

DID JOANNA BECOME JUNIA?

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Abstract: In 2002, Richard Bauckham argued that Joanna, the wife of Herod Antipas's finance minister Chuza, adopted "Junia" as her Latin name. Usage of this name later facilitated her missionary travels in the western part of the Roman Empire in conjunction with Andronicus. This paper seeks to evaluate such a historical reconstruction by (1) addressing the evidence of Jews possessing, adding, or changing to, a Roman name, (2) discussing whether Joanna's Jewish name would pose difficulties for Greeks and Romans such that she needed to use a similar-sounding "Junia" as her name, (3) viewing Roman legislation regarding the adoption of Roman names by foreigners in general, and (4) referring to the woman named Junia Theodora in a 1st-century inscription to shed light on our present discussion. I conclude that the hypothesis of "Joanna-becoming-Junia" is very unlikely, if not untenable, in spite of its attractiveness as a historical reconstruction.

Key words: Luke 8:3, Romans 16:7, Joanna, Junia, Chuza, Andronicus, Herod Antipas, Junia Theodora, Jewish adoption of Roman names, Suetonius

In a lengthy and impressive chapter in 2002,¹ Richard Bauckham argued rather cogently that Joanna, the wife of Herod Antipas's finance minister Chuza, probably came from a prominent and wealthy Jewish family. Thus she could have had financial resources of her own to contribute to Jesus and his followers as they travelled together around Galilee and later to Jerusalem, where she witnessed the death and resurrection of Jesus. Moreover, her association (through Chuza) with Herod's much Romanized court in Tiberias allowed her to acquire some Latin and to adopt Junia as her Latin name, which later facilitated her missionary travels in the western part of the Roman Empire in conjunction with Andronicus (whether her second husband or Chuza with a new name²). For this reason, when Paul referred to Junia in Romans 16:7, he described her as prominent among the apostles.

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¹ Richard Bauckham, "Joanna the Apostle," in *Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 109–202.

² Bauckham first suggested that Joanna's wealth and freedom to travel with Jesus and his disciples may be due to her widowhood; see *Gospel Women*, 134–35. But in Bauckham's imaginative historical reconstruction later in the book, Chuza was fully "drawn by his wife into the disciples and they were both present when the risen Jesus appeared to them and commissioned them as his witnesses" (198). From then on, they became a husband-wife team of missionaries. As they were commissioned by the Jerusalem church to work in Rome, he adopted the Greek name Andronicus.

Then in 2005, Ben Witherington came to the same conclusion,³ differing only in surmising that Joanna was divorced by Chuza because of her close association with Jesus and that Andronicus was her second husband.

Subsequently, others who likewise regard Junia as a female apostle have also embraced Bauckham's thesis identifying Joanna with Junia. Some among them surmise that "Andronicus" was simply another name for Chuza, whether chosen by himself or conferred by other Christians.⁴ Other writers espousing Bauckham's view believe that Andronicus was Joanna's second husband after Chuza's death.⁵ Moreover, some who attempt to dig more into the life of this Joanna even equate her with the Joanna, granddaughter of the High Priest Theophilus, whose name was inscribed on an ossuary. And this Theophilus is further identified with the Theophilus to whom Luke-Acts was dedicated.⁶

In view of the fact that this hypothesis of "Joanna becoming Junia" is seemingly being embraced enthusiastically by some,⁷ and with some reservations by others,⁸ this article seeks to review it, not challenging it in a comprehensive or definitive way,⁹ but merely attempting to raise some questions. First, I address the evi-

³ Ben Witherington III, "Joanna, Apostle of the Lord—or Jailbait?," *BRer* 21.2 (2005): 12, 14, 46.

⁴ For the view that the name Andronicus was Chuza's own choice, see Constantina Clark, "Exploring the True Identity of Junia: Prominent among the Apostles," *JECH* 8.3 (2018): 102. For the name as conferred by others, see Richard Fellows, <http://paulandco-workers.blogspot.com/2020/04/chuza-and-joanna-as-andronicus-and.html>.

⁵ It has even been suggested that Andronicus was possibly the apostle Andrew, whom Joanna married after Chuza's death; see Alice Matthews, "The Jewish Palace Insider and Benefactor Junia (Romans 16:7)," Theology of Work Project, <https://www.theologyofwork.org/key-topics/women-workers-in-the-new-testament/the-jewish-palace-insider-and-benefactor-junia-romans-166>.

⁶ See, for example, Clark, "Exploring."

⁷ After the publication of my article "Was Junia(s) a Female Apostle? And So What?," *JETS* 63.3 (2020): 517–34, I received an email from Richard Fellows in which he stated, "Most apostles to gentile lands took Latin names that sounded similar to their Semitic names, so if a Joanna became an apostle there is a good chance (50%?) that she would be called Junia. No other Latin name would work as well." Thanks to him, I subsequently pursued the matter further, and this article is written partly in response to his comment and to his blog. For a recent survey of Junia research, see Matt H. Hamilton, "Junia as a Female Apostle in Romans 16:7: A Literature Review of Relevant Sources from 2010 to Present," *Eleutheria* 6.1 (2022): 31–58, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/eleu/vol6/iss1/5>.

⁸ For instance, while Bruce Winter summarizes Bauckham's historical reconstruction, he is not entirely committed to it. Bruce Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2003), 202–3. Lynn H. Cohick also regards this as an interesting possibility; see her *Women in the World of the Earliest Christians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 315. Likewise, Amy Peeler writes, "Although a solid suggestion, this remains only a possibility"; see Amy Peeler, "Junia/Joanna: Herald of the Good News," in *Vindicating the Vixens: Revisiting Sexualized, Vilified, and Marginalized Women of the Bible*, ed. Sandra L. Glahn (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017), 279. Similarly, Mowczko concludes, "Nevertheless, the idea that Joanna is Junia cannot be substantiated." Margaret Mowczko, "Junia—The Jewish Woman Who Was Imprisoned with Paul," *Kyria*, 29 December 2020, <http://www.kyrianetwork.com/junia-the-jewish-women-who-was-imprisoned-with-paul>.

⁹ Thus I will not query whether Chuza must be of Nabatean origin, as Bauckham alleges. Neither will I delve into the possibility that ἐπιτρόπος could mean "guardian (of a minor)" as in Galatians 4:2. If so, he and Joanna might have been rather advanced in years and less likely to travel to places outside Palestine as missionaries after Jesus's resurrection. In addition, I will not discuss the possibility that the Lukan Joanna was actually the granddaughter of Theophilus the High Priest. More importantly, I will

dence of Jews possessing, changing to, or adding, a Roman name. Then I discuss whether Joanna's Jewish name would pose difficulties for Greeks and Romans such that she needed to use a similar-sounding Junia as her name. I then broaden the scope by viewing Roman legislation regarding the adoption of Roman names by foreigners in general. Finally, I mention the woman named Junia Theodora in an inscription found close to Corinth to see what light her name and citizenship status may shed on our present discussion.

I. EVIDENCE OF ADOPTION OF ROMAN NAMES AMONG JEWS

One strong argument that Bauckham adduces for Jews assuming Roman names is that this phenomenon is evidenced in the New Testament and in Jewish rabbinic literature and inscriptions. For instance, Bauckham quotes Lev. Rab. 32:5 as follows:

R. Huna stated in the name of Bar Ḳappara: Israel were redeemed from Egypt on account of four things, viz because they did not change their names.... They did not change their name[s], having gone down as Reuben and Simeon, and having come up as Reuben and Simeon. They did not call Judah "Leon," nor Reuben "Rufus," nor Joseph "Lestes" [corrected: Justus], nor Benjamin "Alexander."

Bauckham goes on to say, "The form of the text in *Cant. Rab.* 56:6 has: 'They did not call Reuben "Rufus," Judah "Julianus," Joseph "Justus," or Benjamin "Alexander."'"¹⁰

Clearly, the rabbis were indirectly referring to the prevalent practice of Jews changing to Greek or Roman names and were voicing their disapproval of this practice. However, in the case of Jewish rabbinic literature, the question of dating surely has to be taken into consideration. Bar Ḳappara was a Palestinian scholar in the transition period between the *tannaim* and the *amoraim* at the beginning of the 3rd century, while R. Huna was a Babylonian *amora* of the second generation (born about 212 or 216; died in 296–297).¹¹ Thus what they said may not reflect the situation of Jews in the time of Paul. This is especially the case since the Roman emperor Caracalla issued an edict (*Constitutio Antoniniana*) that granted Roman citizenship to all free inhabitants of the Roman Empire in AD 212,¹² which probably encouraged Jews to adopt Roman names.

Nevertheless, Bauckham also cites evidence from the New Testament to show that Jews in Paul's time already were not averse to adopting Roman names.

assume for the moment that Paul was referring in Romans 16:7 to a woman apostle named Junia and not to a man with the Greek name Junias.

¹⁰ Both quotes are from Bauckham, *Gospel Women*, 183n315.

¹¹ See Marcus Jastrow and Louis Ginzberg, "Bar Ḳappara," *JE* 2:503–5; Isidore Singer and M. Seligsohn, "Huna," *JE* 6:492–93; Yitzhak Dov Gilat and Stephen G. Wald, "Bar Kappara," *EncJud* 3:155–56; Shmuel Safrai, "Huna," *EncJud* 9:600–601.

¹² See Judith Evans Grubbs, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire: A Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 14.

Indeed, we hear of “Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus)”¹³ (Ἰωσήφ τὸν καλούμενον Βαρσαββᾶν ὃς ἐπεκλήθη Ἰοῦστος) (Acts 1:23); “John, also called Mark” (Ἰωάννου τοῦ ἐπικαλουμένου Μάρκου) (12:12); “Saul, who was also called Paul” (Σαῦλος ὁ καὶ Παῦλος) (13:9); “Jesus, who is called Justus” (Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰοῦστος) (Col 4:11). As noted by Bauckham also, sometimes the addition of another name was necessary to distinguish between people bearing the same Jewish name. For example, the candidate named Joseph in Acts 1:23 for the apostleship left vacant by Judas Iscariot had to be distinguished from the Joseph from Cypress (4:36). The former was called Barsabbas and Justus, while the latter Joseph was called Barnabas by the apostles (Ἰωσήφ ὁ ἐπικληθεὶς Βαρναβᾶς ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων). If we ask why calling the former Joseph Barsabbas was insufficient such that he was further named Justus, we may find the answer in Acts 15:22 where, besides Silas, the other representative to convey the apostolic decree was Judas (called Barsabbas). Two prominent persons apparently possessed Barsabbas as a patronymic name,¹⁴ so that Joseph Barsabbas carried a third name, Justus. If distinguishing between people bearing the same Jewish name constitutes one reason why people in the early church were known by other names (whether in Aramaic or Latin), then this weakens Bauckham’s hypothesis that Jewish Christians in Jerusalem (e.g., John Mark, Joseph/Justus) assumed Latin names when they later became missionaries to other lands, and that their Latin names in Acts were introduced retroactively from their later missionary careers.¹⁵ Furthermore, as seen in the example of John Mark, it is not always the case that a Latin name with a similar sound to the Jewish name was chosen.¹⁶ Other reasons may lie behind the choice, as we will see in section III.

¹³ In the following, biblical quotations in English are taken from the NIV. For quotations in Greek, I have kept the cases as they appear in the Greek text of UBS⁵.

¹⁴ It is disputable whether “Barsabbas” was a patronymic; some scholars think so, while others regard it as a nickname meaning “son of the Sabbath” (i.e., born on the Sabbath). See Margaret Williams, “Palestinian Jewish Personal Names in Acts,” in *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*, vol. 4: *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting*, ed. Richard Bauckham (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995), 101–2n235.

¹⁵ So Bauckham, *Gospel Women*, 185.

¹⁶ While noting the dissimilarity in sound of the Latin name Mark to the Jewish name John, Richard Fellows simply states that, besides the *praenomen* Mark, he must have borne another Latin name (*cognomen*) similar in sound to John. This is certainly a circular argument, since “Mark” could serve as his *cognomen*, and he is called in Acts either John Mark (12:12, 25; 15:37) or John (13:5, 13). Outside the book of Acts, he is consistently called Mark in the New Testament (Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11; Phlm 24; 1 Pet 5:13). The standard practice among native Romans from antiquity had been to carry three names: (1) a *praenomen* (usually a personal name given at birth), (2) a *gentilium* or *nomen*, name of the *gens* (family or clan), and (3) a *cognomen* (name by which the person was generally known). The first two represented Roman citizenship. See Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity, Part III: The Western Diaspora 330 BCE–650 CE*, TSAJ 126 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 8; Heikki Solin, “Names, Personal, Romans,” *OCD* 996. For further discussion, see section III below.

II. WHETHER JOANNA'S JEWISH NAME WOULD POSE DIFFICULTIES TO GREEKS AND ROMANS

According to Margaret Williams, "The Gentiles he [John Mark] was seeking to convert would have found Mark a far easier name to cope with than the outlandish and unfamiliar Yehohanan." Building on this foundation, Bauckham goes on to say regarding Joanna: "Like its masculine equivalent of John, her Hebrew name was an awkward one for Greek- or Latin-speakers."¹⁷

To gauge whether the Hebrew names of John and Joanna would be awkward to Greek- or Latin- speakers, one criterion is whether the Greek or Latin forms of the names were found in literature and in epigraphical materials in pre-Constantine times before the recognition of Christianity in the Roman Empire. Here it is noteworthy that Tal Ilan's *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity* lists twelve instances of the Jewish name Joanna in Palestine in the period spanning from 330 BC to AD 200. Excluding the mention in Luke 8:3 and seven cases that have the name written in Hebrew, there are three cases where the name appears in Greek (two as *Ἰωαννας* on ossuaries, thus prior to AD 70, and one as *Ἰωάνναι* on papyrus and dated to 257 BC). Also of interest is a rare case of a Latin inscription found in Palestine where the name appears as *Iohan[n]a* on an ossuary (thus prior to AD 70).¹⁸

As for the occurrence of Greek and Latin forms of Joanna's name in the Western Diaspora from 300 BC to AD 650, Ilan lists five cases, of which four are in Greek in various morphological variations of *Ἰωάννα*, written on papyri and found in Egypt (of dates from 3rd century BC to AD 87). One instance is in Latin (*Iohanna*) from Sicily and dated to AD 591.

What then about the masculine equivalent of Joanna, in Greek or Latin? It is interesting to note that Ilan lists 33 instances under the name Yohanan for the Western Diaspora from 300 BC to AD 650. Among the instances using various morphological forms of the Greek name *Ἰωάννης* dated to the first two centuries AD, most are found in Egypt and Cyrenaica, appearing on epitaphs, but also occurring on a papyrus and an ostrakon.¹⁹ Later instances from the 4th century AD appear in Greece and Asia as well.

Up to this point, it seems that the Latin name of Iohanan is rare or non-existent in the extant evidence,²⁰ but this cannot be said of Iohanna. In fact, as mentioned above, it appears on an ossuary in Jerusalem prior to AD 70 and is also the name of a Jewess in Sicily in AD 591. So if Joanna were to travel to Rome and minister to Latin-speaking people, there seems to have been no real need for her to adopt the Latin name Junia. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that even when migrating to Latin-speaking countries (particularly Rome), Jews who had previously

¹⁷ Bauckham, *Gospel Women*, 185, quoting Williams, "Palestinian Jewish Personal Names in Acts," 105.

¹⁸ Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity, Part I: Palestine 330 BCE – 200 CE*, TSAJ 91 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 420–21.

¹⁹ Ilan, *Lexicon, Part III*, 105–8, especially items 17, 18, 23, 28–32.

²⁰ Thus Bauckham states that "John (Yehohanan or Yohanan) was little used in the diaspora." Bauckham, *Gospel Women*, 185.

resided in Greek-speaking countries (such as Egypt, Cyrenaica, Asia and Greece) continued to use Greek.²¹ Again, therefore, there is no apparent need for Joanna to adopt the Latin name Junia. Here we should note that the man paired with Junia in Romans 16:7 bears the Greek name Andronicus (Ἀνδρόνικος) and not a Latin name.

Like Bauckham, Richard Fellows regards “Andronicus” as the name Chuza used in missionary work. But Fellows argues further that “Andronicus” was the Greek name given by Christians to Chuza to honor him as a benefactor of the church, since “Andronicus” means “victory of a man,” similar to how the name “Peter” was the name bestowed on Simon in view of his foundational role in the church. However, though we have evidence of early Christians receiving a laudatory name from Jesus or from the apostles (clearly in the case of Barnabas), “Andronicus” may not have been a suitable name to bestow at all since it was used of slaves as well!²² In any case, it was a common name in the Mediterranean world.²³

III. WHETHER ADOPTING LATIN NAMES WAS EASY IN TERMS OF ROMAN LAW

The New Testament examples of Jews bearing Latin names may give the impression that changing one’s name was an easy matter in the time of Jesus and Paul. However, it should be borne in mind that the *praenomen* and *gentilium* (*nomen*) of Roman names signified Roman citizenship, which was a valuable commodity that implied status and privilege. Since Roman emperors from Augustus²⁴ onward till Caracalla’s edict made careful distinctions between Roman citizens and non-citizens, it is not surprising that we read in Suetonius’s record of the reign of Claudius the following statement: “He forbade men of foreign birth to use the Roman names so far as those of the clans were concerned. Those who usurped the privileges of Roman citizenship he executed in the Esquiline field.”²⁵

On close scrutiny, this legislation seems to imply that (1) prior to this legislation, some foreigners did adopt Roman names; (2) a *de jure* and *de facto* distinction

²¹ So Ilan, *Lexicon*, Part III, 6, paragraph 1.2 on Greek names. It is noteworthy here that of the tombs in Beth She’arim, Palestine, some of the deceased bore bilingual names (e.g., Latin and Hebrew, Hebrew and Greek) on their epitaphs usually written in Greek letters, whether they were Jews from the Diaspora or from Galilee. One of the deceased was named Sarah (her Hebrew name) and Maxima (a Latin name or honorific title). See Michael Peppard, “Personal Names and Ethnic Hybridity in Late Ancient Galilee: The Data from Beth She’arim,” in *Religion, Ethnicity, and Identity in Ancient Galilee: A Region in Transition*, ed. Jürgen Zangenberg, Harold W. Attridge, and Dale B. Martin, WUNT 210 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 99–114. For a brief discussion on Sara Maxima, see Teresa J. Calpino, *Women, Work and Leadership in Acts*, WUNT 2/361 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 90.

²² See C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 2:788; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, AB 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 737, on Romans 16:7. Jewett reports, “Andronikos is a prestigious Greek name frequently given to slaves or freedmen during the Greco-Roman period.” Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 961.

²³ So Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 737; BDAG 76.

²⁴ For Augustus’s concern to keep the Roman people pure and unsullied by any taint of foreign or servile blood, see Suetonius, *Aug.* 40.3.

²⁵ “Peregrinae condicionis homines vetuit usurpare Romana nomina dum taxat gentilitia. Civitatem R. usurpantes in campo Esquilino securi percussit.” Suetonius, *Claud.* 25.2–3 (Rolfe, LCL).

existed between Roman citizens and foreigners; (3) there existed ways to ascertain Roman citizenship; (4) foreigners adopting Roman gentile names posed a serious breach of Roman sentiments; and (5) beheading foreigners who pretended to possess Roman citizenship was an appropriate punishment and deterrent.

This legislation did not, of course, prohibit foreigners from obtaining Roman citizenship legally,²⁶ thereby obtaining Roman names legally as well. We know that “freed slaves [of foreign origin] took the gentile name of the former owner and were always plebians.”²⁷ In addition, “in Rome, when made a Roman citizen, the person who was bestowed this honor was given a family name after the Roman family who adopted him/her.”²⁸ Foreigners who obtained Roman citizenship were given certificates that they could show if required.²⁹ Likewise, freedmen and freedwomen had ways of proving their citizenship status as well.

Returning to Jews bearing Roman names in the New Testament, we are clearly told that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens (Acts 16:37) and that Paul was a Roman citizen from birth (22:28). We know also that Paul’s Hebrew name was Saul. But his Latin name “Paullus” was not a Latin form of his Hebrew name. Rather, he was probably given both names (13: 36) at birth, with Paullus being the cognomen of his Roman name.³⁰ But what about John Mark and Joseph Barsabbas called Justus mentioned above? Neither seems to have been a freed slave of a Roman master. Did they somehow acquire Roman citizenship then? Joseph Barsabbas was a candidate for apostleship to replace Judas Iscariot (1:23), so he was a follower of Jesus together with the twelve apostles from the baptism of John the Baptist to the

²⁶ Thus stated Cassius Dio on the desirability of citizenship: “For since Romans enjoyed a higher status than non-citizens in practically every respect, many people were applying for citizenship from Claudius himself and were buying it from Messalina and the imperial freedmen” (*Roman History* 60.17.5). For citation and discussion, see Barbara Levick, ed., *The Government of the Roman Empire: A Source Book* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 144 (#136). An example is Claudius Lysias, the tribune who transferred Paul from imprisonment in Jerusalem to the custody of Felix, the Roman governor stationed in Caesarea; he evidently obtained his Roman citizenship through the Roman emperor Claudius directly or through someone acting on behalf of Claudius (Acts 22:28; 23:26).

For the recording of Roman citizenship in tribal lists at Rome, municipal registers, and census archives, see A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), 147–48.

²⁷ Susan Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” in *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, ed. Ken M. Campbell (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 135. Likewise, McLean states: “Freedmen were given their masters’ praenomina and nomina and thus became indistinguishable from the remaining members of the family apart from their original praenomen which would become their cognomen.” Bradley H. McLean, “The Agrippinilla Inscription: Religious Associations and Early Church Formation,” in *Origins and Method: Towards a New Understanding of Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Bradley H. McLean, JSNTSup 86 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 254. See also Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law*, 146; Solin, “Names, Personal, Roman,” 998.

²⁸ Ilan, *Lexicon*, Part III, 8, citing the cases of King Herod and Josephus.

²⁹ See David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 608.

³⁰ See Ilan, *Lexicon*, Part III, 530n1, and F. F. Bruce, “Paul the Apostle,” *ISBE* 3:709. Bruce further surmises that the name Paullus might have been chosen because of its assonance to Saulos (Greek for the Hebrew name *Saul*). In general, besides phonetic resemblance, Jews may have acquired an additional name in Greek or Latin with similar meanings or associated qualities; see Peppard, “Personal Names and Ethnic Hybridity.”

time of Jesus's ascension. This suggests his Galilean origin (see 1:11) and makes it unlikely that he had acquired Roman citizenship when he was an apostolic candidate.³¹ As for Mark, judging from the description of his mother's sizable house in Jerusalem (12:12–13), his relationship to Barnabas, a landowning Levite from Cyprus (Col 4:10; Acts 4:36), and the early church tradition that he interpreted for Peter in Rome,³² it is not impossible that he acquired Roman citizenship sometime in his life. However, it is also possible that John Mark and Joseph/Justus Barsabbas simply adopted their Latin names without actually obtaining Roman citizenship,³³ if they did so prior to Claudius's legislation mentioned above and if the legislation was not retroactive. The same goes for Jesus who is called Justus, mentioned by Paul as one of the Jewish persons in Rome sending greetings to the Colossian church (Col 4:11). After all, Marcus and Justus were not exclusively Latin *gentilium* but could be used as *praenomen* and *cognomen* by Romans as well.³⁴ Besides, "Marcus was one of the commonest of Latin *praenomina*."³⁵ In the case of Joseph Barsabbas, it is also possible that Justus (Ἰούστος) was meant to be an alternative nickname meaning "just man," as "it corresponds exactly to Hebrew הַצַּדִּיק—one of several honorific nicknames to be found in the Palestinian Jewish onomastikon."³⁶

But the names Junius and Junia seem to be exclusively Latin *gentilium*³⁷ and not adopted by Jews with ease. In Tal Ilan's lexicon, no cases are found of Jewish men named Junius or Jewish women named Junia in the first two centuries AD, whether in Palestine or in the Western Diaspora (discounting Romans 16:7).³⁸ Per-

³¹ Papias relates a story that he heard from the daughters of Philip that this Justus once drank poison without ill effects (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.9). Bauckham sees this as evidence that Justus was later known as a travelling missionary in the diaspora. Bauckham, *Gospel Women*, 185. However, while Papias could have heard the story in his hometown Hierapolis where Philip's daughter settled, it does not entail that the incident about Justus happened in the diaspora. If he is to be identified with the Justus named by Eusebius as the third bishop of Jerusalem (*Hist. eccl.* 3.39.9), he was most likely based in Jerusalem.

³² Fragment of Papias on Mark quoted in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.15–16.

³³ A parallel is found in the case of a groom named Judah also called Cimber who features in a marriage contract written in Greek dated to AD 128 that is part of the cache of documents known as the "Babatha archive" found in the "Cave of Letters" along the Dead Sea. His name Cimber was a Roman *cognomen*, not a *nomen*, and is not indicative of a Roman citizen status. See Grubbs, *Women and the Law*, 131–33, 297n128.

³⁴ Ilan, *Lexicon*, Part III, 519n1 (for Marcus), 506n1 (for Justus).

³⁵ Thus Bauckham, *Gospel Women*, 185. See also Michael Peppard, "Names, Personal, Roman," 997, who suggests that the name "Marcus" may imply being born in March, the month consecrated to Mars.

³⁶ Williams, "Palestinian Jewish Personal Names," 104.

³⁷ See Peter Lampe, "Junia/Iunias: Sklavenherkunft im Kreise der vorpaulinischen Apostel (Rom. 16:7)," *ZNW* 76 (1985): 132 (3.1); Ilan, *Lexicon*, Part III, 591n1.

³⁸ No entry was listed in Ilan's *Lexicon* for Junius and Junia in her Part I, Part II, or Part IV. In Part III, Ilan lists three persons bearing the name Junius from epitaphs in Rome, but these are dated to the 3rd to 4th century AD (505). In the same volume, she gives two entries in Rome for Junia (other than the Junia in Romans 16:7), with one (also called Rufina) from the 3rd to 4th century AD, and two epitaphs of uncertain date referring to another Junia (a slave called Shabūtī) and most likely not Jewish because the deceased had been cremated (591). In this connection, it is interesting to note that the early papyrus P46 (dated to c. 2nd century) has the variant Ἰουλίαν instead of Ἰουνίαν at Romans 16:7. Perhaps this can be explained as a transcriptional error. But this variant is found also in manuscripts of the Vulgate and in Jerome as well, as noted in the critical apparatus of UBS⁵. Since these latter hail from

haps this is because the *gens* Junia was one of the most celebrated families of ancient Rome.³⁹ Could the Joanna who was associated with Herod Antipas's Romanized court in Tiberias be an exception and so bore the Latin name Junia in spite of its rarity among Jewish women? In my opinion, this is very unlikely. First, it is unlikely that a woman named Joanna (presumably Jewish) was born into the Junian family and was given the name Junia at birth. Second, no evidence whatsoever exists that Joanna or her father became a Roman citizen by being freed or adopted by a Roman patron belonging to the *gens* Junia unless one equates her with the Junia of Romans 16:7, which is plainly a circular argument. Third, it is also unlikely that Joanna acquired the name Junia on account of her connection to Herod Antipas's court because King Herod's father Antipater was appointed procurator of Judea and made a Roman citizen by Julius Caesar in 47 BC.⁴⁰ He would have been given the *gentilium* Julius such that all his descendants would bear the gentile name Julius.⁴¹ If Joanna were to adopt the name Junia when still associated with the court in Tiberias, might it not be offensive to Herod Antipas?

What of the possibility of Joanna becoming Junia after she parted company with Herod's court or with Chuza in her later life as a Christian missionary? While not impossible theoretically, it is also very unlikely for the following reasons: (1) If she sought to become a Roman citizen through legal means, she probably lacked the political clout to accomplish this goal even if she had the financial resources.⁴² (2) In view of the disdain of the Jewish rabbis regarding Jews changing their names to Greek and Latin ones as mentioned above, she probably would incur some unnecessary stigma and a stumblingblock to her ministry. (3) After the promulgation of the legislation by Claudius and the severe penalty associated with it, unless Joanna had obtained Roman citizenship and the Roman name Junia legally, it would be

Rome, is it possible that Jerome and the copyists of the Vulgate thought it unlikely that a Jewish person bore the name Junia or Junius in Rome?

³⁹ See Lampe, "Junia/Junias: Sklavenherkunft," 132 (3.1). Finding it inconceivable that Junia was born into this esteemed Roman *gens*, Lampe thinks that either Junia was a freedwoman of a patron belonging to the Junian *gens* or her father's family had such an ex-slave origin. This view is recently reiterated by Amy Peeler in "Junia/Joanna," 278. Citing Peeler, Mowczko goes further, stating that "rather than being Joanna, an aristocratic member of Herod's court, there is a real possibility that Junia had once been a slave.... If Junia was a freedwoman, she probably suffered a great deal when she was in prison." Mowczko, "Junia."

⁴⁰ This incident is also recounted in Josephus, *B.J.* 1.194; *A.J.* 14.137.

⁴¹ See discussion in Harold Hoehner, *Herod Antipas: A Contemporary of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 18–19; Morton Hørning Jensen, *Herod Antipas in Galilee: The Literary and Archaeological Sources on the Reign of Herod Antipas and Its Socio-Economic Impact on Galilee*, 1st ed., WUNT 2/215 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 68–69. For descendants of Herod with the name Julianus and for an *agoranomos* of Agrippa II bearing the name Julius in AD 49, see Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity, Part II: Palestine 200–650*, TSAJ 148 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 466–67. We may also note that Herod the Great's great granddaughter Berenike might have had a granddaughter named Julia Crispina. See Grubbs, *Women and the Law*, 323n89.

⁴² This would be especially true for people previously associated with Herod Antipas after he was condemned by Caligula on the charge of treason and exiled to Gaul together with Herodias. It would certainly bring danger and shame to his former *ἐπιτρόπος* Chuza and his wife. For the incident, see Josephus, *B.J.* 2.183; *A.J.* 18.252–55. It is generally dated to AD 39. See William Milwitzky, "Antipas (Herod Antipas)," *JE* 1:638–39; Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 260–63; Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 93–94.

foolish and reckless for her to start or continue to use the name Junia in Rome. This is especially so if she had been imprisoned previously on account of the gospel as stated in Romans 16:7, since people hostile to Christians could easily turn her over to the Roman officials for contravening the law.

Bearing in mind all the arguments against Joanna becoming Junia, it is time to examine the case of another Junia who was in all likelihood also not born Roman.

IV. RELEVANCE OF JUNIA THEODORA TO THE PRESENT DISCUSSION

One reason why Junia Theodora is relevant to the discussion here is that certain scholars have identified her, or sought to do so, with the Junia in Romans 16:7. Thus Bruce Winter raised the question, "Could the Junia of Romans 16:7 be the same person as Junia Theodora?"⁴³ To arrive at a satisfactory answer, it is necessary to describe briefly the composite inscription on a stele found on the outskirts of Corinth bearing five separate decrees or official letters that honor Junia Theodora publicly. These five are as follows:⁴⁴ (1) a decree of the Federal Assembly (*κοινόν*) 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 second decree of the Federal Assembly of Lycia, and (5) a decree of the Lycian city of Telmessos.

First, it is important to ascertain the date of the inscription, because Junia Theodora is irrelevant to our present discussion if she did not live in the first century. Two possible dates have been suggested by scholars based on an inference from the reference in line 58 (from #4 in the above list) to Junia's magnificent welcome of many of the Lycians "in exile," with R. H. Kearsley favoring the year AD 57,⁴⁵ and Steven J. Friesen championing the earlier date of around AD 43.⁴⁶ For our purpose, it is unnecessary to choose between the two options. Suffice to say that Junia Theodora seems to be a contemporary of the Junia in Romans 16:7. Thus we can proceed to ask whether the two were the same person.

Having raised this question, Bruce Winter rejects the identification of the two Junia(s) for two main reasons. First, whereas our Junia was a Christian well known among the apostles and previously imprisoned for her faith, no hint exists of Junia Theodora's connection to Christianity—her anticipated death was referred to as coming into, or reaching, "the presence of the gods" (lines 11, 65, in items #1 and

⁴³ Winter, *Roman Wives*, 183–204.

⁴⁴ These texts are reproduced in Greek and translated into English in R. A. Kearsley, "Women in Public Life in the Roman East: Iunia Theodora, Claudia Metrodora and Phoebe, Benefactress of Paul," *TynBul* 50.2 (1999): 189–211. The texts and Kearsley's translation are reproduced in Winter, *Roman Wives*, 205–9. For a German translation and discussion, see Hans-Josef Klauck, "Junia Theodora und die Gemeinde von Korinth," in *Religion und Gesellschaft im frühen Christentum Neutestamentliche Studien*, WUNT 2/152 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 232–47. For a recent discussion with a fresh English translation, see Steven J. Friesen, "Junia Theodora of Corinth: Gendered Inequalities in the Early Empire," in *Corinth in Contrast: Studies in Inequality*, ed. Steven J. Friesen, Sara A. James, and Daniel N. Schowalter (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 203–26.

⁴⁵ Kearsley, "Women in Public Life," 191–92.

⁴⁶ Friesen, "Junia Theodora," 206–7.

#4). Second, whereas Junia in Romans 16:7 was linked to Andronicus as wife and husband in a way similar to Prisca and Aquila (Rom 16:3), the inscription for Junia Theodora names no husband, and she apparently had no son either, since her heir was Sextus Iulius, a Roman and the agent for the Lycians (lines 12, 54, in items #1 and #4). To these reasons, we may add a third and fourth. Whereas our Junia had been imprisoned for her faith, Junia Theodora had access to Roman authorities in Corinth and could connect the Lycians to them (lines 5–6, 53, in items #1 and #4). She was also able to leave the Lycian Federal Assembly a legacy in her will (line 7, in item #1). Whereas Junia's imprisonment incurred shame in Roman eyes,⁴⁷ Junia Theodora's patronage of Lycian travelers and citizens of the city Telmessos was apparently attributed to "her own love of fame and assiduousness" (line 78, in item #5)⁴⁸ and rewarded by the Federal Assembly of Lycia with a gold crown, a gilded statue with an inscription, and five minas of saffron (lines 63–69, in item #4).

If Junia Theodora is not to be identified with our Junia, she is still relevant to our discussion, possibly as a parallel case of a Jewish woman acquiring Roman citizenship and being called Junia in the first century. However, judging from the Lycians' description of her eventual death as mentioned above, she was unlikely to be a Jewish woman. Even though the name "Theodora" could be used by a Jewess, it was "not exclusively Jewish."⁴⁹ Still, like our Junia, she probably did not inherit her Roman name Junia from her father. Some regard the name of Junia Theodora's father Λεύκιος (lines 16–17, in #2) as the Greek rendition of the Latin name Lucius, but Ilan regards this hypothesis as unlikely because Greek names with the prefix Λευκ- predate Roman times, as some of the Jews with these names do. She lists six examples from the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD from Samaria, Egypt, Cyrenaica, Greece, and Asia.⁵⁰ Thus Junia Theodora's father Λεύκιος was more likely a Greek rather than a Roman person. The Greek name Theodora likewise suggests that she originally came from a Greek-speaking environment. If so, how did she acquire the Roman name Junia? In view of her close ties with the authorities in Corinth (a Roman colony) whether in the AD 40s or 50s, and since Claudius who issued the edict proscribing foreigners from adopting Roman gentile names reigned as Roman emperor in AD 41–54, it is impossible that she did not possess Roman citizenship by then. Indeed, items 1, 3, 4, 5 in the inscription (lines 13, 22, 63, 67, 72) specifically describe her as a Roman, and this would help explain why she bore the Roman name Junia. This being the case, we would like to know further how she obtained her Roman citizenship. No definitive answer is possible, but it is unlikely that, as a wealthy woman with a legacy to bequeath, she was an ex-slave of a Roman family belonging to the *gens* Junia, since her ex-patron would then

⁴⁷ If our Junia was formerly Joanna, the shame would be compounded. See note 42 above.

⁴⁸ For this translation, see Kearsley, "Women in Public Life," 208. Klauck's German translation is similar: "eigenen Ruhmlieben und Dienstfertigkeiten." Klauck, "Junia Theodora," 237, 240. However, Friesen interprets the word φιλοδοξία differently as "distinction." Friesen, "Junia Theodora," 226.

⁴⁹ Ilan, *Lexicon*, Part III, 427n1.

⁵⁰ Ilan, *Lexicon*, Part III, 325, esp. note 1.

have control of her wealth upon her death, seeing that she had neither husband nor children.⁵¹ It is more likely, then, that she was a free woman who derived her wealth from her father or by her own entrepreneurial ventures that involved Lycia. With wealth came influence, and she was then able to acquire Roman citizenship probably through the proconsul of Achaia in Corinth, the provincial capital. If she was politically active around AD 57, she might even have obtained her citizenship and Roman name Junia under Gallio (mentioned in Acts 18:12–17) who was the proconsul in AD 51–52 and whose name includes Junius.⁵²

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the hypothesis that “Joanna and Junia were one and the same person” has to face various challenges. First, the alleged rabbinic evidence for Jews called by both Hebrew and Roman names may not be valid for an earlier time while the evidence from the New Testament does not prove that a Latin name was chosen only for its similarity of sound to the Hebrew name. Second, the extant evidence shows that Greek versions of the names Joanna and John were used prior to AD 70 both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. Even the Latin name Iohana was in use prior to AD 70. Thus there was no evident need for Joanna to adopt the Latin name Junia. Third, after the emperor Claudius issued legislation prohibiting foreigners from using Roman gentile names, and imposing a death penalty for people pretending to be Roman citizens, it would be folly for Joanna to continue or to begin using the gentile name Junia unless she held Roman citizenship as a freed slave of a patron in the *gens* Junia or obtained citizenship under a Roman official belonging to this *gens*. Both of these paths to citizenship were unlikely in the case of Joanna. In addition, it is impossible to identify the Junia of Romans 16:7 with the Junia Theodora honored in an inscription found near Corinth. The latter was evidently non-Jewish, clearly identified as a Roman, and had connections with the authorities in Corinth. Thus Junia Theodora also cannot be cited as an example of a Jewish woman acquiring Roman citizenship and bearing the name Junia. For these reasons, it seems to me that the hypothesis of “Joanna-becoming-Junia” is very unlikely, if not untenable, in spite of its attractiveness and appeal as a historical reconstruction. Nor is it likely that Joanna was otherwise known as Junia from an early age. Nevertheless, even without identifying Joanna with Junia, each of the two characters can still be exemplary with their life stories of faithful discipleship at great cost and their invaluable contribution to the kingdom of God, no matter how we understand their respective relationship to Chuza and Andronicus.

⁵¹ See Grubbs, *Women and the Law*, 27; A. J. B. Sirks, “A Favour to Rich Freed Women (*libertinae*) in 51 A.D.: On Sue. *Cl.* 19 and the *Lex Papia*,” *RIDA* 27 (1980): 288–89.

⁵² The name was given in the Delphic inscription of Claudius as L. Junius Gallio, with L. being the usual abbreviation for Lucius. See Bruce W. Winter, “Gallio’s Ruling on the Legal Status of Early Christianity (Acts 18:14–15),” *TynBul* 50.2 (1999): 213. Gallio’s original name Lucius Annaeus Novatus was changed to Lucius Junius Annaeus Gallio after his adoption by the Roman senator Lucius Junius Gallio. See Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, vol. 2: *Paul and the Early Church* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2004), 1193; Peterson, *Acts*, 516.