?" (Plut., *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267). Second, funerals invert normal practice: "it is more usual for women to go out in public with their heads veiled, and for men to go out with their heads uncovered" (Plut., *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267). Plutarch's interlocutor seems to be unaware of Varro's mention of the *ricinium*, a garment that covered the head, in times of mourning in *De Vita Populi Romani*, which is quoted by Nonius Marcellinus (869L). However, Cicero notes in *De Legibus* that the Twelve Tablets limited the number of women who wore the *ricinia* at funerals to three (2.23.59). What is clear, however, is that Plutarch ascribes the abrogation of typical social norms to a religious game in which the inversion of social customs allows practitioners to process the liminal period in which they transition from having their loved one present in this world to the new reality of the departed's absence. The inversion is not unlike the transvestism practiced around Greece by brides preparing for marriage. By inverting Roman practices, Paul is inverting the honor-shame system.

⁵³⁶ Oster; Gill.

Thus, as verse 6 observes, the man who covers his head brings shame to it, and the woman who leaves hers uncovered brings shame to hers.

Paul's redefinition of "honor" and "shame" continues in the next verse as Paul attributes the reason that man ought not cover his head to man being "the image and glory of God" (εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα θεοῦ, 11:7). One of the men who would have been honored as a god by Romans was the emperor. Imperial apotheosis was expected and followed the pattern set by Augustus as *pater patriae* (Father of the Fatherland). An alternative to the imperial cult model is outlined as Paul declares: "A man, on the other hand, should not cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man." A man no longer covers his head for his father, his *pater familias* and his god. Rather, he conceives of himself as a god, probably on the Neoplatonic model of assimilation to Christ proposed elsewhere by Paul.⁵³⁷ This is fairly straightforward. The idols the Corinthians were worshipping are replaced by the more Jewish notion, also found in Philo, of embodying the commandments or God.

7.2.1. *The Attire of Men While Praying or Prophesying*

While Paul claims that "any man who prays or prophesies" with his head covered "brings shame upon his head" in 11:4, his audience would have been accustomed to seeing men wearing veils for religious purposes.⁵³⁸ The nature of this shame cannot be

⁵³⁷ In his *Advice to the Bride and Groom*, Plutarch famously pronounces: "A married woman should therefore worship and recognize the gods whom her husband holds dear, and these alone. The door must be closed to strange cults and foreign superstitions. No god takes pleasure in cult performed furtively and in secret by a woman" (140D).

⁵³⁸ Richard Oster, "When Men Wore Veils to Worship: the Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11.4," *New Testament Studies* (1988): 481–505; David W.J. Gill, "The

found in 2 Corinthians where Paul states that Moses had to veil his *face* in order to prevent the Israelites from seeing the fading of God's radiance from it. There, the driving force behind Paul's rhetoric is competition with the Jewish influences on the Corinthian community, which was originally founded by Paul with members of the Corinthian synagogue. In 1 Corinthians, Paul's instruction on head-coverings is sandwiched between rules for food sacrificed to idols and for the Christian worship meal. The most likely explanation for a Corinthian Christian man bringing shame upon his head through veiling is because both Jewish and Roman men covered their heads for worship. Likewise, Corinthian Christian women being able to veil their heads—whether married or not, Roman citizen or slave—was a departure from conventional Roman practice. In the anthropological terminology of Bourdieu, these uniform clothing practices dissolve community fractiousness and “demand what is called *tenure*, in the sense of ‘dignity of conduct and correctness of manners.’”⁵³⁹

Head-coverings can be found on men in the Torah, later Jewish scriptures, and rabbinic literature. When the Israelite priesthood is established in Exodus 28:40, head-coverings are prescribed for men for their “honor and glory.” “Glory” is rendered in the LXX using the term “δόξα,” which is also utilized by 1 Cor. 11:15 to describe a woman's hair. Leviticus 8:9, where Aaron is attired for priestly service by Moses, and Zechariah 3:5, where Joshua is similarly attired for priestly service, underscore this point. In Isaiah and Ezekiel, male head-coverings denote Persian royalty while male baldness indicates

Importance of Roman portraiture for Head-Coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,” Tyndale Bulletin 41 (1990): 245–60.

⁵³⁹ Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 206.

grief and dishonor.⁵⁴⁰ *4QWiles of the Wicked Woman* envisions a woman covering her head engaged in male practices such as standing in the agora or the city gate.⁵⁴¹ In the *War Scroll* (1QM, 4Q491), priests are identified by multicolored belts and turbans.⁵⁴² The Talmud associates male head-covering with piety: “I never walked four cubits with uncovered head because God dwells over my head” (*Kiddushin* 31a). Winter wants to reject the notion that male head-covering in Corinth arose from a Jewish practice since neither Paul nor the churches of God have the custom and the churches of God should have been comprised of both Jewish and Gentile congregations.⁵⁴³ However, Murphy-O’Connor astutely notes that Paul should not have found male head-covering a problem; rather, as a Jew, Paul should have found turbans normal since they were attested in contemporary Jewish congregations and Paul followed fewer Jewish practices—e.g., circumcision, avoidance of unclean food—than other Christian communities.⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴⁰ Cf. Ezekiel 13:20–23, 21:26, 23:15, 24:17, 24:23, 27:30, 29:3, 29:18, 32:2.

⁵⁴¹ Dame Folly, who is here being depicted in *4QWiles of the Wicked Woman*, is the opposing figure to Lady Wisdom. The role of Dame Folly is meant to be a reversal on that of Lady Wisdom as presented in Prov. 7:10–12 and 9:13–18 (cf. Prov. 1:21–22; 3:23–26; 8:1–5; 9:3–6). However, though their personalities exist in counterpoint, their locations do not. Both Dame Folly and Lady Wisdom operate in masculine space. While interpreters such as Sidnie White Crawford rightly emphasize that the primary function of Dame Folly is to ensnare men in fornication, this is not necessarily a female prerogative. Sirach, for example, gives a long list of prohibitions directed at men, including avoiding entering the bed of the servant girl of another and even looking at another man’s wife. If Lady Wisdom is a woman coopted for masculine hegemonic rectitude, then Dame Folly is the female embodiment of negative male traits. And her head is covered. Cf. Iniquity in *I Enoch*.

⁵⁴² 4Q491 Frags. 1–3, l. 17.

⁵⁴³ Winter 147 n. 24.

⁵⁴⁴ Murphy-O’Connor, “Sex and Logic in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,” *CBQ* 42 (1980): 482–500, here 484–485.

The ubiquity of male head-coverings in the context of early imperial Roman worship is demonstrated by authors such as Virgil,⁵⁴⁵ Plutarch,⁵⁴⁶ and Juvenal.⁵⁴⁷ During the time of Paul's ministry, a statue of the Roman emperor with his head covered in his role as *pontifex maximus* in the center of Corinth. *Lararia*, which were built in niches in the front area of the house and oriented toward the gaze of the guest entering the *domus*, featured male divine figures with covered heads.⁵⁴⁸ The ritual significance of male veiling might be seen in Virgil's description of the mantle placed over the crown of the head of Pallas lying on the funeral pyre.⁵⁴⁹ Castor rationalized male head-covering through an invocation of Pythagorean doctrines, according to Plutarch: "the Spirit within us entreats and supplicates the gods without, and thus he symbolizes by the covering of the head the covering and concealment of the soul by the body" (Roman Questions, *Moralia*, 266C-E). Oster and Gill have exhaustively shown the pervasiveness of this custom in Roman sources and concluded that Paul was exhorting the male members of his audience at Corinth, a Roman colony, to refrain from seeking social standing through conforming to *Romanitas*.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁵ Male head-covering is associated with mantology and prayer (III.547–552). Later passages develop the possibility of positive divine intervention when a female head is uncovered—Jupiter sends Iris to snip a lock of Dido's hair to allow her to leave her body as an act of mercy.

⁵⁴⁶ According to Plutarch, the reason that men unusually veil their heads for funerals is to honor their father as a god (*Moralia*, IV. Roman Questions, 267 A–B). Moreover, men remove their headcoverings in the presence of influential men in order that those with terrestrial power not seem to demand the same honors as the gods (266 C–E).

⁵⁴⁷ *Sat.* VI.

⁵⁴⁸ E.g., PPM V 571. See Balch, *Roman Domestic Art and Early House Churches*, 52–58.

⁵⁴⁹ *Aen.* XI.93–104.

⁵⁵⁰ Oster, "When Men Wore Veils to Worship: The Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11.4," *NTS* 34 (1988): 481–405, here 494; Gill, "The Importance of Roman Portraiture for Head-Coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *Tyndale Bulletin* 41 (1990): 245–60.

Recent scholarship by Oster, Gill, and others has argued that Paul's removal of the worship veil from men detracted from their honor at worship. Outside the churches of God, Roman men had to veil their heads to show their submission to the greater divine, but doing so as a *pontifex* was honorific. The emperor, after all, was found in the middle of the Corinthian agora *capite velato* in his role as *pontifex maximus*. Paul does not admit this status hierarchy of Roman veiling into the community at Corinth. Slave men appeared in the same guise as high ranking citizens. As Gill and Oster have noted, the removal of veils from men took away honor from them.⁵⁵¹ However, the beneficiaries of this honor removal in the social equation were not only women, but also slave men. Appearing as equals should have reminded Corinthian men of their equality in Christ.

7.2.2. *The Attire of Women Praying and Prophesying*

Since the veil's construction of gender difference in and of itself was not oppressive, one must consider what associations could have arisen in the minds of the Corinthian community when Paul restricted the veil to only its female members. It is in this move

⁵⁵¹ Oster and Gill corrected the older view of scholars such as Lietzmann, Fee, Engberg-Pedersen, and others. Lietzmann acknowledges the Roman custom, but he objects because Paul gives assigns different gender roles and the Corinthian context is one of prayer and not sacrifice, *An Die Korinther*, 53. Fee simply states: "There is almost no evidence (paintings, reliefs, statuary, etc.) that men in any of the cultures (Greek, Roman, Jew) covered their heads." *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987): 507–8. Engberg-Pedersen believes that as a man Paul "*would* and *should* have his head uncovered." See "1 Corinthians 11:16 and The Character of Pauline Exhortation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1991): 679–689, 685. Oster believes that the veils match the imperial practice. Roman sacerdotal officials such as the *Flamen Dialis* were as not allowed outside without the cap (*galerus*). See "When Men Wore Veils to Worship: The Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11.4," *NTS* 34 (1988): 481–405, here 494. Oster cites (495, f. 5): Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 10.15.16–17; Lucan, *Bellum Civile* 1.604; Festus s.v. Apex, qui est sacerdotum insigne; Valerius Maximus *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* 1.1.5; Herman Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* (ILS) (Berlin: Weidmann, 1954) no. 4 (vol. 1, 2). Gill 260.

that scholars such as Oster, Gill, Winter, and Fitzmyer see persisting sexism.⁵⁵² In their view, the prohibition of the veil from Corinthian men deprived male Christians of honorific participation in Roman culture norms, while the female veil would have inevitably played into norms of marriage and thus submission. The significance of the veil can take on sinister connotations, as Gill notes: “If the wife insists on being unveiled then she might as well wear a sign of humiliation by having her hair cut. If she does not wish to bring such shame to her husband, herself and her family then she should be veiled.”⁵⁵³

However, I argue that, because not all members of Paul’s communities were *matronae* of considerable social standing, universal access to veiling would have been honorific to the most vulnerable women in the Corinthian house-churches. Married women wore veils in non-religious contexts. Slave women did not. Innumerable clothing customs identified the body of a slave woman and women who had fallen from high social status. The *lex Iulia* specified certain garments like the *stola*, the garment over a woman’s tunic, and *vittae*, hair ribbons, were to be worn by matrons and not prostitutes.⁵⁵⁴ Convicted adulteresses and prostitutes were prescribed the male toga, the garment Augustus foisted upon a reluctant male citizenry. The matron who appeared in public without her stola was to be punished *pro stupro*, as an adultress. According to Ulpian’s commentary, men who sexually harass respectable women clothed in the

⁵⁵² Richard Oster, “When Men Wore Veils to Worship: The Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11.4,” *NTS* 34 (1988): 481–505; David Gill, “The Importance of Roman Portraiture for Head-Coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 41 (1990): 245–60; Bruce Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

⁵⁵³ Gill 256.

⁵⁵⁴ McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law*, 162.

garments of slaves or prostitutes were not liable for *iniuria*. Sexual harassment for a slave woman was not possible.

If all of the women in Paul's communities are allowed to wear a veil during religious activities, I suggest, members would construe this as an act of egalitarianism for slave women and fallen women in the community. That there were slaves with this anxiety might be seen in 1 Corinthians 7:21-22 during a discussion of marriage and chastity: "Were you a slave when you were called? Do not be concerned.... For the slave called you in the Lord as a freed person in the Lord, just as the free person who has been called is a slave in Christ." Romans 7 compares Christians to the married woman whose husband has died and who is therefore free to marry another without being charged with adultery.⁵⁵⁵ That Paul has in mind actual legal codes might be suggested by verse 6: "But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we are slaves not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit."

Many scholars have argued that the veil would only have implied matrimony. Schottroff takes the perspective that the veil could have only signaled marriage, which entails subjugation to men. She points out that among "the women who, when they prayed and prophesied, no longer wanted to wear veils as a sign of their subordination there may well have been women working in the sex trade who no longer wanted to

⁵⁵⁵ Susanna Morton Braund points out that while acceptable reasons for men seem to have included poisoning, substitution of children or keys, and wine drinking, few reasons seem to have been available to women, 51. As Gillian Beattie points out, Paul is willing to discuss the practical problems with the Roman institution of marriage and permit divorce, *Women and Marriage in Paul and his Early Interpreters* (London: T & T Clark, 2006): 27–28.

accept the daily experience of being subjugated by a man.”⁵⁵⁶ Winter takes a similar approach in positing that the appearance of elite women without their marriage veils in the Corinthian house-churches had too much of a family resemblance to the “new woman,” who engaged in promiscuity and flouted traditional Roman mores along with Roman “new men” such as Ovid.⁵⁵⁷ Winter reads the phrase “because of the angels” in 1 Corinthians 11:10 to mean that women needed to take care that the messengers visiting the community not be scandalized by the bare heads of the worshipping women, a not unreasonable proposal given the ongoing apostolic competition Paul faced and the general imperial suspicion that associations helped would-be rebels to organize.⁵⁵⁸

The veiling of respectable, upper-class women is a cultural norm in Greco-Roman and Jewish literature. In a well-known quote, Valerius Maximus laments the disappearance of such moralistic displays as “the frightful marital severity of Sulpicius Gallus, who dismissed his wife because he learned she had gone about in public unveiled” (6.3.10). Plutarch indicates that “it is more often the custom for women to be veiled” (*Mor.* 267A), but MacMullen observes that this was only true for Greek women of lower classes. Higher class Greek women during the Imperial period “behaved exactly like their counterparts in Italy, fully visible, indeed making their existence felt very fully

⁵⁵⁶ Schottroff 133.

⁵⁵⁷ Winter, *After Paul*.

⁵⁵⁸ Interestingly, John Chrysostom’s reception of this phrase in his hyperbolic description of the abode of Priscilla and Aquila, who are included among the list of the Corinthian house-churches’ well-wishers in Paul’s conclusion to 1 Corinthians: “Hence they were worthy of Paul, and if worthy of Paul, they were worthy of the angels. I would dare to add boldly that that domicile was both a heaven and a church! For where Paul was, there also was Christ. Didn’t he say, “if you seek a sure test that Christ is speaking in me” (2 Cor. 13:3)? And where Christ was, there also angels continually attend.” *Hom. Rom.* 16:3 1.3 (PG 51.191).

in public.”⁵⁵⁹ Plutarch shows us that masculine attitudes toward the heads of their wives differed when he records a case where a wife was divorced for appearing in public with her head *covered*.⁵⁶⁰

Winter has suggested that the Pauline house-churches formed a contrast to the Roman notion of the “New Woman.”⁵⁶¹ New Women and their masculine counterparts were those who flouted imperial moral legislation to encourage the upper classes to marry and perpetuate their family lines. Augustus had codified stipulations against adultery in the *lex Iulia de adulteriis et de pudicitia* and legislated incentives for marriage and procreation in the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* and *lex Papia Poppaea*. Marriage was made mandatory for eligible women between 20 and 50 years of age and for men over 25. Divorced women and widowed women were required to remarry.⁵⁶² Livia personally gave couples from impoverished noble families dowries to facilitate the unions within patrician classes. The Roman “New Man” and “New Woman” were dangerous because their disregard for traditional mores threatened inheritance and inherited class privilege.

Yet, in the Pauline house-churches at Corinth, there could be any number of (a)sexual relationships operating outside of the Roman legal category of marriage. Roman soldiers,

⁵⁵⁹ *Sanh.* 58b and inscriptional evidence. See Annie Jaubert, 425; Ramsay MacMullen, “Woman in Public in the Roman Empire,” *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 29/2 (1980): 208–218, here 218.

⁵⁶⁰ J.L. Hilton and L.L.V. Matthews. “Veiled or Unveiled? (Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 267B–C),” *The Classical Quarterly* (2008): 336–342.

⁵⁶¹ Bruce Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

⁵⁶² Aline Rouselle, *Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity*, tr. Felicia Pheasant (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988): 91.

for instance, were forbidden to marry during their time of service.⁵⁶³ The relationships of slaves could be interrupted by the use of a slave as a wet nurse, but evidence from Plutarch suggests that moral character was thought to improve the wet nurse and so Greeks with traditional values were prized.⁵⁶⁴ Paul's excoriation of a man sleeping with his stepmother indicates that the Christian house-churches at Corinth, as a community, were not keeping stringent standards of holiness let alone legal prescriptions concerning marital morality.⁵⁶⁵ Paul himself abrogates Roman law when he recommends that both the "unmarried" and the "widowed" *not* marry except in cases where it is better to marry than "to burn" (πυροῦσθαι, 7:9). That is, the Corinthians are to marry to prevent the sin of fornication rather than to subscribe to the imperial promotion of marriage and procreation.

The picture presented by Paul's instruction is one of a group of individuals in a range of romantic relationships and socioeconomic statuses. To veil the women equally suggests an equality of status that would not be afforded to women by Roman law. The high class women would be susceptible to charges of adultery; the low class women might not be entitled to a marriage and its accompanying privilege. The construction of

⁵⁶³ The cohabitation of a man with his stepmother is one piece of evidence for long-term relationships outside of traditional marriage in the Corinthian community, see Glancy. For Roman soldiers, see Sara E. Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers (13 B.C. – A.D. 235): Law and Family in the Imperial Army* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 22.

⁵⁶⁴ *De liberis educandis* 5. See Osiek, "Female Slaves, *Porneia*, and the Limits of Obedience," in David L. Balch and Carolyn Osiek, *Early Christian Families in Context*, (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2003): 260.

⁵⁶⁵ Incest, defined in *The Digest* with the code '*ad legem Iuliam de adulteriis et de stupro*' of 18 BC as a man sleeping "with his stepdaughter, daughter-in-law, or stepmother," was so serious an infraction that it was excluded from a five-year statute of limitation when combined with charges of adultery. *The Digest* 48.39; T.A.J. McGinn, "The Lex Julia de Adulteriis Coercendis," *Prostitution, Sexuality and the Law in Rome* (Oxford: Oxford, 1998): ch. 5; Bruce Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change*, 46.

Christian womanhood as controlled and virtuous was a countercultural move in a society that saw women as hysterical and libidinous.⁵⁶⁶ Women instead were attired in recognizable priestly garb at a ritual meal at which the Words of Institution were uttered. I will make the case that Paul's veiling rhetoric implicates the married and unmarried women of all socioeconomic ranks participating in the household worship meal as priests rather than as matrons.

First, in early imperial Roman religion, headgear would have indicated a sacerdotal role. Both men and women served as priests. While there were many priestly offices held by men that conferred priestly status on their wives only by virtue of marriage, women priests who presided over sacrifice seem to have had the same foremost duty of performing sacrifices, whether fruit, wine, *mola salsa*, or livestock.⁵⁶⁷ In towns that appointed priestesses of the imperial cult, priestesses performed rites before imperial images of the living empress and the *divae*. Images of the imperial couple granted harmony in marriage to marrying couples, and garlands of imperial busts may have provided protection against fever. Headgear could be worn by both male and female priests.

Veils would have been familiar signifiers to Corinthians of marriage. Statuary for public places depicted the virtuous, elite Greek matron with veiled head. Redfield and Carson have suggested that the defining moment of the Greek marriage ceremony is the *anakalupteria*, the bride's unveiling of herself to reveal herself to her new husband. This

⁵⁶⁶ Margaret MacDonald, *Early Christian Women and Pagan Opinion: The Power of the Hysterical Woman* (New York: Cambridge, 1996).

⁵⁶⁷ Evidence for female deacons, with feminine article, begins in Romans 16:1–2 with Phoebe (*diakonos*) and continues to later examples such as John Chrysostom's reference to his aunt Sabiniana and friend Olympias. *Ordained Women in the Early Church: A Documentary History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2005): 13–14.

gesture implies the bride's acquiescence to her marriage. For the *anakalupteria*, an act which the woman essentially repeated every morning after her marriage, Martin notes that there could be a paradoxical ambiguity in females retaining agency even as they were submitting in both Greek culture and the Corinthian house-church.⁵⁶⁸ The ubiquity of the marriage veil is the reason that scholars such as Wire and Schottroff assume that the Corinthian female prophets must have eschewed the veil in order to be countercultural and that Paul was curtailing this liberated attitude.⁵⁶⁹

In Roman culture, literature referred to the flame-colored bridal veil as a metonymy for the bride (Catullus 61).⁵⁷⁰ The Roman bride *nubere viro*—in other words, she literally put on a veil.⁵⁷¹ In Petronius' *Satyricon*, Quartilla, a priestess of Priapus, inverts the traditional Roman wedding by staging a mock wedding between Giton, her lover Encolpius' *eromenos*, and seven-year-old Pannychis, her own maid servant. The name Pannychis suggests an all-night rite or festival, which Quartilla should have been adept at performing in her capacities as a priestess. Pannychis' head is draped in a flame-colored veil, and she is led by torches to the bridal chamber.⁵⁷² The episode, through its inversion

⁵⁶⁸ James Redfield, "Notes on the Greek Wedding," *Arethusa* (1982): 192; Anne Carson, "Putting her in her place: Woman, dirt, and desire," in *Before sexuality: The construction of erotic experience in the ancient Greek world*, (Princeton: Princeton, 1990): 163–64. Martin combines both the view of Kuemmel, who holds, and of Conzelmann, who believes the veils serve to compensate woman for her inherent ontological weakness as in God's image only in a derivative sense. See Conzelmann 189. The Mishnah follows the stringent divorce stipulations related by Roman moralists in prescribing divorce for women who did not wear appropriate clothing, who went about with disheveled hair, and who went into the street and talked with a man (Ketubot 7.6). Annie Jaubert, "Le voile des femmes (1 Cor XI.2–16) *New Testament Studies* 18 (1972): 419–430, here 424.

⁵⁶⁹ Schottroff 133.

⁵⁷⁰ For the veil as a metonymy, see Karen K. Hersch, 98, 300. For the shops, see Francis Marion Dana, *The Ritual Significance of Yellow among the Romans*, 12.

⁵⁷¹ Hersch 16.

⁵⁷² *Sat.* 26. See Regine May, "Chaste Artemis and Lusty Aphrodite," 137.

of normative ritual praxis, underscores the association of veiling with marriage. The irony in the scene is that, as a high status priestess and mature woman, Quartilla should have been enacting no such rites, while, as a low status young girl, Pannychis should have not been participating. Such passages give credence to the early Classicist correlation of the marriage veil with sacrifice at the household hearth and at the altar of Juppiter Dialis.⁵⁷³ More importantly for the purposes of this study, the absurdity Petronius expects his readers to find in this scene is a good indication that Paul's giving the veil to all women in complete earnestness could have radically egalitarian implications for the members of the Corinthian house-church, who came from all social classes, including slave classes. A veil cordoned one off from the multiple male suitors of a flute-girl, even in the case of Pannychis.

Older scholarship and translations often interpret Paul's notation that woman is the *δόξα ἀνδρός* at 11:7 as the "pride of her husband." That is to say, scholars have read the woman being constructed in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 in terms of household structures. They assume that the term *γυνή* refers to a "wife" rather than a woman, presumably because lifelong celibacy was not a viable option in the religious cults of the early imperial period. Thus, Paul's *γυνή* relates to his man in a marital manner, and the "glory" that she has is derivative of her spouse. It is assumed that she cannot be praying and prophesying on her own behalf but that her primary role is of wife rather than as leading prophet.

These assumptions have been made not without reason. Plutarch, for instance, notes that a wife should give up her gods and adopt those of her husband at the moment of

⁵⁷³ A.W. Rossbach, *Untersuchungen ueber die römischen Ehe*, 284. Cf. Herman Diels, *Sibyllinische Blätter*, 70.

marriage. Roman moralists rail against women for pursuing superstitions, because the women are failing to subordinate their religious interests to those of their husbands, who are taken to subscribe to orthodox positions in Roman religion in support of the hegemony of the patriarchy. Pomponia Graecina, wife of Aulus Plautius, was even accused by her husband of *superstitio externa* and tried (and acquitted) in the presence of her entire *familia* in 57 or 58 CE.⁵⁷⁴ The *tutulus*, a purple veil, indicated the *materfamilias*.⁵⁷⁵ As Saller notes, the title *materfamilias* “connoted sexual honor within a legitimate marriage” during the early imperial period. Cicero condemned Clodia for being the *materfamilias* of a *domus* “in which the *materfamilias* lives in the style of a prostitute” (*Cael.* 32.57), and he excoriated Anthony for throwing parties in Varro’s villas that mixed “whores with *matresfamilias*” (*Phil.* 2.105).⁵⁷⁶

The fact that the immediately following unit of instruction is both constructed with an inversion of Paul’s commendation suggests that it might have something to say about the interpretation of Paul’s intent in his instruction in veiling. Whereas Paul commends the Corinthians for preserving the traditions and does not impute their departure from them with respect to veil to any errant theology, Paul emphatically does not praise the fact that the Corinthians’ meetings are doing more harm than good (11:17). It seems that the worship meal has factions: some leave hungry, others drunk. This unequal food distribution, as Theissen has noted, is most readily explained by

⁵⁷⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 13.32. See the discussion in Carolyn Osiek, *Rich and Poor in the Shepherd of Hermas: An Exegetical–Social Investigation* (Washington, DC: CBA, 1983): 92–93.

⁵⁷⁵ Bonfonte 1986: 160; Wood 1995: 428; Wood, *Imperial Women: A Study in Public Images, 40 BC – AD 68* (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

⁵⁷⁶ Richard P. Saller, “Pater Familias, Mater Familias, and the Gendered Semantics of the Roman Household,” *Classical Philology* 94/2 (1999): 182–197, here 195.

socioeconomic divisions.⁵⁷⁷ Wealthy members were having their fill, while poorer members were going without.

If this socioeconomic factionalism is as much of an issue in the veiling prescriptions, as Paul's rhetoric implies, the ramifications of veiling for status are profound. Paul's veiling instructions interrupt the normal assignments of status by veils that happened in the Roman culture in which the Corinthian Christians were actively participating. No longer do only the most elite citizens get permission to veil. In Paul's new world order, all men are equal, and all women are equal. More than three women wear *ricinia* in the meetings of the churches of God. Men are not the only ones who receive legitimation for their prayer for veiling—in fact, they must take the less honorable position of praying without a veil. A slave man is not less honorably attired, at least in terms of headgear, than the *pater familias* he serves.

7.3 Veils, Angels, and Authority

At 11.10, Paul claims that a woman must “have authority” (ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν) over head ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς because of the angels διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους. Interpreters have alternately seen the veil as a prosthetic device that compensates for a woman's inherent inferiority and enables her to worship as an equal or as a prophylactic device that shields the woman from the unwanted sexual overtures of divine and human messengers. Hooker's seminal article argued that women had to hide their glory in order reflect that of men.⁵⁷⁸ Arguing for the latter position, Martin contends that Paul threatens the women

⁵⁷⁷ Theissen, *Social Setting*, 137–140; Dunn, *1 Cor.*, 57–59; For critiques of this position, see Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*; Alex T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth*.

⁵⁷⁸ Hooker 410–16.

into submission by rhetorically presenting the specter of the “angelic phallus,” that is, the implied threat of aggressive, masculine penetration that makes the veil not only a prosthetic device but a prophylactic one. Being reminded of the omnipresence of masculine domination convinces a woman to acquiesce to male hegemony, as a single individual in a single community, she veils herself in order to display her conformity to secular hierarchical orders in which men are superior to women.⁵⁷⁹ Quite recently, Finney has combined the two tendencies and argued that the angels present at Corinth are good guardians of order, but that this order is maintained by the self-abasement of the woman, who covers her hair as the sign of *her* glory (11:15). According to Finney, this means that the “woman’s own honour is safeguarded from the sexual desire of heavenly beings.”

However, given the recurring motifs of judgment and in 1 Corinthians, one wonders if the proper scriptural intertext is not the Fall of the Watchers, which lies outside of the creation narratives, but Paul’s material inside 1 Corinthians concerning lawsuits. 1 Corinthians 4, as we recall, casts Paul in the public gaze in the spectacle, being judged by spectators and angels alike. In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul encourages the Corinthians to cease bringing each other into court. Paul’s reference to the women’s authority and the angels supports the idea that women might be seen as being respectable members of society who would judge angels and not need the interference of outside law

⁵⁷⁹ Troy Martin, “Paul’s Argument from Nature for the Veil in 1 Corinthians 11:13–15: A Testicle Instead of a Head Covering,” 79.

courts.⁵⁸⁰ Such a reading is particularly the case should we construe, with Winter, *angeloi* as “messengers” rather than “angels.”

Paul’s mention of angels when discussing veiling at worship also disrupts ecclesial structures of authority. If Paul is ascribing women’s veiling to numinous figures, that only accentuates the move of authority away from traditional architectural modes of indicating ecclesial authority such as the *cathedra* found in Roman period synagogues in Greek, Palestine, and Iran.⁵⁸¹ A similar logic occurs throughout 1 Corinthians as Paul describes the worship meal. The performative act of uttering the Words of Institution receives no mention, consistent with Paul’s denigration of the charismatic act of prophecy, while the unequal distribution of food serves as the etiology of disease at Corinth. What the Corinthians are to focus on are the shared elements of worship, the Eucharist and the veils, rather than the status indicators of the Roman cultural marketplace actually brought into the worship arena. All Corinthian Christians will have such a culturally honorific marker, the imperishable crown. In the meantime, they veil according to gender approved by divine or cultural messengers.

7.4. Paul’s Argument from Nature (1 Cor. 11:13-15)

⁵⁸⁰ Richardson suggests that the three times Paul received 39 lashes from the local synagogue indicates his willingness to take blame rather than appeal to the courts. Peter Richardson, “Judgment in Sexual Matters in 1 Corinthians 6:1–11,” *Novum Testamentum*, 25.1 (1983): 37–58, here 58. With such corporal circumscription, the promise to eventually one day judge angels would doubtlessly be compelling.

⁵⁸¹ Lee Levine, *Ancient Synagogue*, 323–327; E.L. Sukenik, “‘Cathedra of Moses’ in Ancient Synagogue.” Matthew 23:2, which notes that the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat, has been argued by Shaye Cohen to be a metaphorical reference and not a critique of actual practice. Cohen, “Pharisees and Rabbis,” 103.

Paul's argument from nature has recently been interpreted in terms of Greco-Roman medical theory. In v. 13, Paul uses the imperative to exhort the Corinthians to "judge for themselves" whether it is "fitting" (πρέπον) for a woman to pray to God with "uncovered head" (ἀκατακάλυπτον). Verse 14 asks if not "nature itself teaches" (ἡ φύσις αὐτὴ διδάσκει) that man (ἄνθρωπος) lacks honor. Verse 15 provides the complementary thought that hair, man's dishonor, is a woman's glory (δόξα). The reason that hair is a woman's glory has to do with her naturally covered state: hair has been given to her as a covering (περιβολαίου). The passive construction of the verb "to give" indicates that although woman has the authority to veil herself, her choice to do so conforms not with any manmade decree but with the natural order itself. Presumably, the agent obscured by the passive is divine Providence rather than the emperor or even Paul.

The Roman construction of nature, as some scholars have argued, corresponds with Paul's assertions. In Greco-Roman medical theory, long hair does not belong on men. Pseudo-Phocylides states that "long hair is not fit for males, but for voluptuous women" (212). According to Hippocrates' construction of the body, a woman's body is assisted by long, hollow hair that increases the suction power of her hollow uterus (*Gland.* 4; Aristotle, *Gen. an.* 739a.37-739b.20). As discussed in the previous chapter, Roman cultural norms devalued the long hair on men because it was an impediment to Roman military objectives. Josephus' embellishments on the story of Absalom serve to prove the superiority of Roman customs concerning long hair. Absalom's long hair is the source of his beauty, and it allows the enemy to capture him when he becomes entangled in a tree as he rides his horse (*Ant.* 7.238).

However, there is no reason that we need to presume that Paul's audience supports the military-influenced construction of hair fashion in Rome. Roman literary culture continues the epic tradition that presents long hair in a positive light, as we see in Synesius' commentary on the now-lost *Encomium on Hair* of Dio Chrysostom (40-120 C.E.). In this epic vein, we see that long hair symbolizes the virility of the male warrior in ancient Greek culture. The unacceptability of long hair is not only pragmatic—that is, a protective measure against the plagues that often follow the movements of troops and the obvious vulnerability of the soldier's head to lice—but also arises from the association of long hair on men with foreign cultural norms. The short, cropped hair of a Roman man is a daily reminder of the state's commitment to military excellence and separation of the Roman and the foreign.

If the historical witness of Acts is to be believed, growing hair out was not shunned by Paul as one from Jewish heritage, for Paul cuts his hair at Cenchrae in relation to a vow. This appears to have been a variation on the naziritic vow that was undertaken by both male and female Jews according to the longstanding tradition presented in Scripture (Numbers 6:5, Judges 13:5; Luke 1:15, Acts 18:18, Acts 21:23-24). Philo, in *Immut.* 87-90, interprets the rules concerning hair maintenance in Numbers 6 as cultivating virtue in the mind of the one who makes the great vow (88). That this biblical rite has not simply become an allegory for Philo is clear in *Agr.* 175-178, where Philo holds that only an unintended abrogation of Numbers 6:9, 12 can be ritually remedied (cf. also *Fug.* 115). Philo's remarks would seem to reflect contemporary

popular piety (*Ant.* 19.292f; *Ant.* 4.72), where a thirty day period would have removed both men and women from the Roman practice of daily hair maintenance.⁵⁸²

Thus, it would seem to me that the critical word in this passage is not Paul's invocation of nature but his invocation of the concept of judgment. When Paul asks the Corinthians to judge for themselves whether or not nature itself does not tell them men should be unveiled and women should be veiled, he is encouraging them to think beyond the practices of the Roman imperial cult. His use of a leading question is a standard feature of his diatribe.⁵⁸³ Paul expects that the Corinthians will discern that the practices of Roman worship are not only incompatible with Roman worship but they are unnatural.

7.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that the veils in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 intersect with the Roman imperial legislation and cultural expectations regarding the presentation of the body in public. Augustan clothing reforms were part of a larger cultural program by fiat and by persuasion through the public art to introduce and inculcate Roman cultural norms. Horace, for example, celebrated the *lex Julia* in his *Secular Hymns* in the Secular Games. The regular hosting of spectacles encouraged audiences to identify with the seating arrangement and corresponding attire of their social class.

Paul's instructions abrogate the social program that imperial legislation sought to promulgate by removing the worship veil from men and giving it to women. While

⁵⁸² Furthermore, *Bellum* 2.313 described Berenike's Nazirite vow, which lasted 30 days, the duration of the standard Nazirite vow attested in the Mishnah (*Nazir* 1.3a; 6.3a).

⁵⁸³ This can be seen clearly in his Letter to the Romans. Stanley K. Stowers, *Diatribes and Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 119–120; Elliott, *Rhetoric of Romans*, 132–41; and Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 165–66.

recent scholarship has contended that Paul only removes honor from the men, I have argued that Paul extends honor to women by allowing all women to veil. The position of Oster, Gill, Winter, and others that Paul takes away honor from men to assign women marriage veils presumes different contexts for male and female veiling occurring at the same event. The Corinthians are simultaneously supposed to see men as losing honor by being denied the customary right to appear at worship *capite velato* as the head of the household, but women are supposed to be confined by the novel imposition of household regulations. Paul is concerned with messengers, outsiders of angelic or human origins, in 11:1–16 as he is when he denigrates glossolalia (14:23). However, as in his instruction with glossalia, the worship meal remains a liturgical activity. It does not represent a return to ordinary time with its accompanying lesser expectations for veiling.

By having the Corinthian Christians veil according to their gender during the eucharistic celebration, Paul implies that the Corinthians should identify by their gender instead of by their social class, which would have proscribed the veil from some of them. Paul progresses through his instruction trying to unravel the hierarchies whose formulations he mimicks in the beginning of the pericope. Just as men and women are explicitly found to be interdependent rather than hierarchically ordered, free and slave gain tacit equality. Paul's convoluted approach to arriving at this interdependency and uniformity of dress is likely a response to the deep socioeconomic divisions in the community. In sharp contradistinction to the collectivist model evinced by Acts with the demise of Ananias and Sapphira for withholding property from the community, Paul cannot demand that the Corinthians share their worship food equally. He must instead reify the distinction between home and worship setting by asking whether or not the

Corinthians have homes in which to eat. Such a question at once legitimizes the prayer and prophecy of the women at the meal and relegates limitations on matrons and slaves in comportment—if not possessions—to the Roman-constructed household.

Conclusion

The goal of this study has been to demonstrate that the body that Paul constructs in 1 Corinthians—both in terms of individual clothing prescriptions and the ideational “Body of Christ” as a social and heavenly being—is inexorably intertwined with the Roman body politic in Corinth and the colonial discourse Roman Greek elites were attempting to negotiate for themselves. In Galatians, Paul is able to rehearse the common baptismal formula of tripartite negation—neither Greek nor Jew, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female—in order to indicate the equality that everyone finds in Christ. In 1 Corinthians, this pre-Pauline baptismal formula, as Antoinette Wire has astutely noted, permeates the letter. But he only uses the Greek-Jew and slave-free negations rather than the male-female binaries. I think that the issue is not that Paul’s egalitarianism cannot translate into practical theology because of persisting resistance to allow women to be equal in embodied form. Also, the problem is not that marriage in Roman antiquity was inherently an enslavement, or at the very least a lessening of status of married women, as Boyarin and others have argued. Instead, Paul appears to be interfacing with the Corinthians’ concern for status and their attempts to participate in the Roman cultural marketplace.

While Bockmuehl has observed that Paul breaks from his nationalistic past when he ceases to attempt to regulate the Jewish body politic in his role as a Pharisee policing infractions of the nascent Christian movement, it appears that Paul very much feels comfortable with nationalism and has merely broadened his perspective to the *heavenly politeuma*. It is more accurate to characterize this as a shift in nationalistic perspective

rather than an eschewal of nationalism. The impetus for the nationalistic discussion in 1 Corinthians, as opposed to other Pauline letters, is attributed to the Corinthians. They are the ones with many pedagogues who have forgotten that they have only one father. They are the ones who envision themselves as already being kings. Surely, however, Paul is the one invoking the specter of the spectacle to insinuate that the Corinthians' pursuit of status is at odds with the apostolic position at the center of the arena, just as the Corinthians' propensity to bring fellow congregants into Roman courts endangers fellow Christians. It is Paul himself who is framing the Corinthians' natural desire for honor and socioeconomic betterment in terms of nationalistic discourse.

We can see the structures of the cultural apparatus in Roman Corinth sprinkled throughout 1 Corinthians in Paul's references to pedagogues and gymnasium, law courts, the arena, and the Greek athletic games. As I argued in Chapter One, Paul's concern for *paideia* is not a product of any specific problem the Corinthians are having. Rather, Paul addresses the Corinthian Christians' aspirations to participate in the honorific structures of the Roman Greek colony. He refers to the Corinthian Christians in terms of Hellenistic kingship and the structures of ephebic inscription. Such a rhetorical strategy allows the Corinthian Christians to construct Christian identities that have honor configurations similar to those in the *polis*. Paul himself manifests these same desires to have status when he uses the body metaphor that was a commonplace in contemporary political discourse. Yet, when he refers to the educational and athletic apparatuses of the polis, he continually sets himself apart from them, whether he inhabits a role superior to them, as when he claims that the Corinthians have many pedagogues but only one father, or whether he assumes the role of slave exhibited as a spectacle. Paul simultaneously

inhabits and displaces the uppermost and lowermost positions in Roman Corinthian ideology. As Elizabeth Castelli has adroitly observed, Paul's rhetoric exhibits a hermeneutic of sameness. In order to achieve homogeneity, however, he must exploit the power differentials fundamental to Roman Greek society as it was being lived in Corinth.

Paul's construction of the educational and athletic apparatus in 1 Corinthians, as I demonstrate in Chapter Two, possesses the same bifurcation of status between Roman and Greek athletics and elite and lower class education models found in Roman Greek society. This dichotomy had been quickly glossed by Pfitzner in his foundational study of the *agōn* in the Pauline corpus, but it has recently been very thoroughly examined by studies on Roman period athletics. As scholars such as Newby and Grijalvo have shown, Roman Greek elites emphasized the *ephebeia* as a way of nostalgically continuing memories of an independent Greek nation of city-states after the Roman conquest. Rhetoric involving use of gymnastic models would have connoted belonging to one of the traditionally elite families of Roman Greece, since the *ephebeia* and associated participation in the gymnasium had slowly become inaccessible to lower classes of free citizens beginning in the Hellenistic period. Combat sports were to be distinguished from the light sports and calisthenics of gentlemen. Even athletic events held in commemoration of an important nationalistic victory were typically under the guise of races in armor, hardly anything endangering to the physical beauty of the body or the life of its possessor. To engage in combat sports was to enter into a liminal space, represented by cultural contemporaries as a gigantomachy or an adolescent excursion into the animalistic on the way to adulthood.

Paul, as we have seen in Chapter Three, confers the honor of participation in the gymnastic system upon all Corinthian Christians. This part of the cultural apparatus preserved a sense of Greek nationality even during colonization by Rome. While Paul's accusation that the Corinthians have too much pride in their "many pedagogues" as opposed to their one father in 1 Corinthians 4 appears on the surface to be derisive of the gymnastic institution, it actually both credits the athletic apparatus understood to be traditionally Greek in Roman Corinth and displaces the paternal claims of the emperor, who had been cast as *pater patriae* since the Augustan era. It is the Greek athletic apparatus and not the Roman one in which the Corinthian Christians are participating in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. Paul, on the other hand, again interfaces with a Roman model by envisioning himself undertaking participation in the combat sport of boxing, which was perceived just as much as "gambling with the body" then as Bourdieu has described it today. Similarly, Paul places himself twice in the spectacle. The first time is in chapter 4, when Paul contrasts his exhibition in the arena as one condemned with the Corinthians' self-fashioning as Hellenistic "kings," consonant with the nostalgic self-fashioning of Roman Greek elite. The second time is in chapter 15, when he rhetorically queries why he would have fought against beasts in Ephesus if there were no resurrection. Both of these appearances in the arena underscore the lack of esteem found for Christians in the world (and possibly lower heavens) and the honors that await them at the new, eschatological order. Yet, to prepare for their eschatological crowns, the Corinthians are to envision themselves as training according to civic athletic regimens.

In Chapter Four, I looked at the Christian "race of faith," modeled on the Greco-Roman "race of life" but distinctly different. Scholarship has often associated Paul's

athletic metaphors in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 with the nearby Isthmian Games and the *agōn* motif. However, I situated the footrace motif in the Roman Greek nationalistic discourse that associated the footrace with education and citizenship. In 1 Corinthians 9 and 10, running is connected with citizenship and exodus typology. In 9:24–27, each believer runs in competition for a single crown. If in Philippians Paul’s exhortation to imitate him assimilates Paul to the victorious Christ, then in 1 Corinthians Paul’s projected defeat accomplishes just the opposite: it leaves the prophetic role empty, allowing each believer to race to occupy it. Paul both channels Corinthians’ agonistic spirit toward a definable goal as a pragmatic pastoral move and implies that each believer may surpass him in spiritual authority as a theological move. As 1 Corinthians progresses, the coronal imagery shifts from the implicit crown of kingship of 1 Corinthians 4 to the explicit crown of athletic discipline of 1 Corinthians 9. The race for the crown in 1 Corinthians enables the Corinthian Christians to accrue honor in the heavenly *politeuma*, establishing equality among the Corinthian Christians and among the Corinthian Christians and apostles like Paul.

In Chapter Five, I argued that the coronal imagery of 1 Corinthians both denies and gives the community honor. Like the coronal motif of Philippians, the crown in 1 Corinthians plays off the gold civic crown awarded to benefactors and trainers as well as the vegetal athletic crown awarded in the stadium. From the inscriptional evidence of the honors awarded to Corinth resident Junia Theodora, we know that the civic crown was also often imperishable, connoting the bestowal of immortality by the *polis* on an exemplary individual benefactor. It seems that the Corinthians had aspirations to this level of cultural honors. In 1 Corinthians 4, Paul excoriates the Corinthians for assuming

elite status on the order of kings, particularly when the place of the apostle is as one exhibited in the arena to the scorn of rulers and angels (or, perhaps, messengers). Yet, in 1 Corinthians 9, Paul builds on his claim that he is the father of these vain Corinthians who have so many pedagogues by allowing the Corinthian Christians to attain honors modeled on the system of *paideia* in place in Roman Corinth. The imperishable and perishable crown have a deep relation to one another, since a person must strive to attain either one. The difference between the two crowns is their durability. Just as disciplining oneself for a prize one might not win is thought to yield cultural capital in the Roman colony of Corinth, so too is spiritual asceticism a worthwhile pursuit.

As I have argued in Chapters Six and Seven, when legislating the appearance of individual bodies in the worship community in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16, Paul again avails himself of the existing cultural expectations of Roman Greek Corinth. Paul's main concern throughout the pericope, I think, is the political and cultural implications of veiling, which is one of the reasons he commences with the political language of headship and concludes with an appeal to social custom. Oster and Gill have already made the case for the dishonor of male worshipers in the Pauline house-churches latent in Paul's instruction that males not veil. Because the Roman emperor stood in statue form in the Corinthian agora *capite velato*, citizen men would have had the expectation that they, too, could veil as the role of *pater familias* was modeled on that of the *pater patriae*. However, I have observed that Paul's proscription actually equalizes relationships between citizen men and slave men, creating solidarity along gender lines. The position of Oster, Gill, Winter, and others that Paul takes away honor from men only to fail to give it women by assigning them marriage veils seems untenable to me. It

presumes different contexts for male and female veiling occurring at the same event. If worship veils are restricted from men at a worship meal, does that automatically render the meal not a worship meal? I think the answer to this question is a resounding “no.” The Eucharistic meal remains a worship meal, and the instruction that women veil at the worship meal validates their prayer and prophecy according to the norms of the Roman colony of Corinth. We find Paul concerned with messengers, outsiders of angelic or human origins, when he denigrates *glossolalia* (14:23). However, in both 1 Corinthians 11 and 14, the worship meal remains a liturgical activity. It does not represent a location in ordinary time with its accompanying lesser expectations for veiling. Thus, women are probably receiving compensatory honor, and they are definitely being subjected to the same status inversion principle Paul has already foisted upon the men. This must have been quite a shock to the Corinthian Christians who were used to uneven distribution of food at the worship meal so that the wealthier received more and the poorer less!

Mandating that the Corinthian Christians veil according to their gender during the eucharistic celebration implies that the Corinthians should identify by their gender instead of by their social class. The wealthier Corinthian Christians would have undoubtedly had finer cloth with which to veil their hair, but at least the act of veiling would cover any expensive hairstyles being worn to worship. Paul’s instruction coheres with his attempt to unravel the hierarchies that he introduces at the beginning of the pericope. The convoluted way that he goes about this must be seen as a response to the deep socioeconomic divisions in the community. Men and women remain interdependent rather than hierarchically ordered, but free and slave only gain tacit equality. Facing a community unlike the generous Philippians who supported other communities, and the

early Christian community of Acts that rigorously enforced communal property, Paul cannot blatantly stipulate that the Corinthians share their worship food equally. Instead, he reifies the distinction between home and worship setting by asking whether or not the Corinthians have homes in which to eat. Such a question at once legitimizes the prayer and prophecy of the women at the meal and relegates limitations on matrons and slaves in comportment—if not possessions—to the Roman-constructed household.

Overall, then, Paul's construction of the Christian body in its individual and corporate dimensions appears to be in conversation with the processes of democratization at work in Second Temple Judaism. As part of democratization, rather than religious authority stemming from the participation in temple sacrifice led by a priestly class, Jewish cultural capital began accruing to individuals for the daily performance of *Mitzvot* and displays of individual piety. Elite signifiers in Roman Greek Corinth such as the imperishable civic crown and participation in the ephebic system are made available to each Christian, regardless of socioeconomic standing. Given the gradual restriction of the educational apparatus that had once been the right of every citizen to those citizens with sufficient wealth for participation since the Hellenistic period, Paul's inclusion of even slaves in the elite model of citizen training would have been perceived as highly egalitarian, going far beyond the token continuation of Classical Greek structures by which Roman Greek elites hoped to preserve a sense of national identity. Paul's assignment of the veil by gender rather than social class dovetails with Paul's emphasis on the Body and Blood of Christ as eaten in memory according to the Words of Institution rather than on the performative act of a celebrant who utters them. Paul mentions nothing like the stone chairs we have from Roman period synagogues, no

permanent status distinctions. Rather, Paul instructs the Corinthian Christians to avoid displays of status by eating equal food portions.

Paul places the piety of the Corinthian Christians at the daily and local levels. As Ernest Renan observed, “a nation’s existence is, if you will pardon the metaphor, a daily plebiscite, just as an individual’s existence is a perpetual affirmation of life. That, I know full well, is less metaphysical than divine right and less brutal than so called historical right.”⁵⁸⁴ In a similar fashion, Paul exhorts the Corinthian house-churches to vote daily for the heavenly *politeuma* rather than to participate in the worldview of social groups like voluntary associations. As in much of Israelite and early Jewish history, the Corinthian Christians are encouraged to avoid table fellowship with idols. The Greek voluntary associations are softer forms of Roman Empire, refracting the imperial worldview promulgated officially in legislation such as the *lex Julia* and reinforced culturally through such performances as Horace’s hymn at the Secular Games. The Greek voluntary associations also influenced the larger, colonizing Roman state. Paul negotiates with a complex network of cultural institutions that constitute authority and create lived experience in the Roman colony of Corinth in the middle of the first century CE.

Thus, we see in Paul’s citizenship schema in 1 Corinthians, with its pedagogues, legal apparatus, and gymnasia, a program for nation-building that was finely calibrated to the cultural milieu of Roman Corinth in the first century. Paul, in facing a community that is preoccupied with external and internal honors, uses his preexisting notion of the Christian *politeuma* that he has developed with the Philippians, but he instructs the

⁵⁸⁴ Ernst Renan, “Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?,” lecture at the Sorbonne (March 11, 1882).

Corinthians with precepts and rhetoric that corresponds with the cultural situation in Roman Greece, particularly the colony of Corinth. Women and slaves are enfranchised in Paul's legislative vision, because he has individuals forge solidarity along gender lines that ignore class. All women are able to veil, and they are to focus on the fact that they are veiling more than anything else. Slave men now match their masters. All are envisaged as being able to participate in the same gymnasium, a condition that certainly would not have pertained to the gymnasium in Roman Corinth or anywhere else in the empire. In this way, Paul creates the egalitarian gymnasium that we see in its negative form in rabbinic literature, as seen when Naomi instructs Ruth that, "it is not the way of Israel to visit theaters and circuses, rather the houses of prayer and study."⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸⁵ *Ruth Rabbah* 2.22. The residual notion of the *politeuma* might have inspired the comment by Ulla that "women are a nation unto themselves" (*bShabbat* 62a), following in the tradition of the ascription of a *politeuma* to the independent governing unit of women at the women's athletic games at Olympia. On the Greek model, Jewish women would then form a nation within a nation.

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