

The Portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla in Acts: The Question of Sources

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This study argues in three stages that virtually everything the Book of Acts says about Aquila and Priscilla can be derived or inferred from materials in the Pauline letters or can plausibly be attributed to the author's own literary, theological, and/or apologetic agenda. The argument supports the following propositions: (a) that the author of Acts knew and used at least some of the Pauline letters, (b) that Acts reflects a distinctly anti-feminist bias, (c) that the author's agenda included an anti-Marcionite component, and (d) that Acts is to be dated in the second century and perhaps as late as the middle of the century.

Keywords: Acts, anti-feminism, Apollos, Aquila, Marcionites, Pauline letters, Priscilla (Prisca)

The author of Acts – hereafter, with no implications regarding actual identity, to be called simply 'Luke' – mentions Aquila and Priscilla three times: (1) In 18.1–3, Paul arrives in Corinth from Athens, takes up residence with the couple, and works with them in their trade as σκηνοποιοί.¹ Aquila is identified as a Jewish native of Pontus who, with his wife Priscilla, has recently moved from Italy to Corinth because the Emperor Claudius had banished all Jews from Rome. (2) In 18.18–19, Priscilla and Aquila leave Corinth with Paul, accompanying him as far as Ephesus, where they remain. (3) In 18.24–26, they correct what they regard as a defective version of the gospel being preached by Apollos in Ephesus.²

The same couple – known, however, as Aquila and Prisca³ – appears three times in the Pauline letters:⁴ (1) In 1 Cor 16.19b, Paul conveys greetings from Aquila

1 Usually translated as 'tentmakers' or 'leather workers', but see below under B.7 (p. 488) for a different possibility.

2 Other references to Aquila (but not Priscilla) in various versions of the 'Western' text (Acts 18.2, 7, 18, 21) are almost certainly later additions.

3 'Priscilla' is the diminutive form of 'Prisca' and clearly refers to the same person.

4 'Pauline letters' here and elsewhere includes the Pastorals, Ephesians, Colossians, and 2 Thessalonians, all of which I regard as pseudonymous.

and Prisca⁵ and ‘the church in their house’. (2) In Rom 16.3–5a, Paul asks his readers to greet Prisca⁶ and Aquila and ‘the church in their house’, identifying the couple as ‘fellow workers in Christ Jesus who risked their necks for [his] life’ and noting that ‘not only [he] but also the churches of the Gentiles give thanks for [or “to”] them’. (3) In 2 Tim 4.19a, the pseudonymous ‘Paul’ asks ‘Timothy’ to greet Prisca and Aquila. The consistent linking of the two names and the references to ‘the church in their house’ indicate that Aquila and Prisca are a married couple.⁷

It is obvious that Paul’s references to Aquila and Prisca are based on his own acquaintance with them. There is no evidence, however, that Luke knew Aquila and Priscilla, and his references to them are presumably based on source material of some type. Until recently, many if not most scholars assumed that Acts was written in the first century,⁸ and almost all have been persuaded that its author did not know – or at least did not use as sources – any of the Pauline letters.⁹ Luke must, therefore, have had access to other source material that included information about Aquila and his wife. Thus, Gerd Lüdemann maintains that here, as elsewhere, Luke drew on ‘traditions’ – written and/or oral and, in some cases, reflecting details of the letters – that were accessible in the Pauline mission fields.¹⁰ Lüdemann distinguishes such traditional material from Lukan redaction on the basis of ‘concrete details, which in themselves show no special Lucan tendency’.¹¹ With this as his criterion, he concludes that most of what Luke says about Aquila and Priscilla ‘seems to reflect tradition’ (i.e., source material other than the Pauline letters).¹²

- 5 Many witnesses (including C and D) have ‘Priscilla’, but the preferred reading is ‘Prisca’; see, e.g., Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/United Bible Societies, 2d ed. 1994) 503. A omits the entire clause, ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς ἐν κυρίῳ πολλὰ Ἀκύλας καὶ Πρίσκα.
- 6 Some witnesses have ‘Priscilla’, but the preferred reading is ‘Prisca’; see, e.g., Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 475.
- 7 Acts 18.2 and 1 Cor 16.19b name Aquila first, but Priscilla or Prisca appears first in Acts 18.18, 26; Rom 16.3, and 2 Tim 4.19a. Except when referring specifically to one of the latter four passages, however, I shall name Aquila first because (a) he appears first both in the earliest reference in Acts and in what is almost certainly the earliest reference in the letters and (b) alphabetical order places him first.
- 8 For discussion, see, e.g., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998) 51–5.
- 9 More than a generation ago, Werner Georg Kümmel (*Introduction to the New Testament* [Nashville/New York: Abingdon, rev. ed. 1975] 186) spoke of this as the ‘nearly universal judgment’ of contemporary NT scholarship.
- 10 Gerd Lüdemann assisted by Tom Hall, *The Acts of the Apostles: What Really Happened in the Earliest Days of the Church* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 2005) 18; see also, e.g., C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1994–98) 2.xxx.
- 11 Lüdemann, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 392; cf. Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 2.858.
- 12 Lüdemann, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 392, cf. 235, 248; cf. Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles* 2.858.

Clearly, Luke *might* have used sources such as Lüdemann describes, but, if so, these sources no longer exist and anything that might be said regarding their nature, content, provenance, or accessibility is purely hypothetical and speculative. Increasingly, however, scholars are moving to a second-century date for Acts¹³ – a time when some if not all of the Pauline letters would already have been written. Moreover, we still have these letters in something at least approximating their original form and can therefore compare their content with that of Acts. Finally, there is now a growing consensus that Luke knew at least some of the letters and used them as sources in composing his narrative of Christian origins.¹⁴ Thus, it is now reasonable to assume, simply on *a priori* grounds, that the letters likely served as sources for at least *some* of the details in Luke's portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla. If, however, *virtually everything* Luke says about the couple either could be derived or inferred from the letters or could plausibly be attributed to Luke's own agenda, there would be no need for an appeal to otherwise unknown and purely hypothetical sources as the basis for his references to Aquila and Priscilla. Moreover, this would render suspect any attempt to use these references as an argument for the existence of such sources.

The thesis of the present study is that virtually everything Luke says about Aquila and Priscilla *can* in fact be either (a) derived or inferred from materials in the Pauline letters or (b) plausibly attributed to Luke's own literary, theological, and/or apologetic agenda. The argument supporting this thesis will proceed in three stages: First, I shall note a series of precise agreements between Luke's references to Aquila and Priscilla and the Pauline references to Aquila and Prisca – agreements that, viewed cumulatively, would appear to constitute strong *prime facie* evidence that Luke not only knew the references in the letters but also used them as a (or perhaps even *the*) primary source for his own portrayal of Aquila and

13 For arguments and bibliography, see Richard I. Pervo, *Redating Acts: Between the Evangelists and the Apologists* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 2006); cf. also, e.g., Joseph B. Tyson, *Marcion and Luke-Acts: A Defining Struggle* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 2006) 1–23. Both Pervo and Tyson date Acts c. 100–150 CE, but Pervo (p. 343) regards c. 110–120 or even c. 115 as most likely, while Tyson (p. 78) prefers c. 120–125. In my judgment, however, a date as late as c. 140–150 CE can by no means be ruled out; see, e.g., John T. Townsend, 'The Date of Luke-Acts', *Luke-Acts: New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature* (ed. Charles H. Talbert; New York: Crossroad, 1984) 47–62, esp. 58: 'whatever evidence exists [regarding the date of Luke-Acts] is compatible with a date that approaches the middle of the second century'. On the reception of Acts in the period before Irenaeus, see Andrew Gregory, *The Reception of Luke and Acts in the Period before Irenaeus: Looking for Luke in the Second Century* (WUNT 2/169; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 299–351. Gregory states (p. 353), 'I have found no external evidence to demonstrate that *Luke* was used before the middle of the second century, and no evidence to prove the use of *Acts* until somewhat later.'

14 For a detailed presentation of the evidence, with bibliographical references, see Pervo, *Redating Acts*, 51–147.

Priscilla. Second, I shall identify a number of additional details in Luke's portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla that could reasonably be inferred from materials in the letters. Third, and finally, I shall discuss details in Luke's portrayal of the couple that appear to derive from his own literary, theological, and/or apologetic agenda.

A. Precise Agreements between the Lukan and Pauline Portrayals

Five points of precise agreement between Luke's portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla and the Pauline portrayal of Aquila and Prisca are immediately evident, and a sixth may well have been intended by Luke.

1. Both in the best witnesses to Acts and in the letters, neither Aquila nor Priscilla/Prisca is ever mentioned apart from the other. This might mean, of course, that the two were so closely associated in the minds of early Christians that reference to one and not the other would have been unthinkable. It might mean, however, that Luke – either consciously or unconsciously – simply followed the example of the letters in always naming the two together. In either case, this point must be noted because it may be part of a larger pattern of agreement that becomes evident only when other such points are brought into the picture.

2. Both in the best witnesses to Acts and in the letters, Aquila and Priscilla/Prisca are mentioned by name exactly three times.¹⁵ There is no apparent reason why Luke would follow the letters at this point, and this agreement may therefore be purely coincidental. Again, however, it may be part of a larger pattern.

3. Both in Acts and in the letters, Aquila and Priscilla/Prisca are located earlier in Corinth and later in Ephesus. Acts locates them in Corinth,¹⁶ reports their move to Ephesus,¹⁷ and narrates something of their activity there.¹⁸ The letters are less explicit, but they clearly imply the same geographical schema. In 1 Cor 16.19b, Paul conveys greetings to the Corinthians from the couple, thereby indicating that they are known in Corinth and strongly implying their previous residence there. In the same verse, Paul sends greetings from 'the churches of Asia', and, in v. 8, he indicates that he himself is now in Ephesus, which was the major city in the Roman province of Asia. This almost certainly means that Aquila and Prisca were in Ephesus when Paul wrote the final verses of 1 Corinthians – in other words, that they had moved from Corinth to Ephesus. Finally, in 2 Tim 4.19a, 'Paul' asks 'Timothy' to greet Prisca and Aquila, and 'Timothy' is clearly to be located, fictively, in Ephesus.¹⁹ This agreement between the letters and Acts might reflect

15 Acts 18.2, 18, 26b; 1 Cor 16.19b; Rom 16.3; 2 Tim 4.19a.

16 Acts 18.1–3 (having moved there from Rome).

17 Acts 18.18–19.

18 Acts 18.24–26.

19 2 Tim 1.15–18; 4.12; cf. also 1 Tim 1.3.

common knowledge regarding the couple's successive places of residence. Luke might, however, simply have followed the geographical schema implied in the letters.

4. Both in the best witnesses to Acts and in the letters, Aquila is named first in one reference²⁰ and Priscilla/Prisca in two.²¹ As Jerome Murphy-O'Connor notes, the latter sequence 'is most unusual' and indicates that the wife 'was more important than her husband' – in terms either of 'social status or independent wealth' or of prominence in the life of the Church.²² It is unclear why either Acts or the letters would independently vary the order of precedence, but the fact that *both do so and by precisely the same ratio* suggests that Luke, knowing the relevant passages in the letters, simply followed the same numerical pattern of varying precedence.

5. Both in Acts and in the letters, Aquila is named first when the locale in mind is Corinth and Priscilla/Prisca first when the locale is elsewhere. Acts names *Aquila* first when the couple is in Corinth,²³ and Paul mentions *Aquila* first when he sends greetings to Corinth.²⁴ Acts names *Priscilla* first, however, when the couple is in transit from Corinth to Ephesus²⁵ and when they are in Ephesus;²⁶ similarly, Paul mentions *Prisca* first when the couple is in Rome,²⁷ and 'Paul' names *Prisca* first when they are fictively in Ephesus.²⁸ It is possible (a) that Aquila played the leading role in Corinth but Priscilla/Prisca assumed this role later, (b) that the couple was therefore actually known as 'Aquila and Priscilla/Prisca' in Corinth and as 'Priscilla/Prisca and Aquila' elsewhere, and (c) that Luke was independently aware of the geographical transposition of primacy and chose to reflect it by the order in which he listed the names. In light of other points of agreement between Acts and the letters, however, it appears more likely that Luke simply knew the relevant passages in the letters and followed not only their numerical but also their geographical pattern of varying primacy.

20 Acts 18.2; 1 Cor 16.19b.

21 Acts 18.18, 26b; Rom 16.3; 2 Tim 4.19a. The 'Western' text has Aquila first in Acts 18.26, but, as Metzger (*Textual Commentary*, 413–14) notes, '[t]he unusual order, the wife before the husband, must be accepted as original, for there was always a tendency among scribes to change the unusual to the usual'.

22 Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, 'Prisca and Aquila', *Bible Review* 8 (1992) 40–51, 62, here 40 and 42.

23 Acts 18.1–3.

24 1 Cor 16.19b.

25 Acts 18.18.

26 Acts 18.26b.

27 Rom 16.3. See below p. 484 for the possibility that the location might be Ephesus rather than Rome.

28 2 Tim 4.19a.

6. Acts 18.2 states that Aquila and Priscilla resided in Rome before moving to Corinth. Romans 16.3–5a appears also to indicate the presence of Prisca and Aquila in Rome. Thus, a sixth point of agreement between Acts and the letters could be the residence of the couple in Rome. Two potential problems, however, make this questionable.

The first is that Romans 16 may originally have been intended for some destination other than Rome – probably Ephesus.²⁹ If so, then vv. 3–5a would confirm the presence of Prisca and Aquila in Ephesus rather than in Rome. It is clear, however, that chap. 16 was a part of Romans at least as early as c. 200 CE and perhaps considerably earlier.³⁰ Thus, whatever its original destination, chap. 16 may well have been known by Luke as a part of Romans and therefore viewed by him as indicating the presence of Prisca and Aquila in Rome when the letter was written.³¹

The second potential problem is that Romans was almost certainly written *later* than 1 Corinthians and thus places Prisca and Aquila in Rome *after* they had been in Corinth and Ephesus, not *before* as indicated in Acts. Luke may well have assumed, however, that Romans was written *earlier* than 1 Corinthians. Most of the early witnesses, including all of the best ones,³² place Romans first – that is, *before* the Corinthian correspondence – among the Pauline letters. Moreover, David Trobisch and Murphy-O'Connor have independently argued that the very earliest collection of Pauline letters – consisting of Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Galatians – placed Romans first.³³ With Romans as the first letter in the collection, it is precisely the *first* Pauline reference to Prisca and Aquila (Rom 16.3–5a) that locates them in Rome. If Luke was working with such a collection, he might easily have assumed that the couple resided in Rome *before* moving to Corinth and constructed his narrative accordingly. If so, then Luke clearly intended his narrative to agree with the letters at this point.

29 For discussion and the conclusion that the chapter was an original part of Romans, see, e.g., Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (ed. Eldon Jay Epp; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007) 8–9.

30 It is included in P⁴⁶ (typically dated c. 200 CE, but cf. Philip W. Comfort and David P. Barrett, eds., *The Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2001) 204–7, where it is placed near the middle of the second century.

31 On the date of Acts, see n. 13 above.

32 Not only the earliest extant MS, P⁴⁶, but also B (4th cent.), \aleph (4th cent.), A (5th cent.), C (5th cent.), and D (6th cent.); on the date of P⁴⁶, see n. 30 above. For discussion of the sequence of the letters in early collections, see, e.g., Eugene Harrison Lovering, Jr., 'The Collection, Redaction, and Early Circulation of the Corpus Paulinum' (Ph.D. diss., Southern Methodist University, 1988) 259–74; David Trobisch, *Paul's Letter Collection: Tracing the Origins* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) 18–22; and David Trobisch, *The First Edition of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University, 2000) 21–38.

33 Trobisch, *Paul's Letter Collection*, 54; Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul the Letter-Writer: His World, His Options, His Skills* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1995) 120–30.

Conclusion. Considered separately, each of the above points might appear coincidental or inconsequential or both. Viewed cumulatively, however, they form a remarkable pattern of precise agreements between the Lukan and Pauline portrayals of the couple in question – even in matters not involving historicity. In my judgment, such a pattern can hardly be coincidental and would appear, therefore, to indicate that Luke knew and was influenced by the Pauline references to Aquila and Prisca. Indeed, in the absence of evidence for other source material used by Luke, this would appear to constitute rather strong *prime facie* evidence that the Pauline references served as a (or perhaps even the) *primary* source for his own portrayal of the couple.

B. Features in the Lukan Portrayal that could Reasonably be Inferred from Materials in the Letters

In addition to the precise points of agreement just noted, there are six – or perhaps seven – other features of Luke’s portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla that could reasonably be inferred from materials in the Pauline letters.

1. The location of Paul in Corinth at the same time Aquila and Priscilla were there (Acts 18.1–3) could reasonably be inferred from materials in 1 Corinthians and Romans. 1 Corinthians 16.19b strongly implies that Aquila and Prisca resided in Corinth before moving to Ephesus,³⁴ the Corinthian correspondence as a whole indicates that Paul himself was in Corinth more than once,³⁵ and 1 Cor 16.19b and Rom 16.3–4 demonstrate that Paul was well acquainted with Aquila and Prisca. Although the letters nowhere explicitly state that the three were in Corinth at the same time, they do suggest that this was likely. Thus, Luke may simply have assumed it to have been the case and constructed his narrative accordingly.

2. The portrayal of Paul as having ‘resided’ (ἔμεινεν) with Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth (Acts 18.3a) could reasonably be inferred from 1 Cor 16.19b and/or Rom 16.3–5a, both of which refer to the ‘church’ in the couple’s home. To be sure, Acts does not mention a church in their home in Corinth. Given the fact that a church met in their home both in Ephesus and in Rome,³⁶ however, it would be natural to assume that this was the case also in Corinth – particularly if Luke thought the couple’s residence in Corinth came between that in Rome and in Ephesus.³⁷ Further, it would be reasonable to suppose that Paul’s Corinthian converts would

³⁴ See above under A.3 (p. 482).

³⁵ E.g., 1 Cor 1.14–16; 2.15; 3.1–10; 4.14–15; 9.1–2; 15.1–3; 16.3–7; 2 Cor 1.15–2.1; 11.7–9; 12.14, 20–21; 13.1–2, 10.

³⁶ 1 Cor 16.19b; Rom 16.5a (assuming Romans 16 to be an original part of Paul’s Roman letter).

³⁷ See above under A.6 (p. 484).

meet in the home where he himself was residing.³⁸ Thus, on the basis of Paul's references to 'the church in their house', Luke may simply have assumed that Paul resided (ἔμενεν) in the home of Aquila and Priscilla while he was in Corinth and made this assumption explicit in his narrative.³⁹

3. The portrayal of Paul as 'working' (ἠργάζετο) with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18.3) could reasonably be inferred from 1 Cor 4.12a and Rom 16.3. In 1 Cor 4.12a, using the same verb that appears in Acts 18.3, Paul speaks of 'laboring, working with our own hands' (κοπιῶμεν ἐργαζόμενοι ταῖς ἰδίαις χερσίν),⁴⁰ and the plural forms suggest that he engaged in such labor in collaboration with one or more other people. The identification of Aquila and Priscilla as those with whom he worked in Corinth⁴¹ may have been suggested by Rom 16.3, where Paul refers to Prisca and Aquila as his 'fellow workers' (συνεργοί). To be sure, Paul adds 'in Christ Jesus' (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), thereby apparently indicating that he has in mind religious activity, not manual labor as in Acts.⁴² Nevertheless, Paul's reference – in the plural – to working with his hands (1 Cor 4.12a) and to Prisca and Aquila as his 'fellow workers' (Rom 16.3) may have prompted Luke to assume that Paul 'was working' (ἠργάζετο) with the couple in Corinth.⁴³

4. The portrayal of Priscilla and Aquila as leaving Corinth with Paul and accompanying him to Ephesus, where they remain while he goes on to Caesarea (Acts 18.18–21), could reasonably be inferred from 1 Cor 16.19b. Here, as noted above, Paul suggests the couple's residence earlier in Corinth and later in Ephesus. Acts 18.18–21 may well be simply Luke's narrative device to get them from Corinth to Ephesus, where they will encounter Apollos.

5. Aquila and Priscilla disappear completely from Luke's narrative following their correction of Apollos's defective version of the gospel (Acts 18.24–26), which, therefore, appears to be the real point of their inclusion at all.⁴⁴ Thus, Luke's por-

38 Several 'Western' witnesses add 'with whom also I am lodging' after 'Aquila and Prisca' in 1 Cor 16.19b, thus explicitly identifying their home (in Ephesus) both as the meeting place for the church and as Paul's place of abode. If Paul could be presumed to reside in the house where the church met in Ephesus, this could reasonably be supposed to have been the case earlier in Corinth.

39 Acts 18.7 could indicate either (a) that Paul subsequently moved from the home of Aquila and Priscilla to that of Titius Justus or (b) that he moved his preaching activity from the synagogue (v. 4) to the latter's home (which was adjacent to the synagogue) but maintained his residence in the home of Aquila and Priscilla. The latter is perhaps implied by the report that they accompanied him when he left Corinth (v. 18).

40 See also 1 Cor 9.6 and 1 Thess 2.9.

41 Assuming that παρ' αὐτοῖς goes with both ἔμενεν and ἠργάζετο.

42 Note 1 Thess 3.2; 2 Cor 8.23; Phil 2.25; 4.3; Phlm 1, 24; Rom 16.9, 21, where Paul refers to others as his 'fellow workers' (συνεργοί).

43 Note the same root (ἐργ-) in all three passages. Some witnesses, including ℵ* (4th cent.), read ἠργάζοντο ('they were working') rather than ἠργάζετο ('he was working') in Acts 18.3.

44 On this, see C 3 and 4 below (pp. 492–3).

trayal of Apollos (Acts 18.24–19.1a) is relevant for the present study. A number of the details in this portrayal could reasonably be inferred from materials in the Pauline letters: (1) In 1 Corinthians, Paul portrays Apollos as an important figure in the church, associating him with both Ephesus and Corinth.⁴⁵ Acts 18.24–19.1a has essentially the same picture of Apollos. (2) In 1 Cor 1.17b; 2.1–5, Paul notes his own deficiencies as an orator, implicitly contrasting himself with other preachers who presumably are more gifted.⁴⁶ Acts 18.24–25, 28, in turn, characterizes Apollos as precisely the kind of eloquent speaker implied in Paul's own disavowal. (3) In 1 Corinthians, Paul suggests some degree of rivalry and even tension between himself and Apollos,⁴⁷ noting that he has no control over the latter's activity⁴⁸ and intimating that the two are to some extent competitors for leadership in the church.⁴⁹ Indeed, a good case can be made that 'the conflict in Corinth was at its core a debate between Paul and the Apollos party'.⁵⁰ All of this may be reflected in Acts 18.24–26, which states that Apollos's initially defective version of the gospel was corrected, and that it was corrected precisely by associates of Paul.⁵¹ (4) In Titus 3.13, however, Apollos is pictured quite positively as a trusted associate of Paul.

Such intimations of initial tension followed by close association between Apollos and Paul may well have set the stage for Luke's creation of a narrative in which Apollos preached a defective version of the gospel, was corrected by Paul's associates, and became a respected leader in the Christian movement.⁵²

6. The identification of Priscilla and Aquila as those who corrected Apollos's defective version of the gospel and thus brought him into the circle of Pauline Christianity could reasonably be inferred from various materials in the Pauline letters. Apollos, Aquila, and Prisca are the only people Paul mentions by name as residing with him in Ephesus when he wrote 1 Corinthians.⁵³ Thus, being in Ephesus with Apollos, the couple would have been well situated to correct his defective version of the gospel. Furthermore, Paul suggests that they would have

45 1 Cor 1.12; 3.4–8, 22; 4.6; 16.12 (cf. v. 8).

46 See the entire passage, 1 Cor 1.17–2.5; see also 2 Cor 10.10.

47 1 Cor 1.12; 3.4–6, 22; 4.6; 16.12.

48 1 Cor 16.12.

49 E.g., 1 Cor 3.6, 10; 4.15.

50 Michael Wolter, 'Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger (Act 18 24–19 7)', *ZNW* 78 (1987) 49–73, here 66 (translation mine); see references in n. 79. Wolter acknowledges (p. 72) 'that Luke was informed about the conflict in Corinth' but denies (p. 72 n. 101) that this information came from 1 Corinthians.

51 Luke's awkward contrasting of 'accurately' (ἀκριβῶς) in 18.25 and 'more accurately' (ἀκριβέστερον) in 18.26 may reflect Paul's own ambivalence regarding Apollos.

52 Wolter ('Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger') argues that Luke's goal in Acts 18.24–9.7 is 'to express Pauline dominance over Apollos' (p. 71).

53 1 Cor 16.8, 12, 19b. 'Chloe's people' (1.11) and Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (16.16–17) were probably residents of Corinth who merely visited Paul in Ephesus.

been well qualified for such a task. The Ephesian and Roman churches meet for worship in their home,⁵⁴ and the very high – indeed, apparently unique – esteem in which Paul holds the couple is clear in Rom 16.3–4, where he praises them as ‘my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life, to [or “for”] whom not only I but also all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks’.⁵⁵ Thus, the question would almost inevitably pose itself to Luke: ‘Who better than this couple to correct the erroneous views of Apollos?’

7. Acts 18.3 indicates that Paul was, by trade, a σκηνοποιός – usually translated as ‘tentmaker’ or ‘leather worker’. The word, however, is ‘a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament’ and ‘is also hardly ever used in older or contemporary writings’. Thus, ‘its meaning is obscure’.⁵⁶ According to Pollux, though, it was used in Old Comedy to signify ‘a maker of stage properties’ or even ‘a stagehand’ (who moved stage properties).⁵⁷ Acts portrays Paul as working in urban, not rural, areas, and ‘one is left with the strong probability that Luke’s publics in [such] areas, where theatrical productions were in abundance, would [probably] think of σκηνοποιός in ref[erence] to matters theatrical’.⁵⁸ Thus, the intended meaning of σκηνοποιός in Acts 18.3 may well be ‘maker of stage properties’ or ‘stagehand’, and, if so, then Luke is linking Paul professionally to the theater.

It is at least possible, moreover, that this was suggested by Paul’s own statement in 1 Cor 4.9: δοκῶ γάρ, ὁ θεὸς ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀποστόλους ἐσχάτους ἀπέδειξεν ὡς ἐπιθανατίους, ὅτι θέατρον ἐγενήθημεν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις. Clearly, Paul’s imagery here is ‘theatrical’ in nature: he states that he has become a θέατρον with ‘the world and angels and humans’ as his audience. Θέατρον can refer either to *a place* for public entertainment – e.g., dramatic performances, gladiatorial contests, or public execution of condemned criminals – or to *the ‘spectacle’ that one sees* in such a place.⁵⁹ Paul, of course, here uses the word in the latter sense. Moreover, he most likely has in mind neither dramatic performances nor gladiatorial contests but rather the public execution of convicted criminals.⁶⁰ All three, however, were closely associated in the popular mind as forms of public entertainment and, for this reason, each could be labeled as θέατρον.⁶¹ In addition, the distinction between θέατρον as ‘what is seen’ and θέατρον

54 1 Cor 16.19; Rom 16.5a.

55 In the extant letters, he praises no one else so highly.

56 H. Szesnat, ‘What Did the σκηνοποιός Paul Produce?’, *Neot* 27 (1993) 391–402, here 394.

57. Pollux, *Onom.* 7.189; see, e.g., Szesnat, ‘What Did the σκηνοποιός Paul Produce?’, 394 n. 2; W. Michaelis, ‘σκηνοποιός’, *TDNT* 7.393–4, 393; and BAGD 928–29 and the bibliography cited there.

58 BAGD 929.

59 BAGD 446.

60 V. Henry T. Nguyen, ‘The Identification of Paul’s Spectacle of Death Metaphor in 1 Corinthians 4.9’, *NTS* 53 (2007) 489–501.

61 Θέατρον is related to θεάομαι, which means ‘to look at’, ‘to see’, ‘to behold’.

as ‘where it is seen’ would be somewhat fluid, given the fact that the same word was used for both. In any case, 1 Cor 4.9 indicates that Paul was familiar with the *θέατρον*. Moreover, his reference to himself *as a θέατρον* might suggest that he was somehow professionally associated with the *θέατρον*. Hence perhaps the theatrical term *σκηνοποιός* to designate his trade in Acts 18.3.

In conclusion, whether considered individually or cumulatively, these seven additional features of Luke’s portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla by no means prove that the Pauline letters served as a source for this portrayal. They do, however, indicate that a great deal of what Luke says about the couple could reasonably be inferred from materials in the letters. Thus, coupled with the points of precise agreement discussed earlier, they appear to buttress the case for viewing the letters as a (or even *the*) primary source for Luke’s portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla.

C. Details in the Lukan Portrayal that Appear to Derive from Luke’s Own Agenda

Certain details in Luke’s portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla cannot easily be traced, either directly or indirectly, to materials in the Pauline letters. In my judgment, however, these details are best accounted for in terms of Luke’s own literary, theological, and/or apologetic agenda.

1. Although the best manuscripts of the Pauline letters always refer to Aquila’s wife as ‘Prisca’, Luke consistently employs the diminutive form ‘Priscilla’, which is often viewed as ‘a term of endearment or familiarity’.⁶² It is clear that Paul was well acquainted with the woman, however, while Luke presumably was not. It is difficult to understand, therefore, why Luke would change Paul’s ‘Prisca’ to ‘Priscilla’ if the latter is in fact ‘a term of endearment or familiarity’.⁶³ Thus, the difference in nomenclature might appear to argue against Luke’s use of the letters at this point. In my judgment, however, there is a plausible reason why Luke would change ‘Prisca’ to ‘Priscilla’.

While the diminutive ‘may express affection, familiarity, [or] daintiness,’ it can also signify ‘pity or contempt’.⁶⁴ Thus, Murphy-O’Connor suggests that Luke’s use

62 F. Scott Spencer, ‘Women of “the Cloth” in Acts: Sewing the Word’, *A Feminist Companion to the Acts of the Apostles* (ed. Amy-Jill Levine with Marianne Blickenstaff; Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2004) 134–54, here 150 n. 77.

63 Although a number of MSS change ‘Prisca’ to ‘Priscilla’ in the letters (see nn. 5 and 6 above), the reverse never occurs, at least to my knowledge, in Acts.

64 Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (rev. Gordon M. Messing; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1956) 235. Donald C. Swanson (‘Diminutives in the Greek New Testament’, *JBL* 77 [1958] 134–51, here 146) lists ‘deteriorative’ as one category of diminutives and cites *γυναικάριον* (‘silly woman’) as an example. The last Roman emperor to rule from Rome, Romulus Augustus, was often mockingly referred to as ‘Romulus Augustulus’.

of 'Priscilla' 'might be interpreted as a put-down'.⁶⁵ It is my suggestion, therefore, that Luke changed 'Prisca' to 'Priscilla' precisely as a way of belittling or disparaging the woman in question and thus downplaying her role as a leader in the church.

This suggestion is supported by two striking indications in Acts 18.2 that Luke intends to subordinate Priscilla to Aquila: (1) the verse says that Paul 'found' *Aquila*, not *both Aquila and Priscilla*; and (2) it provides certain biographical details regarding Aquila – he is a Jew, a native of Pontus, and has recently moved from Rome to Corinth – but says of Priscilla *only* that she is 'his wife'. Clearly, Aquila is the more important of the two in Acts 18.2. The letters, however, make no distinction in their treatment of Aquila and Prisca, always speaking of the couple as a pair. Thus, the name change from 'Prisca' to 'Priscilla', together with the imbalance in the treatment of Aquila and Priscilla in Acts 18.2, constitutes a significant downplaying of the role of Priscilla in the Book of Acts.⁶⁶

This is consistent with the treatment of women elsewhere in Acts.⁶⁷ Apart from Priscilla and Aquila, the only Christian married couple mentioned in Acts is Ananias and Sapphira (5.1–10), and they are portrayed in a highly negative light.⁶⁸ Moreover, while other individual women are mentioned in Acts, none except Priscilla is portrayed as a leader in the church.⁶⁹ Finally, although Acts refers to

65 Murphy-O'Connor, 'Prisca and Aquila', 40.

66 This appears to be an early stage in a trajectory that finds fuller expression in the 'Western' text of the chapter; see, e.g., James Hardy Ropes, *The Text of Acts: The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I: *The Acts of the Apostles*, Vol. 3 (ed. F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake; London: Macmillan, 1926) 161–79; and Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 408–9, 410, 412, 465, 413–14. Moreover, the treatment of Priscilla appears to be but one among other indications of 'the anti-feminist tendencies of the "Western" text in Acts' (Ben Witherington, 'The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the "Western" Text in Acts', *JBL* 103 [1984] 82–4; cf. Richard I. Pervo, 'Social and Religious Aspects of the Western Text', *The Living Text: Essays in Honor of Ernest W. Saunders* (ed. Dennis E. Groh and Robert Jewett; Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985) 229–41, here 235–40; and Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University, 3d ed. 1992) 295–6.

67 On the treatment of women in Acts, see Amy-Jill Levine with Marianne Blickenstaff, ed., *A Feminist Companion to the Acts of the Apostles* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 2004). On Luke's tendency to diminish the role of women, see, e.g., Mary Rose D'Angelo, 'Women in Luke-Acts: A Redactional View', *JBL* 109 (1990) 441–61; Turid Karlsen Seim, *The Double Message: Patterns of Gender in Luke-Acts* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1994); and Ivoni Richter Reimer, *Women in the Acts of the Apostles: A Feminist Liberation Perspective* (trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995).

68 This was pointed out to me by my colleague Rúben R. Dupertuis.

69 Mary the mother of Jesus (1.14), Tabitha or Dorcas (9.36–41), Mary the mother of John Mark (12.12), a maid named Rhoda (12.13–15), the unnamed mother of Timothy (16.1), Lydia (16.14–15, 40), a slave girl in Philippi (16.16–18), and a woman in Athens named Damaris (17.34). Some of these women – Mary the mother of John Mark, Rhoda, Tabitha, and Lydia – play a significant

unnamed women who are Christians,⁷⁰ the overwhelming emphasis is on men. Not only are the leading characters all men⁷¹ but it is ‘men’ (ἄνδρες), not ‘people’ (ἄνθρωποι), who are repeatedly addressed in the speeches.⁷²

In short, Luke portrays the early Christian movement as almost completely dominated by men. The only possible exception is Priscilla. As F. Scott Spencer notes, her encounter with Apollos ‘is as close as we get in Acts to a woman proclaiming the word to a man’. Even here, however, ‘the scene is normalized somewhat by the presence of her husband’.⁷³ Indeed, one can only wonder why Priscilla finds her way into the narrative at all. My suggestion is that, at least in part, she is included because the Pauline letters consistently speak jointly of Aquila and Prisca but that she is, at the same time, belittled by having her name changed to the diminutive form and being subordinated to Aquila.⁷⁴ Thus, the name change from ‘Prisca’ to ‘Priscilla’ appears to reflect an item in Luke’s own theological/apologetic agenda.

2. A second detail in Luke’s portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla that appears to derive from his own agenda is the couple’s move from Italy to Corinth because of the Emperor Claudius’s edict expelling all Jews from Rome (Acts 18.2). Luke probably read Rom 16.3–5a as indicating that the pair lived in Rome *prior* to their residence in Corinth.⁷⁵ What he needs for the sake of his narrative, therefore, is simply a literary device to get them from Rome to Corinth, where they can be associated with Paul. He has earlier dealt with a somewhat analogous situation by using the Emperor Augustus’s census decree to get Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus (Luke 2.1–4). Now, his identification of Aquila as a ‘Jew’ enables him to use the edict of Claudius to get Aquila and Priscilla from Rome to Corinth (Acts 18.2). This detail of the narrative, therefore, reflects Luke’s own literary agenda, which, in turn, is in the service of his theological/apologetic agenda.⁷⁶

role in the narrative, but none is portrayed as a leader in the church. Indeed, J. Albert Harrill (‘The Dramatic Function of the Running Slave Rhoda [Acts 12.13–16]: A Piece of Greco-Roman Comedy’, *NTS* 46 [2000] 150–57), following an earlier suggestion by Richard I. Pervo (*Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987] 62–3), views the Rhoda story as ‘a highly conventionalized sequence of action elaborated not to uplift slaves [or women] but to entertain with humour that dishonours them’ (p. 151).

70 Acts 2.17–18; 5.14; 6.1; 8.1, 12; 9.1; 17.4, 12; 21.5, 9; 22.4.

71 E.g., all of the ‘Apostles’ and, specifically, Peter, John, and James; all of the ‘Seven’ and, specifically, Stephen and Philip; and others, including Ananias, Barnabas, James, and especially Paul.

72 E.g., Acts 1.16; 2.14, 22, 29; 3.12; 7.1; 13.16, 26; 15.13; 17.22; 22.1.

73 Spencer, ‘Women of “the Cloth” in Acts’, 152.

74 Another possible reason for her inclusion is discussed below under numbers 3 and 4.

75 See above A6 (p. 484).

76 As indicated below pp. 492–4 (C3 and 4), it apparently was important to Luke to have Aquila (and Priscilla) reside at one time in Rome.

3 and 4. Two remaining details in Luke's portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla must be considered together because, in my judgment, they stem from Luke's own theological/apologetic agenda and are interrelated. The first is the apparently irrelevant identification of Aquila in Acts 18.2 as a Jew⁷⁷ and a native of Pontus. The second is the encounter of Priscilla and Aquila with Apollos, in which they correct his defective understanding of the gospel (Acts 18.24–26).⁷⁸

Joseph B. Tyson – following the lead of John Knox – has recently argued that Acts was intended in part as a response to the challenge posed by Marcionite Christianity.⁷⁹ I find this argument persuasive and now propose to extend it by suggesting that Luke's portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla is a part of his anti-Marcionite agenda.⁸⁰

With the exception of Barnabas,⁸¹ Aquila and Priscilla are the only associates of Paul who play any independent role in the Book of Acts. They are mentioned only in chap. 18, but they appear three times in this chapter, and each of the three appearances establishes one or more quite specific details in the portrayal of the couple. The first (18.2–3) identifies Aquila as a Jew from Pontus, introduces Priscilla as his wife, gets the couple from Rome to Corinth, and associates them

77 Paul's statement that 'all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks to' (or 'for') Prisca and Aquila' (Rom 16.4) might suggest that they were Gentiles.

78 A few witnesses, including the original of \aleph , read 'Apelles' rather than 'Apollos' at Acts 18.24 and 19.1, and G. D. Kilpatrick ('Apollos – Apelles', *JBL* 89 [1970] 77) suggests that this may be the original reading. If so, the reference might be to the 'Apelles' mentioned by Paul in Rom 16.10 as 'approved ($\delta\acute{o}\kappa\iota\mu\omicron\varsigma$) in Christ'. The adjective suggests approval as a result of testing, which might imply some initial question regarding the status of Apelles. This, in turn, might give rise to a narrative in which a change in status (i.e., from 'heretical' to 'orthodox') is reported (Acts 18.24–26). Perhaps more intriguing, however, is the fact that 'Apelles' was the name of a second-century follower of Marcion, who disagreed with the latter on some points of theology and went to Alexandria, the reported birthplace of Apollos (or Apelles) in Acts 18.24 (see Eusebius *Hist. Eccl.* V.xiii.2, 5–9 and especially Tertullian, *Praescr.* 30). For purposes of the present discussion, however, I shall assume that the correct reading in Acts 18.24; 9.1 is 'Apollos' and not 'Apelles'.

79 Tyson, *Marcion and Luke-Acts*; see John Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament: An Essay in the Early History of the Canon* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1942). The date of Marcion's activity is debated. As John J. Clabeaux notes ('Marcion', *ABD* 4.514; cf. the entire entry, 514–16), 'Biographical information on Marcion and his early work is scant and . . . often of dubious reliability'. He appears to have been in Rome around the middle of the second century, but previous activity in Asia Minor and particularly Ephesus suggests that he became prominent some time earlier. Tyson argues, convincingly in my judgment, that 'Marcion's views were [likely] known, at least in part and in some locations, as early as 115–120 CE' (*Marcion and Luke-Acts*, 31). Tyson then proposes that 'the Acts of the Apostles was probably written about 120–125 CE, just when Marcion was beginning to attract adherents into what became the most significant heterodox movement of the second century' (p. 78).

80 To my knowledge, this has not previously been suggested.

81 See Acts 9.27; 11.22–26; 15.36–39.

closely with Paul; the second (18.18–19) gets them from Corinth to Ephesus; and the third (18.24–26) presents these associates of Paul as correctors of ‘heresy’ in Ephesus (by implication, of course, also portraying Paul as an opponent of ‘heresy’).⁸²

Very little is said about the nature of the ‘heresy’ involved,⁸³ and Acts makes no explicit reference either to Marcion or to Marcionite Christianity. There are, however, four quite striking parallels between Luke’s portrayal of Aquila and what is known about Marcion: (1) both are natives of Pontus,⁸⁴ (2) both resided at one time in Rome, (3) both also resided at one time in Asia Minor (Ephesus),⁸⁵ and (4) both were, in some sense, Pauline Christians. In my judgment, these parallels cannot be merely coincidental. Indeed, if Tyson is correct regarding the date and occasion of the writing of Acts, any reference, however indirect, to a Christian teacher from Pontus who resided both in Rome and in Asia Minor and was somehow associated with Paul would almost inevitably have brought Marcion to the mind of an attentive reader.⁸⁶

There are, however, also four crucial differences between Luke’s portrayal of Aquila and what is known about Marcion: (1) Marcion sought to divorce Christianity from Judaism, but Luke identifies Aquila explicitly as a ‘Jew’; (2) Marcion presented himself as a ‘Paulinist’ and, indeed, regarded Paul as the only true apostle of Christ, but Luke portrays Aquila as one who was closely associated with Paul and therefore in a better position to understand Pauline Christianity; (3) Marcion required sexual abstinence, but Luke explicitly portrays Aquila as having a wife (indeed, this may explain in part why he included Priscilla in the narrative); and (4) Marcion proclaimed a ‘heretical’ version of Christianity, but Acts reports that Aquila corrected the defective version of Christianity proclaimed by Apollos. In short, Luke pictures Aquila as the married Jew from Pontus, one-time resident

82 It is anachronistic to speak of ‘heresy’ (or ‘orthodoxy’) at this point, but Luke clearly regards Apollos’s initial preaching as defective and thus erroneous.

83 Acts 18.25 reports that Apollos ‘knew only the baptism of John’; cf. the reference in Acts 19.1–7 to ‘disciples’ who had been baptized ‘into John’s baptism’ but had not received or even heard of the Holy Spirit. Wolter (‘Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger’) argues that Acts 18.24–28 and 19.1–7 are to be linked, with the relation between Apollos and Paul as the common theme. For discussion, see, e.g., Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 2.886–8.

84 Aquila is Ποντικός τῷ γένει (Acts 18.2). Ποντικός occurs only here in the NT (Πόντος appears only in Acts 2.9 and 1 Pet 1.1).

85 Luke, however, has Aquila in Rome *before* going to Corinth and then Ephesus, while Marcion was in Rome *after* his time in Asia Minor.

86 Tyson (*Marcion and Luke-Acts*, 77) suggests that the report of Paul’s frustrated attempt to go into Bithynia (Acts 16.6–8) ‘may . . . contain an allusion to Marcion’s homeland’. According to Tyson, Bithynia and Pontus were generally associated, Pontus was known as Marcion’s place of origin, and Luke wanted to disassociate Paul from Marcion by showing that there had been no Pauline mission in the latter’s homeland.

of both Rome and Ephesus, and Pauline Christian who corrects an erroneous version of Christianity. Surely, in the minds of second-century Christians, such a portrayal would cast Aquila as the very antithesis of the celibate Marcion who rejected any connection between Christianity and Judaism – who, however, was also from Pontus, also a onetime resident of both Ephesus and Rome, and also in some sense a Pauline Christian. At the same time, by implication, this clearly would portray Paul as an anti-Marcionite.

In portraying Aquila as the parallel/antithesis to Marcion, Luke appears to be suggesting at least two important points: (1) that not only ‘heretical’ and specifically non-Jewish Christianity but also ‘orthodox’ Christianity with links to Judaism has ties both with Rome and with Asia Minor and, indeed, is to be found even in Pontus – i.e., that Marcionite Christianity is an aberration, not only in Rome and Asia Minor but also in Pontus;⁸⁷ and (2) that Paul and his associates represent ‘orthodox’ Christianity that is linked to Judaism and thus are the opponents of ‘heretical’ non-Jewish (i.e., Marcionite) Christianity.

In addition, it may be significant that Luke explicitly identifies both Aquila and Apollos as ‘a certain Jew’⁸⁸ and that they are the only people so identified in the entire Book of Acts. The use of identical terminology suggests a parallel and/or contrast between the two. The parallel would be the fact that both are Jewish Christians, and the contrast the fact that they initially represent different versions of Jewish Christianity, one of which is acceptable and the other is not. This may suggest that Luke was concerned not only about Marcionite (i.e., non-Jewish) Christianity but also about some form(s) of Jewish Christianity.⁸⁹

Further, it is almost certainly significant that different places of origin are specified for Aquila and Apollos – using, however, the same syntactical construction.⁹⁰ Just as identifying Aquila with Pontus appears to suggest a parallel/contrast between him and Marcion, it is possible that identifying Apollos with Alexandria may imply a similar parallel and/or contrast between him and some unknown (to us) person(s) or movement identified with that city.⁹¹

87 Acts never indicates when or where Aquila became a Christian – whether in Pontus, in Rome, or in Corinth. The absence of any reference to his conversion and the statement that Paul ‘found’ him in Corinth, however, suggests that he was already a Christian when he arrived in Corinth.

88 Aquila (Acts 18.2): τινὰ Ἰουδαῖον; Apollos (Acts 18.24): Ἰουδαῖος . . . τις.

89 Perhaps even some type of Ebionite-like Christianity.

90 Aquila (Acts 18.2): ‘a native of Pontus’ (Ποντικὸν τῷ γένει); Apollos (Acts 18.24): ‘a native of Alexandria’ (Ἀλεξανδρεὺς τῷ γένει).

91 John Mark, who, according to Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* II.xvi.1), traveled to Egypt after Peter’s death in Rome and who, in early tradition, was closely associated with Alexandria, receives rather negative treatment in Acts (12.12, 25; 13.13; and especially 15.37, 39; note, however, the positive portrayal of Mark in Phlm 24; Col 4.10; 2 Tim 4.11; and 1 Pet 5.13). *The Secret Gospel of Mark*, if authentic, indicates the presence of ‘heretical’ Christianity in Alexandria in the

Finally, the ‘more accurate’ (ἀκριβέστερον) instruction of Apollos by Priscilla and Aquila could be seen as Luke’s way of suggesting that ‘heretics’ can in fact, if properly informed, be brought into the fold of ‘orthodox’ Christianity. This might represent a kind of ‘olive branch’ held out to Marcionite Christians (and perhaps to other ‘heretics’ as well).

Conclusion and Implications

In three stages, I have argued that virtually everything Luke says about Aquila and Priscilla either (a) can be derived or inferred from materials in the Pauline letters or (b) can plausibly be attributed to Luke’s own literary, theological, and/or apologetic agenda. To the extent that this argument is persuasive, it provides support for at least four important but still somewhat controversial propositions regarding the Book of Acts:

1. Luke knew at least some of the Pauline letters – including the pseudonymous 2 Timothy and perhaps Titus – and used them as sources in composing his narrative of Christian origins.
2. The Book of Acts reflects a distinctly anti-feminist bias.
3. Luke’s agenda in the composition of Acts included an anti-Marcionite component.
4. The composition of Acts is to be dated relatively late – certainly sometime in the second century and perhaps as late as the middle of the century. This is supported by (a) evidence that Luke’s portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla is based on materials not only in 1 Corinthians and Romans but also in the pseudonymous 2 Timothy and perhaps Titus⁹² and (b) the apparent anti-Marcionite thrust of Acts seen in this portrayal (and elsewhere).

second century and appears to associate it in some way with Mark; for conflicting views on the authenticity of this document, see Scott G. Brown, *Mark’s Other Gospel: Rethinking Morton Smith’s Controversial Discovery* (Studies in Christianity and Judaism 15; Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University, 2005); and Stephen Carlson, *The Gospel Hoax: Morton Smith’s Invention of Secret Mark* (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2005). Note also, however, the possibility that the original reading in Acts 18.24; 19.1 is ‘Apelles’, not ‘Apollos’, and the fact that a former follower of Marcion named ‘Apelles’ spent some time in Alexandria (n. 78 above).

⁹² Various dates have been proposed for the Pastoral Letters, ranging from the 50s to near the middle of the second century. For a summary of various views, see, e.g., Jerome D. Quinn, ‘Timothy and Titus, Epistles to’, *ABD* 6.568–9. The relation between the Pastoral Letters and the Book of Acts has also been a matter of considerable discussion; see, e.g., Quinn, ‘Timothy and Titus’, 568–9. As has already been noted (n. 13), there are good reasons for dating Acts in the second century – perhaps even as late as the middle of the second century. The later Acts is dated, of course, and the earlier the Pastorals are dated, the more likely it is that Luke would have known 2 Timothy and Titus.