

Constructing Euodia and Syntyche: Philippians 4:2–3 and the Informed Imagination

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I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. (Phil 4:2–3 NRSV)

Of Provocation and Frustration

This essay was provoked by a sermon I heard more than twenty-five years ago. The preacher was a better-than-average homiletician with his Master of Divinity from a quality seminary. In dealing with the theme of unity and discord within the church, he took as an example, Euodia and Syntyche, “or,” he said, “as I prefer to call them, ‘You’re-Odious’ and ‘Sure-Touchy.’” I thought it a pretty creative laugh line, whether the preacher invented the names or not. At the same time, I found it troubling. It is the only comment I remember from the sermon, probably because I had by that time encountered many exemplary women students struggling to be taken seriously both by their male counterparts in seminary and the churches they hoped to serve. Even a cursory reading of the Letter to the Philippians had made it clear to me that, whatever the nub of the problem was between these two co-workers of Paul, it should not be trivialized into a “cat fight” or a “hen fight” between a couple of prickly women.¹ There had to have been more at stake than personal issues.

At the same time, it is enormously difficult to say exactly what was at stake and why Paul found it necessary in such a short letter to “call out” two women before the whole congregation. Everything we know about them and their situation is divulged in only thirty-eight words. The history of the exegesis of these thirty-eight words is a record of both the ingenuity and the desperation of interpreters of the text. In the brief survey that follows, my goal is to sift out from the efforts of this train of interpreters what I regard as the most probable construction of Euodia and Syntyche of Philippi. I use the word “construction” rather than “reconstruction” advisedly, with an appreciative nod to Dale Allison and his book *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History*. Influenced by modern memory studies, Allison avers that, with the best will in the world and the most sophisticated analysis of the data available, we can never reconstruct the past; rather, we select, arrange, and interpret the information we have such that we construct, not only the past, but even our memories of our own past.² If this is true even of characters about whom we have dozens of stories and documents, how much more is it the case with figures we know only by means of a few lines in an ancient letter.

At the same time, because women get comparatively so little attention in the literature of earliest Christianity, it is critically important to attend to texts in which they are mentioned as active in the mission and expansion of the church. When we begin to

notice such texts, we can never read the New Testament in the same way. For example, as Mark Goodacre points out, we can read the Gospel of Mark almost to the end without realizing that there were women accompanying Jesus and his male disciples; finally we come to Mark 15:40–41, where we find at the cross “women looking on from a distance; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. These used to follow him and provide for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem” (NRSV). Once we have read this detail, we would be wise to imagine women among the disciples in every Markan scene in Galilee.³ The efforts of scholars, especially feminists, to give a voice to the silent partners of Paul and to tell their stories is important, but we have to remember that we, not these silent women, are the writers of the stories we tell, and it is our voices, not theirs, that we use in the telling. This requires the use of imagination, yes, but a disciplined and well-informed imagination.⁴

Euodias and Syntiches?

Some ways of interpreting Phil 4:2–3 either minimize the importance of Euodia and Syntyche in the congregation or write them out of the story altogether. William Tyndale (1534) rendered both terms as masculine (“Euodias” and “Sintiches”). The Authorized Version (KJV) follows Tyndale for “Euodias,” but not for Syntyche, perhaps supposing the two were a married couple. One could be excused for suspecting a masculine bias on the part of the translators. A masculine form of each of the names is known from the inscriptions, Greek sources yielding the spelling *Euōdos*⁵ and one Latin inscription attesting to Sintichus.⁶ One would not expect the transliterations used in Tyndale and the AV, however, for either of these forms; moreover, the two are then referred to by the feminine pronoun *autais* and the feminine relative *haitines* (v. 3). The matter is not so simple, however, because Tyndale construes v. 2 as standing alone, such that “Euodias and Sintiches” do not serve as the antecedent of *autais* and the relative *haitines*. He translates “I praye Evodias, and beseche Sintiches that they may be of one accorde in the lorde. Yee and I beseche the faythfull Yockfelowe, helpe the women who labored with me in the gospel.” Thus he has in mind, on the one hand, two quarreling men, and on the other hand, some women who labored with Paul in the gospel. Similarly, the AV understands “Euodias” and Syntyche to be referred to only in v.2, with some unidentified “women who laboured with me in the Gospel” as the referents in v. 3. It is, of course, possible that Tyndale and the translators of the AV were influenced by a masculine bias that inclined them to think that, if two persons were important enough in the church for Paul to address them by name, at least one of them must certainly be male. Although neither translation is troubled by the reality that some women labored with Paul in

the Gospel, the circumstance that these women are not identified with the two named persons marginalizes the latter as just two persons who had a disagreement. And the grammatical construal that underwrites their translations seems quite unnatural.⁷

There is also a minor textual variant that could have the effect of demoting Euodia and Syntyche from the rank of *sunergoi*: At 4:3 Codex Sinaiticus and P16 (POxy 2009) read “Clement and my co-workers and the rest” (*Klēmentos kai tōn sunergōn mou kai tōn loipōn*), rather than “Clement and the rest of my co-workers.” In my judgment this is almost certainly an inadvertent scribal error,⁸ not an “antifeminist” alteration.

It’s All About Euodia and Syntyche

At the other extreme, rather than limiting the place of Euodia and Syntyche, some scholars magnify their importance so far as to find in their disagreement the main purpose of the letter. On the basis of a literary study of Philippians, David E. Garland judges that the Philippian church was crippled by internal disputes and conflicts. He writes, “It is my contention that Paul carefully and covertly wove his argument to lead up to the impassioned summons in 4:2. He wrote primarily to defuse the dispute between these two women that was having disastrous repercussions for the unity of the church.”⁹ Nils Dahl attaches a similar importance to the disagreement between the two women,¹⁰ as does Boyd Luter.¹¹ The most thoroughgoing analysis of the letter as a response to conflict is the 1992 Aberdeen dissertation of Davorin Peterlin. Peterlin discerns allusions to disagreements about theodicy, prompted by Paul’s sufferings (1:12–26) and pagan social pressure against the church (1:27–30). He conjectures a “pro-Paul party” and an “anti-Paul party,” led, respectively, by Euodia and Syntyche, arguing that the question of Paul’s financial support was a source of controversy between these two putative “parties.”¹²

The value of these studies has been to draw attention to recurring emphases on unity, humility, and selflessness in the letter, such that Paul’s entreaty to the two women may be coherently related to a central theme, rather than based on a personal “feud” between the two. Against those who doubt the literary unity and integrity of the letter,¹³ the above studies focus on the unifying elements. Nevertheless, I do not believe those readings of the letter that identify community discord as *the* precipitating purpose can bear the weight imposed upon them. To be sure, the situation addressed by Paul in Philippians may be more difficult to pin down than in any other of the letters attributed to him. A reasonable case can be made that the hiatus in the church’s financial support (4:10–11) had been caused, in part, by disagreement among the believers about how much to send and perhaps even whether such support should be continued (4:14–17). It may be that Paul’s strong emphasis on being united in the same love and purpose (2:2–3; 4:2) alludes to serious divisions within the community (1:15, 17; 2:14). Even so, the letter, on the whole, is suffused with such fervent expressions of love and joy (1:7–8, 25; 2:17–18; 4:1, 4, 10) as to justify the conclusion that Greek and Roman rhetoric of friendship dominates the letter.¹⁴ To insist that the disagreement between Euodia and Syntyche is *the* precipitating cause of the letter

depends on a mirror-reading of all of this friendship language as a corrective to the divisions in the church.

The Acts Connection

Many scholars have turned to the account of the birth of the Philippian church in Acts 16:13–14 to help construct the identity of Euodia and/or Syntyche. As is well known, the first convert in that city was the woman Lydia, a seemingly-independent head-of-household who was a dealer in purple dye. As early as 1908 Theodor Zahn suggested the possibility that “Lydia” was an ethnic nickname, meaning “the Lydian woman,” since she was from Thyatira in the province of Lydia.¹⁵ Some years later, his colleague Paul Ewald mooted the suggestion that either Euodia or Syntyche might have been “the Lydian woman,” but conceded that this must remain only “an attractive possibility.”¹⁶ Gerald Hawthorne still sees “a certain credibility” in this conjecture.¹⁷ Other scholars turn to the Acts account to suggest that, since Acts 17:4, 12 mention women of high social standing as converts at Berea and Thessalonica, the female converts at Philippi, including Euodia and Syntyche, were likely socially prominent: “At Philippi, at Thessalonica, at Beroea, the women—in some cases certainly, in all probability, ladies of birth and rank—take an active part with the Apostle.”¹⁸

Although it is, in the strictest sense, impossible to construct an adequate account of Paul’s chronology and ministry without the help of Acts, it is methodologically questionable simply to turn to Acts to construct the identity of persons mentioned in Philippians, but not in the narrative of Acts itself.¹⁹

The Macedonian Connection

By far the area of research most frequently exploited for its potential to help in constructing the identities of Euodia and Syntyche has to do with the social status and religious participation of women in Macedonia. Among contemporary commentaries, the typical point of entry is a two-page summary found in Tarn and Griffith’s *Hellenistic Civilization*, beginning with this choice comment: “If Macedonia produced perhaps the most competent group of men the world had yet seen, the women were in all respects the men’s counterparts. . . .”²⁰ The authors go on to mention Macedonian women who were prominent in government, military affairs, civic patronage, and religious cults, adding: “From the Macedonian courts, (relative) freedom broadened down to the Greek home; and those women who desired emancipation—probably a minority—were able to obtain it in considerable measure.”²¹ One finds references to these pages in commentary after commentary.²²

Thirty years before Tarn and Griffith, J. B. Lightfoot had already called attention in his commentary to a number of funerary and monumental inscriptions from Macedonia in which women appear to be prominent, remarking, “The extant Macedonian inscriptions seem to assign to the sex a higher social influence than is common among civilised nations of antiquity.”²³ A few years later William M. Ramsay expressed a similar opinion, including Asia Minor along with Macedonia as favorable to the advancement of women.²⁴ Scholars of today who take the trouble to cite primary sources seldom, if ever, go

beyond these same nine inscriptions culled by Lightfoot from the *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecorum*.²⁵

The most focused and extensive effort to relate the Philippian letter to the women of Macedonia, and specifically Philippi, is the doctoral dissertation of Lilian Portefaix, published under the title, *Sisters Rejoice: Paul's Letter to the Philippians and Luke-Acts as Received by First-Century Philippian Women*. She surveys archaeological, epigraphic, and literary sources in order to reconstruct the socio-cultural and religious backgrounds of women in Philippi at the time when the letter would have been received. She holds that these sources attest to a high visibility of religious cults holding special attraction for women. These findings undergird her reading of Philippians, which is based on "reception theory," as set forth in the work of Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss. She interprets the letter according to the "horizon of expectations" (*Erwartungshorizont*) of the first two generations of women who became members of the Philippian church. Because Philippian women already had a keen interest in religious matters (as shown by the sources she has surveyed), they would have responded positively to Paul's portrayal of the church as a "celestial citizenship" (Phil 3:20; cf. 1:27) where women stood on equal ground with men. That Philippian women were ready to make sacrifices for religion also inclined them favorably to Paul's designation of himself and Timothy as "slaves" of Jesus Christ (1:1) and to the portrayal of Jesus himself as one who "took the form of a slave" (2:7).²⁶ She writes, "The picture Paul gives of Syntyche and Euodia as struggling in the cause of the gospel (Phil 4:3) accords with the one we already have of Philippian women's interest in religious matters."²⁷

A broader concentration on the religious interests and practices of the women of Philippi is Valerie A. Abrahamsen's *Women and Worship at Philippi: Diana/Artemis and other Cults in the Early Christian Era*. A self-described feminist study, the book offers a detailed analysis of the archaeological evidence for religious cults at or near Philippi up through the Byzantine era, focusing on their possible or probable connection with women. Her general conclusion is this: "The combined influence of Isis, Diana, the Horsemen and Dionysos vis-à-vis female cult officials—the *assumption* that women were to be among the leaders of any religious organization—was felt by the Christian community, and some female leaders of the dying pagan cults probably transferred their loyalty to Jesus the Christ (and his Holy Mother, the counterpart of Isis), became leaders in the new group and brought followers with them."²⁸ Among these Christian leaders were Euodia and Syntyche. Citing the work of other feminist scholars (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Mary Rose D'Angelo), Abrahamsen suggests that Euodia and Syntyche were a "missionary couple," possibly living together in a union parallel to that of husband and wife missionary couples.²⁹

There are problems in highlighting the social and religious position of Macedonian women as helping to explain the place of Euodia and Syntyche (and Lydia) in the Philippian church. Beginning with the famous quotation from Tarn and Griffith, the examples of powerful women are all from the elite class, mostly from the Hellenistic era. After referring also to educated Greek women philosophers, magistrates, poets, and founders of

clubs during the Roman era, Tarn and Griffith go on to write: "But most of these things clearly relate only to a minority."³⁰ High-status women (by birth, rank, or social order) anywhere in the Mediterranean world were always more visible and more influential than lower-status women. We should not assume that Euodia and Syntyche were high-status converts. Even the report in Acts that some of the "leading women" of Thessalonica (17:4) or "women of high standing" of Berea (17:12) became converts cannot be turned around to mean all the women converts in these cities were socially powerful. Moreover, we have no reason to believe that any of the named women converts in Acts were of high social status: Tabitha (9:36–42) and Prisca (18:2–3) were artisans; Lydia, although frequently assumed to have been wealthy and socially influential, was a merchant whose background and social status cannot be determined from the account in Acts.³¹ To be sure, anyone who owned a house would have attained some measure of social respectability, but this alone would not have given that person elite status.

L. Michael White cautions against using raw archaeological data to construct a social description of the world of a text.³² Drawing on two phases of excavation that occurred after the time of Lightfoot and Ramsay, White surveys 202 inscriptions from Philippi, noting that "general areas of participation by women at Philippi do not seem to stand out as appreciably higher than the proportion of inscriptions by prominent women from other regions of the empire. . . ." ³³ He readily acknowledges the evidence for the popularity in and around Philippi of religious cults traditionally associated with women, particularly the cult of Diana, but is skeptical of efforts to account for the conversion of women to Christianity in Macedonia on the basis of this evidence.

But do we really need the "Macedonian connection" to help us account for the place of Euodia and Syntyche in the church at Philippi? I don't think so. Throughout Paul's network of churches, one finds female co-workers.³⁴ Phoebe of Cenchreae, the eastern port of Corinth, is commended as both a *diakonos* ("minister"? "deacon"?) and a patron (*prostatis*) of many, including Paul (Rom 16:1–2). Prisca (Priscilla) was, along with her husband, a noted teacher and leader of house churches in Corinth (Acts 18:1–3), Ephesus (Acts 19:24–26), and Rome (Rom 16:3–5); the two had "risked their necks" for Paul. Junia and her husband (or brother?) were called "noteworthy apostles" (Rom 16:7)³⁵; they were kinfolk of Paul and converts even before him. Nympha was leader of a house church in Colossae (Col 4:15).³⁶ If a socio-cultural explanation of the leadership of women in the Pauline churches is needed, we are on firmer ground simply pointing to a general "loosening up" during the late Republican and early Imperial period of many of the social strictures on women throughout the Roman world.³⁷

What Can We Say About Euodia and Syntyche?

What is the picture we can draw of them by means of a disciplined imagination? They were surely Greeks, the Greek name "Euodia," meaning "Good Journey,"³⁸ "Syntyche," meaning "Good Luck." Even Paul's address to each of the women separately—"I encourage Euodia and I encourage Syntyche"—seems to accord

them, or at least their disagreement, special status. It is fair to surmise that they were leading figures in the congregation at Philippi, having “struggled in the gospel” (*sunēthlēsān*) with Paul (4:3).

That they are included “with Clement and the rest” of Paul’s “co-workers” (*sunergoi*, v. 3) underscores their status as missionaries, with the same standing as Paul’s male associates. Paul uses the term *sunergos* in his letters to refer to twenty different persons who carried out what we would today call “ministry” or “mission,” whether itinerant or local. Included are such notables as Apollos (1 Cor 3:9), Prisca and Aquila (Rom 16:3–4), Silas (1 Thess 3:2), Timothy (Rom 16:21), and Titus (2 Cor 8:23). He never uses the term of “believers in general.”³⁹ In 2:25–29, where Paul commends the ministry of Epaphroditus, his “co-worker and fellow-soldier,” he says the readers should “hold in esteem all such ones,” presumably including Euodia and Syntyche.⁴⁰ We need not infer that Euodia and Syntyche did their work “in the gospel” in the marketplace or on the street corner, since ordinary Greek women, even in Macedonia, had quite limited opportunities to operate freely in a public setting, particularly if they engaged in teaching;⁴¹ but the power and influence of women within the home—including house churches—would have been considerable.⁴²

It is certainly possible that they were leaders of two house churches, but nothing in the letter actually suggests this.⁴³ It is also possible, as many scholars have noted, that the two were among the *diakonoi* addressed in Phil 1:1.⁴⁴ Indeed, Peterlin concludes, following a quite sophisticated argument, that they were deacons (i.e., having a local church ministry similar to that of Phoebe in Corinth [Rom 16:1–2]).⁴⁵ In my judgment, his construction of the status and function of *diakonoi* in the Pauline churches is more detailed and specific than warranted by the textual references.

As to the cause(s) of their disagreement, I do not believe we have enough evidence to identify precisely what it was they were quarreling about, although I believe it is reasonable to conclude that it was related to wider tensions within the whole church, as I have noted above.

The injunction in 4:2 for Euodia and Syntyche “to think the same (*to auto fronein*)” points back to the similar injunction to the whole community in 2:2 “that you (pl.) think the same (*hina to auto fronēte*),” a plea that is reinforced by the following participial phrase “being of one mind” (*to hen fronountes*). References to forms of *fronein* in both positive (2:5, 3:15) and negative senses (3:15, 19) draw the reader’s attention to disagreements within the church, but do not allow us to pinpoint the problems.

Finally, I think it is important to emphasize the function of these women as both positive and negative examples in the letter. Rhetorically, the letter offers contrasting models of behavior by those who are friends of the gospel (Paul [1:12–26], Timothy [2:19–24], Epaphroditus [2:25–30]) and those who are enemies of the gospel (those who preach “from envy and rivalry” [1:15]; “opponents” of the Philippians [1:28]; “dogs, evil workers” [3:1–2]; “enemies of the cross of Christ” [3:18–19]).⁴⁶ Euodia and Syntyche cannot neatly be slotted into either list. They are negative examples, because they do not “think the same in the Lord” (4:2). At the same time, they are positive examples because

they have “struggled together with [Paul] in the gospel” (4:3), which is precisely what Paul indicated in 1:27 as his hope for all the Philippians (“with one soul struggling together for the faith of the gospel,” *mia psuchē sunathlountes tē pistei tou euaggeliou*). But note that Paul ends on a positive note, aligning the two “with Clement and the rest of my co-workers whose names are in the book of life” (4:3).

This little exercise has uncovered no striking new evidence, framed no new theory about the place of Euodia and Syntyche in the Philippian church and in Paul’s ministry. If my imagination is more restrained than that of some of the scholars whose work I have reviewed, it is because I long ago took as a guiding premise Jacob Neusner’s dictum: “What we cannot show, we do not know.”⁴⁷ But I hope I have shown that, on any reading, these two women have earned a place of honor in the roster of Paul’s companions in ministry and in the life of the church at Philippi.

Notes

1. Bernadette J. Brooten, “Women and the Churches in Early Christianity,” *Ecumenical Trends* 14 (1985): 53.
2. Dale Allison, *Constructing Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 1–13.
3. See podacre.blogspot.com, NT Pod 65.
4. In the following, I do not deal with the question of the literary integrity of the letter. I am persuaded by the arguments in favor of integrity (David E. Garland, “The Composition and Unity of Philippians: Some Neglected Literary Factors,” *NovT* 27, no. 2 [1985]: 141–73 and Jeffrey T. Reed, *A Discourse Analysis of Philippians: Method and Rhetoric in the Debate over Literary Integrity* [JSNTSup 136; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997]), but the debate has little bearing on one’s interpretation of 4:2–3.
5. MM 263; one inscription has *Euōdios*; see Theodor Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament* (trans. by John Moore Trout et al.; vol. 1, repr. of the 1909 ed.; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1953), I:533.
6. MM 615, citing only *CIL* XII, 4703.
7. It is noteworthy, however, that both translations read “Junia” at Rom 16:7, which argues against a masculine bias.
8. This is a “subsingular” reading; i.e. the scribes of the two MSS in question independently made the same error.
9. Garland, “Composition and Unity,” 173.
10. Nils Dahl, “Euodia and Syntyche and Paul’s Letter to the Philippians,” in *The Social World of The First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (ed. L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 3–15.
11. Boyd Luter, “Partnership in the Gospel: The Role of Women in the Church at Philippi,” *JETS* 39, no. 3 (1996): 411–20.
12. Davorin Peterlin, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians in the Light of Disunity in the Church* (NovTSup 79; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 217–28.
13. For a summary of partition theories, see Reed, *Discourse Analysis*, 124–52.
14. See Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament* (3rd ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010), 328–29.
15. Zahn, *Introduction*, 522. There is inscriptional evidence for “Lydia” as an ethnic cognomen.
16. Paul Ewald, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Philipper*, in Str-B 11:212. He notes also (216) the possibility that the Clement of v. 3 might be the name of the jailer of Acts 16:27–34.
17. Gerald Hawthorne, *Philippians* (Waco: Word, 1983), 179.
18. J. B. Lightfoot, *St Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Macmillan, 1868), 56.
19. J. Paul Sampley points to the related practice of interpreting one of Paul’s letters in a way that makes certain there is no disagreement

with what Paul says on a related issue in another of his letters, a process Sampley calls “corpus harmonization” (Sampley, *Pauline Partnership in Christ: Christian Community and Commitment in Light of Roman Law* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980], 54).

20. W. W. Tarn, and G. T. Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilization* (3rd ed.; New York: Meridian, 1961), 98.

21. Tarn and Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 98–99.

22. To mention only three, see Gordon Fee, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 391; Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1976), 8; Bonnie B. Thurston and Judith M. Ryan, *Philippians and Philemon* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2005), 19. Each of these scholars quotes at least a portion of the “choice comment” mentioned above from Tarn and Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 98.

23. Lightfoot, *Philippians*, 56.

24. William Mitchell Ramsay, *St Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1896), 227.

25. See Lightfoot, *Philippians*, 56, for references; cf. Ben Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 98.

26. Lilian Portefaix, *Sisters Rejoice: Paul’s Letter to the Philippians and Luke-Acts as Received by First-Century Philippian Women* (Uppsala and Stockholm: Almqvist, 1988), 136.

27. Portefaix, *Sisters Rejoice*, 138.

28. Valerie A. Abrahamsen, *Women and Worship at Philippi: Diana/Artemis and other Cults in the Early Christian Era* (Portland: Astarte Shell, 1995), 91, author’s emphasis.

29. Abrahamsen, *Women and Worship*, 83, cf. 195.

30. Tarn and Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 99–100.

31. Many commentaries mistakenly suppose that Lydia must have been connected with the expensive purple dye extracted from a shellfish and controlled by Imperial monopoly. There were two other, less expensive, types of purple dye, the most common derived from the madder root. We have no basis for determining which kind Lydia was involved in as a dealer. See *NewDocs* 3, 53–54.

32. L. Michael White, “Visualizing the ‘Real’ World of Acts 16: Toward Construction of a Social Index,” in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (ed. L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995), 234–61.

33. White, “Visualizing,” 258, n. 71.

34. S. Scott Bartchy, “The Domestication of a Radical Jew: Paul of Tarsus,” in *Maven in Blue Jeans: A Festschrift in Honor of Zev Garber* (ed. Steven Leonard Jacobs; West Lafayette: 2009), 7–16.

35. I regard the old debate about whether to read “Junia” (female) or “Junias” (male) as now settled. See Eldon Jay Epp, *Junia: The First Woman Apostle* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005).

36. S. Scott Bartchy, “Can You Imagine Paul Telling Priscilla Not to Teach?” *Leaven* 4, no. 2 (1996): 19–23.

37. See Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

38. A few manuscripts read *Euōdia*, meaning “sweet-smelling” or “fragrant.”

39. E. Earle Ellis, “Paul and His Co-Workers,” *NTS* 17 (1971): 440.

40. Luter, “Partnership,” 415.

41. Winter, *Roman Wives*, 115–16.

42. For the opinion of Celsus and other cultured pagans about how the workshop-home promoted the work of evangelism by women see Margaret Y. MacDonald, *Early Christian Women and Pagan Opinion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). That such pagan portrayals may reflect an idealized notion of the social invisibility of women in the wider world is suggested by Carolyn Osiek and Margaret Y. MacDonald, *A Woman’s Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), esp. ch. 10.

43. Carolyn Osiek, *Philippians, Philemon* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2000), 111–12, opines that the two were *episkopoi* (1:1), not in the later technical sense of officeholders, but as “heads of local house churches.”

44. See Lightfoot, *Philippians*, 158, and many other commentators.

45. Peterlin, 106–11, 123. Using Phoebe as a model for what the ministry of Euodia and Syntyche must have been is explaining one unknown by another, for, *pace* Peterlin, we cannot say precisely what is implied in Paul’s commendation of her as “*diakonos* of the church in Cenchrea” (Rom 16:1); but see J. David Miller, “What Can We Say about Phoebe?” *Priscilla Papers* 25, no. 2 (2011): 16–21.

46. See Stanley Stowers, “Friends and Enemies in the Politics of Heaven,” in *Pauline Theology*, vol. 1. (ed. J. Jouette Bassler; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991).

47. See Neusner, *What We Cannot Show, We Do Not Know: Rabbinic Literature and the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1994).



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