JANELLE PETERS

Paul and the Citizen Body

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 625

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Paul and the Citizen Body

Egalitarian Athletics and Veiling Instructions in 1 Corinthians

Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

This monograph completes a course of faith onto which I set myself, after visiting Delos and noticing frescoes that showed me a contrast between Greek and Roman athletics. Having traveled to Greece on a grant from Emory University, I proceeded to investigate imperial imagery in the Gospel of John, a project that will summarily be published in the coming years along with related work on *1 Clement*. Hans-Josef Klauck, Kevin Corrigan, Eric Varner, Peter Bing, Katrina Dickson, and Christine Perkell all contributed to the intellectual vibrancy of the work, and I benefited from dialogue with the editors at *Biblica* and Antonio Pitta.

Several articles and book chapters related to this monograph have appeared in recent years. In addition, Michael Bird has commissioned me to write on adjacent topics in synagogues and the Dead Sea Scrolls, which I studied with David Goodblatt, for collected volumes. I also have published several articles on the first letter to mention 1 Corinthians, *1 Clement*, and will be producing a two-volume philological commentary on *1 Clement* for Baylor University Press in the upcoming years.

Many people have nourished me as I have completed the various stages of this project. I am grateful to all my kith and kin, my editors, my advisors, my communities and affinity groups, and my scholarly guild. As in the imagery of Paul, these individuals are my crown of glory.

Los Angeles, December 2024 Janelle Peters

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

What does it mean to be a citizen of heaven? The apostle Paul, who formerly identified as the Pharisee Saul, tells his correspondents "our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil 3:20), reminding the community of eternal belonging not dependent on the Roman Empire.[1] This citizenship seems to be possessed in the present, one in which Paul considers himself an "untimely born" apostle of Christ. Yet, early Christians did not announce their citizenship at their worship meal, which Paul himself describes in 1 Corinthians as being emphatically centered on the remembrance of Christ's blood and body; moreover, some Christian texts such as the *Didachē* indicate baptismal rites could be performed without the civic status markers present in the baptismal formula we find in Paul's letters. Why then does Paul place emphasis on citizenship, even before early Christian traditions ascribe to him citizenship rights such as appeal to the emperor and execution by beheading? Recalling the traditional role of savior played by leaders in the Greek East, the apostle prophesies salvation in the heavenly commonwealth will materialize when Jesus comes. Lowly human bodies will transform to "be like his glorious body" (Phil 3:21). Regardless of their birth, money, or gender, all who profess belief in Christ have a heavenly citizenship. This gives them an equality with each other in the present worship context on earth and in the heavenly *politeuma*.

Paul's interest in citizenship and the implements of statecraft, such as veiling and athletic games, also permeates 1 Corinthians. He adduces factional slogans, ephebic education, kingship, and litigation. The apostle converses with Jewish, Greek, and Roman cultural traditions. Yet, he can be placed squarely neither in Greek nor in Roman cultural orbits. While his athletic metaphors resemble those in Stoic political discourse, Stoics saw themselves as cosmopolitan, invoking a global citizenship.[2] Paul situates his citizenship in heaven, not around the world. Likewise, Paul at times appears more thoroughly encultur-

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[1] Kathy Ehrensperger, "The *Politeuma* in the Heavens and the Construction of Collective Identity in Philippians," *JJMJS* 6 (2019): 22–45. See also the idea that Paul constructs a hybrid Jewish-Roman concept as argued by Sin Pan Ho, "*Politeuma* as a Hybrid Patriotic Identity in Christ: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Philippians 3:20," *BTB* 49 (2019): 96–107.

[2] Lisa Hill has identified the removal of social hierarchies in Stoicism: "Social, ethnic, and gender distinctions are all displaced by the single division which exists between 'good' and 'bad.'" See Lisa Hill, "The First Wave of Feminism: Were the Stoics Feminists?," *History of Political Thought* 22 (2001): 18.

ated to Greek customs than even Jewish Hellenophiles such as Herod. Though Jewish participation in the gymnasium had increased markedly since the days of the protests of 2 Maccabees 4 over Antiochus Epiphanes's gymnasium, Paul stands apart from the Jesus of the gospels in his extended metaphor of athletic competition. Jews around the Mediterranean sought kosher oil for their gymnastic activity from Gentile gymnasiarchs, and yet Paul dares to envision a gymnasium dedicated only to God. This book seeks to address the question of what happens when Paul focuses on citizenship: when writing Corinthian house-churches squabbling over meal regulations both at banquets for Christ and for pagan idols and possibly even bringing lawsuits against each other, the apostle creates church orders promoting movement toward social equality.[3] He allows the poor and enslaved to participate in the same elite customs as their wealthier coreligionists. More is at play in Paul's theology than simple replacement theology or anti-imperialism – Paul is creating an egalitarian church body out of the status-seeking desires of its members, whom the apostle describes as having sought more prestigious baptisms and refused to share food equally at the worship meal.

Though set apart as an "apostle," Paul is not unusual among early followers of Christ in grappling with questions of allegiance. Authority is a perennial theme for the new pan-Mediterranean movement growing around the Jewish religious teacher named Jesus. Among the earliest sayings of Jesus – preserved in both Paul's teaching and the Gospels – are instructions on what to give to God and what to give to Caesar (Rom 13:7; Luke 23:2). Similarly, in the Gospel of John, Jesus's appearance before Pilate revolves around who is a friend of Caesar (John 19:2). Early Christian authors depict Jesus including those often excluded from elite circles, such as the disabled, Samaritans, fishermen, and women.

Writing earlier than the extant gospels, Paul has already been taught the doctrine those who have been baptized cease being confined to categories such as male/female, Jew/Greek, and slave/free. From multiple sayings attributed to Jesus, we know Jesus himself taught there would be neither men nor women in heaven. The gospels depict Jesus as holding heaven to be a place where sex/gender and convoluted marriage histories could be changed: "For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but they are like angels in heaven" (Mark 12:25). Paul reminds those in the Christian communities their citizenship is in heaven – they should think in terms of the heavenly citizenship they will gain upon death. Showing a willingness to imagine his own commonwealth not unlike Seneca in *De Otio*, Paul envisions a transcendent order for the individual. He encourages believers to see their citizenship in a singular place (heaven) and uses the widespread political image of the singular body of the state (the body of Christ). Paul does not present himself in his preserved letters as an enthusiastic Roman citizen. This lack of Roman pride

[3] Alan C. Mitchell, "Rich and Poor in the Courts of Corinth: Litigiousness and Status in 1 Corinthians 6:1–11," *NTS* 39 (1993): 562–586.

seems to be corroborated by Acts 16:37–38, where the Lukan apostle references his Roman citizenship only to shame his jailers into better treatment. Far from promulgating Augustan legislation supportive of marriage, Paul's own words recommend celibacy and discourages participation in secular law courts. The follower of Christ is a citizen of heaven, not simply contemporary social hierarchies.

But this does not mean Paul repudiates all Roman thought. As in Roman political philosophy, Paul holds the bodies of believers will eventually be conformed to the body of Christ. The body "sown in dishonor" and "weakness" rises again in "glory" and "power" through its participation in the body of Christ (1 Cor 15:43). In their present ministries across the Roman Empire, those who follow Christ prepare for their future citizenship through baptism. Characterized by Barclay as a "coming-of-age" ritual for Paul's understanding of followers of Christ as heirs in a Roman legal sense, baptism allows members of the churches of Christ to escape present bodily dichotomies: free/slave, Greek/Jew, and man/woman.[4]

Such anticipations of androgyny and classlessness generate questions about how to realize and maintain this singleness while living in a contingent world in the interim. After all, the apostle expects the kingdom of God to appear imminently. Why should he reinforce fleeting sexual difference if Jesus will soon return to unite believers with his body? This book argues Paul does not simply negotiate the state apparatus of the Roman Empire in 1 Corinthians. Rather, the apostle gives his congregants a new identity in the city of God, one that can coexist with and inform their present civic commitments. Paul writes those who follow Christ at Corinth a way to interface with and ultimately transcend existing social ordering to be more equal in their relationships as followers of Christ.

Questions of citizenship and civic belonging arise often in Paul's epistles. It can be hard to piece together Paul's thinking on any single issue, given his wide-ranging theology and specific responses to community questions from mutual contacts in written and oral communication now lost to us. Though Paul's mention of the heavenly *politeuma* occurs in his letter to the Philippians and his fullest legal theory appears in Romans, the bulk of his practical instructions can be found in his writing to the community at Corinth we now know as 1 Corinthians. Moreover, although various partition theories have been suggested for this letter, Mitchell assembled a consensus for the unity of 1 Corinthians by comparing various elements of the letter to contemporary political language of concord.[5] My analysis will therefore center primarily on Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians, making occasional connections to his correspondence to the

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[4] John Barclay, "An Identity Received from God: The Theological Configuration of Paul's Kinship Discourse," *EC* 8 (2017): 354–372.

[5] Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991).

other house-churches who sought his advice as an apostle. Here, we have a letter where Paul talks about his calling as an apostle, denigrates choosing among church workers, and indicates the tension between the desire to participate in pagan cult with its idol food and the desire to follow to Jewish prohibitions of idol worship.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul's interest in civic identity has broad representation. Writing to Corinth, Paul introduces several civic institutions: pedagogues (1 Cor 4:15), the spectacle (1 Cor 4:9), legal courts (1 Cor 6:1–7), the body as a temple (1 Cor 6:19), and athletic events (1 Cor 9:24–27). In an extended discussion, the apostle discourages eating food sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8:1–11:1). Moreover, Paul includes instruction for the Corinthians on religious attire (1 Cor 11:1–16), focusing on the fashionably dressed person's signals of status and rank. Like imperial legislation and Roman elite culture, Paul seeks to guide and control the Corinthians' choices of upwardly mobile clothing.[6]

Paul both reinforces and upends the existing Roman Greek social hierarchy. The social system's winners and losers in Corinth were evident at Greek sacred athletic games, banquets, and entertainment in the Roman arena. On the one hand, Paul flatters the recipients of his letter at Corinth. He claims they have many instructors and royal pretensions. On the other hand, he points out, he is at the wrong end of the Roman entertainment scene. Rather than receiving coveted dinner invitations, Paul is exhibited in the arena as a condemned criminal and a beast fighter. The apostle says he is judged by the "angels." He suggests the reenactments of mythological tales in the arena were watched by the angels, supernatural beings of Jewish and Christian mythologies who would certainly possess more cosmic power than social and political elites in Corinth. He inverts traditional models of prestige.

The "last of all" apostle gives rules about gendered clothing encourage the status-obsessed Corinthians to identify with one another in terms of gender rather than social class or personal wealth. In the Christian civic body, the church serves as the crown of benefaction for the apostle in the present. The church is also the apostle's heavenly laurels, a crown awaiting all true competitors at the coming of the Savior and the heavenly city. By explaining the heavenly city through conventional markers of civic status in cities of the Roman East and even Rome itself, Paul proves Christians do have civic identity and civic status.

Scholarship has divided Paul's athletic metaphors into two components: the events of the athletic games and the imperishable crown.[7] The imperishable crown of Paul could easily be that of the golden crown so central to the at-

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[6] See John Dugan, "How to Make (and Break) a Cicero: *Epideixis*, Textuality, and Self-fashioning in the *Pro Archia* and *In Pisonem*," *CA* 20 (2001): 66–67.

[7] Victor C. Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agōn Motif: Traditional Athletic Imagery in the Pauline Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1967); Martin Brändl, *Der Agōn bei Paulus: Herkunft und Profil Paulinischer Agonmetaphorik* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

tainment of both civic and immortal status in early imperial Roman Greece. It features throughout Paul's letters as Paul constructs a new citizen body with its identity in Christ, retooling older Greek ideals to fashion a new Christian self-understanding. The crowns were awarded in the most prestigious event and the sport in which women were most likely to compete, signaling the ideal Christian is an honored community member, male or female, free or slave. 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. In the Christian house-churches, Paul democratizes the crown, making it available to all who are willing to discipline themselves.

Like the crown, the veil also becomes more democratic in Paul's teaching. He tells women to veil at the worship meal. He explains this with the gender roles created in the creation account of Genesis. Yet, his appeal to creation implicitly subverts Roman veiling norms, which were linked to imperial creation accounts privileging the marriage of elites. Differing from other early Christian traditions that promised women admission into heaven only after becoming men, the apostle assigns women the crown of immortality as women. Paul's veiling instructions are part and parcel to his work as political theologian and founder figure. Paul provides no details as to the practice of gendered veiling. He refers only to the practice of all of Pauline house-churches, suggesting it is statecraft and not minutely regulated subordination of women at stake. Even if 1 Corinthians 14 is not an interpolation, as is commonly believed, instructions for women to ask extraneous questions of their husbands at home subverts the idea of an egalitarian faction of women from every social class being subordinated, as the Perpetuas of Corinth would then not be in charge of their Felicity counterparts.[8] We know Paul writes a panoply of women in his letters, and, like their male counterparts, they do not always agree with one another.[9]

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[8] Plutarch resembles others in his Roman East milieu in claiming women across social classes, such as Aglaonice, the daughter of Hegetor (*De Defectu* 13) routinely seize prophetic authority consciously and unconsciously with the same gusto as men, such as Josephus and those crawling to the chthonic snakes at the Oracle of Trophonius. See the extensive work of Hans-Josef Klauck. There is no comparable description for the Corinthian church prophetic practice at the other Pauline house-churches or, indeed, within the gospels. The indication in 1 Cor 14:36 that this practice is unique to these churches and not a widespread practice is corroborated by the external evidence. This situation is not analogous to the Judaizers advocating male circumcision of non-Jewish converts to following Christ.

[9] As Christoph Stenschke has recently observed, Paul sees women on their own terms, particularly through the lens of his letter to the Romans: "He speaks of Rebekah as a recipient of divine revelation and highlights and praises some women for their religious activities, that is, their Christian ministry, with or without their husbands, with or without taking family ties into consideration." See Christoph Stenschke, "Paul's References to Women in His Letter to the Romans and Their Function in the Argument of the Letter: A Modest Proposal," *Neotestamentica* 54 (2020): 38.

Whereas Paul's discussions on idol meat and baptism are occasioned by actual events in the community, the athletic metaphors and the imagery of the veiling instructions represent moments of linguistic and theological freedom for Paul. In these, Paul is not bound to a teaching handed down from Jesus, such as the words of institution at the Eucharistic meal. He is not responding to the invitations certain Corinthians have received to banquets of friends and acquaintances outside of the churches of God. He is creating theology on his own terms. That makes the athletic metaphors and veiling instructions among the best places to look for the apostle's agenda. In both athletics and veiling, Paul attempts to move those at Corinth away from identifying with the imperial construction of creation and its implications for societal and human bodies. He seeks to reorient the Corinthians with respect to gender and class. His theology has important implications for civic and personal bodies.

This book will explore the athletic imagery, coronal honors, and other citizenship markers used by Paul in 1 Corinthians. They resist the more exploitative forms of entertainment in the Roman Empire. They encourage those at Corinth to situate themselves in the Body of Christ and the civic body 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 adopts the elite Roman Greek model to style himself as a paternal figure, he voluntarily renounces the prestige and power associated with authority in order to disperse power to all members of the Body of Christ.

The building of the body is associated with the masculine activity of building of civic defense infrastructure in Roman period cultural discourse. This connection appears both in Roman literature and Roman Greek literature of the early imperial period. Virgil tells us of "surrounding Alba Longa with walls" and the *lusus Troiae* in which the boys perform a militaristic dance (5.596–602). Their prowess contrasts with a dance like that which ends the Phaeacian games in *Odyssey* 8, where the youths are graceful but not battle-worthy. Lovatt has shown the idea here is the military prowess of Roman youths is equivalent to a city fortification.[10] Likewise, Plutarch indicates Sparta reserved a place for athletic victors next to kings and even tore down city walls to accommodate athletic victors (*Moralia* 639e). When Paul (in Acts 9:25) scales city walls out of love and with the help of the technology, he revises this longstanding motif.[11] Although women could be trained for participation in and even defense of the state, the bulk of educational attention was directed toward men. This situation is comparable to the distribution of athletic honors, which, as Poplutz

[10] Helen Lovatt, *Statius and Epic Games: Sport, Politics and Poetics in the Thebaid* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005), 175–176.

[11] Intriguingly, in the modern history of reception of this notion of just wall scaling might include Spiderman and the Irish rock band U2.

has noted, overwhelmingly favored male citizens in inscriptional evidence and other forms of intentionally preserved cultural memory.[12]

Paul's gendering of the Christian body in 1 Corinthians performs an odd feat in that the Christian body is both sexed and athletic. A vexing detail of Paul's baptismal formulas written to the Corinthians is that, unlike those to the Galatians, Paul does not explicitly abolish gender distinctions. In fact, quite the opposite, he instructs men and women to veil at worship according to their gender. This implies sex and gender persist at the Christian worship meal. While this is certainly a distressing interpretative move on Paul's part at first glance, I contend Paul's insistence on gender permits all genders to train in the heavenly gymnasium. 1 Cor 9:24–27 contains an extended metaphor on 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.[13] In 1 Corinthians 11, 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 both women as well as men in real-life practice and in mythology: running.

Questions of gender, self-fashioning, discipline, and state intertwine in Paul's instructions to the Corinthians. The apostle subverts cultural expectations of the Roman imperial colony at Corinth by allowing women to participate in sports and men to refrain from veiling.[14] He asks the Corinthian Christians to relinquish their imperially derived worldview for citizenship in a heavenly *politeuma*.[15] Christians must situate their bodies in the Body of Christ.

The first part of this book 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

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

[13] 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.

[14] Janelle Peters, "Slavery and the Gendered Construction of Worship Veils in 1 Corinthians," *Bib* 101 (2020): 431–443.

[15] Laura Nasrallah asserts: "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 Panhellion," *JBL* 27 (2008): 533–566, here 536.

from the Greco-Roman one in 1 Corinthians. The Body of Christ constitutes no mere *collegium*, a voluntary association of individuals based on a mutual interest such as trade or place of origin. 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. To the Philippians, Paul indicates quite clearly the Christian *politeuma* is a heavenly civic body, a body politic reserved for the eschatological future. In writing the Corinthians, Paul discusses civic rule ("already you rule!"), heads ("heads"), and political institutions such as the law court and one of its consequences, the arena. 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 these schisms in the community is to create 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.

The second part explores the way in which Paul constructs the Christian *politeuma* and the Christian citizen through his use of the *agōn* motif in the Pauline correspondence in 1 Cor 9:24–27. 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.[16] Under this rubric, Paul's athletic metaphors became emblematic of a moral struggle in scholarship written through much of the twentieth century.[17] Some scholars such as Ramsay framed this in terms of a military engagement between bodily and spiritual urges.[18] 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.[19] Such a motif is found in Heb 12:12 and Josephus, which both claim God exercises and reproves the community of faith in the wilderness. A more recent study by Brändl helpfully suggests the most important parallels for Paul's athletic references in 1 Corinthians are Jewish polemical texts against Gentiles. Brändl observes being sentenced to death in the Roman amphitheater is an ever-present danger to Paul (1 Cor 4:9, 15:32). Paul

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[16] Adolf Schlatter, *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Volume 2; Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1910), 255; Alfred Juncker, *Die Ethik des Apostels Paulus* (Volume 2; Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1919), 127.

[17] Wilhelm Wrede, *Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1907), 21; Johannes Weiss, *Earliest Christianity: A History of the Period A.D. 30–150* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 577; William D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London: S.P.C.K., 1955), 112.

[18] William M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1895), 354.

[19] Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), 111. Cf. Ceslas Spicq, "Gymnastique et Morale, d'après 1 Tim 4 :7–8," *RB* 54 (1947) : 229; "L'image sportive de 1 Cor 4:7–9," *EphThLov* 14 (1937): 209.

the athlete promotes solidarity among the community ("so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified").[20]

Recent scholarship has called for a reexamination of the availability of athletics to women that earlier studies had elliptically claimed. Meeks has stated "even professional athletes were opened to women" in the first century BCE.[21] Murphy-O'Connor briefly speculates 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. 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 rejects the possibility of women winning a significant number of athletic prizes and social recognition equivalent to men. Developing the latent preference for the masculine, she concludes that "Frauensport existierte, wie ein Blick in die Siegerlisten zeigt."[22] She cites the dismissive opinion of Juvenal.[23] Though her study encompasses the entirety of the authentic Pauline corpus, she focuses on the athletic metaphors of 1 Cor 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 Cor 11:1–16 in detail.[24] Castelli's and Martin's significant studies on Paul's construction of the Corinthian body do not even reference the athletic metaphors.[25]

Roman Greek cultural discourse 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.[26] Newby has shown the ephebic system was nostalgically continued by Greek elites in the Roman period to extend a sense of national identity under Roman colonization.[27] Paul's accusation that the Corinthians would fashion themselves as kings and his reminder that they have many pedagogues but only one father suggest

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[20] Brändl, *Der Agōn bei Paulus*, 350.

[21] Wayne A. Meeks, "The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity," *HR* 13 (1974): 168.

[22] Poplutz, *Athlet Des Evangeliums*.

[23] Cf. Juv., *Sat.*, 6.252–254.

[24] Wayne Meeks, "The Image of the Androgyne;" Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth: Text and Archaeology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2002).

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

[26] Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agōn Motif*, 17.

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

participation in this cultural milieu in which the Greek ephebic system operated under the auspices of the Roman Empire.

Chapter Five claims that Paul uses the venerable and ancient foot-racing event and the idea of the "race of life" more generally to disperse status throughout the Pauline house-churches. I identify the programmatic place of the athletic metaphors in Paul's thought through a comparison of 1 Corinthians 9 and 10 with Phil 3:12–21 and Rom 9:16–33. Interpreters have understood Paul to be speaking generally of an *agōn* 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 Rom 9:16 and Gal 5:7. Accordingly, I argue that Paul invokes running as a discrete image in 1 Cor 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.

The crown Paul promises to the athletic victor democratizes the crowns of Roman political culture. Goodenough notes the adoption of the ancient Mediterranean crown as a symbol by both Judaism and Christianity was marked by enculturation.[28] As Ascough has demonstrated for Philippians, Paul's mention of a crown would have recalled the civic crown for benefactions.[29] 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 Christians trained for inscription as citizens.

Having made the case for the high status "fictive citizenship" of each believer in the Pauline house-churches at Corinth via gymnastic metaphors, this book will turn to the actual practices within the Christian house-churches that Paul prescribes to give weight to his ideology. As in the Roman Empire, there are rules for apparel at worship in the Christian house-churches. Imperial clothing programs would have been prevalent in the empire – Augustus's legislation was already heralded in such elite cultural programs as Horace's *Secular Hymn.* Many scholars, most cogently Winter, have identified Paul's veiling prescriptions as a concession to Augustan moral legislation so that outsiders, the messengers Paul mentions, will not confuse the Corinthian women with the sexually libertine New Women.[30] However, given his extensive use of creational

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[28] Erwin Goodenough, "The Crown of Victory in Judaism," *Art Bulletin* 28 (1946): 139–159.

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

[30] Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001); Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

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