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Salvation, Gender and the Figure of Eve in 1 Timothy 2:9-15

Zusammenfassung:

In diesem Artikel wird die Textpassage über Frauen in 1. Timotheus 2,9-15 im Lichte griechisch-römischer Genderkategorien interpretiert. Der merkwürdige Ausdruck, dass eine Frau „dadurch gerettet [wird], dass sie Kinder zur Welt bringt“, kann auf die starke Betonung der Rolle von Frauen als Gebärende zurückgeführt werden. In diesem Beitrag wird eine breite diskursive Basis für die Pastoralbriefe vorgeschlagen, wobei sowohl jüdische als auch „heidnische“ Genderkonstruktionen miteinander verwoben werden, die diese ungewöhnliche Aussage über das Heil von Frauen durch Kindesgeburt hervorbringen. Insbesondere hellenistisch-jüdische Quellen zu Eva und ihrer Transgression liefern neue Einsichten in die kritische Interpretation von 1. Timotheus 2,15.

Introduction

What does it mean that women will be “saved through childbearing”?¹ This quotation from 1 Timothy 2:15 has puzzled many an exegete. It has been common to explain the comment by reconstructing a group of ascetic opponents in which women were active, in the context of the Pastorals’ community.² I take as my starting point an approach that is more concerned with discourses than authorial intention and reconstruction of contexts. There is a growing awareness that “the rhetorical uses of gender obscure our vision of antiquity.”³ Drawing on insights from ancient historians and biblical scholars who have successfully applied Michel Foucault’s framework of *discourse* and discursive fields to their readings of ancient texts,⁴ I will look at the gender discourses embedded in the Pastorals in search of a better understanding of the so-called “women’s passage” in 1 Timothy 2. The Pastoral Epistles were shaped by the gender discourses going on around them, and in turn these texts entered into the gender discourse and subsequently shaped it. As we all know there is no shortage of examples that these texts have shaped gender discourses in profound ways over the course of almost 2000 years.

In this essay I argue that 1 Timothy 2:9-15 is partaking in Greco-Roman gender and childbearing discourses in general and, in particular, engages with a Hellenistic Jewish gender discourse that held a special understanding of Eve's role in the fall. First, I will sketch these discourses as they relate to the Pastoral Epistles. I build on recent feminist research on these letters that take into account a wide range of texts as constituting Greco-Roman gender discourse. As far as I can see, however, the Hellenistic Jewish trajectory of gender discourse I will present has received little attention in feminist studies on the Pastoral Epistles. I will then try to shed some new light on the understanding of 1 Timothy 2:9-15 by bringing this material into consideration.

Greco-Roman Gender Discourses

What Do Scholars Say about 1 Timothy 2:15?

In the Pastorals, discourses regarding gender, childbearing, and salvation explicitly converge in the comment that “she will be saved through childbearing” (σωθήσεται δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας, 1 Timothy 2:15). This phrase has been intensely studied and a wide range of interpretations has been offered. The lexical and grammatical problems in this verse will be dealt with below. Let me here sketch some of the interpretations scholars have offered. Not all interpreters find that this verse is about salvation. Some understand it as a messianic statement, referring to Mary's birth of Jesus. As the fall came through one woman, so did salvation, according to this interpretation.⁵ Others understand it as a statement concerning women's safe delivery. The verb σώζω has a variety of meanings, ranging from “keep from harm, bring out safely” to “save.”⁶ Some interpreters, then, opt for a non-theological understanding: a woman will be kept safe during the actual process of giving birth.⁷ Building on this reading, Bruce Winter has suggested that the statement is a response to women among the recipients of the letter who put their health at risk by seeking abortions. The message to such a woman was that she “would be preserved by continuing in her pregnant condition.”⁸ Yet another suggestion is that “childbearing” should be understood metaphorically: the women in question should “give birth” to the virtues noted in v. 15b, faith, love, holiness, and modesty.⁹ It is relevant to ask whether the aim of some of these interpretations is to elucidate the phrase or to explain it away. This passage is hermeneutically problematic for those who believe in the divine inspiration of scripture and who want to retain a soteriologically sound (Pauline) author. Many of the interpretations presented above seem to be affected by such a

concern, as they, in different ways, deny that verse 15 is a soteriological statement.

Another rather common line of interpretation is to regard the verse as restricting salvation to being within the paradigm of parenthood and the rearing of children, rather than applying a soteriological significance to childbirth *per se*.¹⁰ Luke T. Johnson, for example, tentatively suggests that “I am inclined to think that Paul is thinking in terms of the woman’s raising her children.”¹¹ Many of these somewhat apologetically inclined scholars reconstruct a context for the letter in which a specific situation in Ephesus (variously described) called for extraordinary measures from the letter-writer. In an attempt to justify why “Paul” makes these statements, this trajectory of interpretation at times seems to insinuate that the targeted women dressed in a provocative manner, lectured their husbands in public and/or lent their ears to dangerous heresy.¹²

Less apologetically minded scholars, including feminist interpreters, seem to accept the verse as a soteriological statement, *viz.*, that women should bear children in order to be saved.¹³ Most of these scholars assume that a group of ascetic opponents were causing disruption in the Pastor’s community. It is with this ascetic background that the statement in verse 15 has been interpreted. As Jouette Bassler has argued: “His objective in promoting childbearing is to provide an effective response to the ascetic demands of the opponents.”¹⁴

The reconstruction of an immediate epistolary context has, then, been a common way to explain this puzzling and peculiar statement. On the one hand, a conservative trajectory seems to “blame” a certain group of women in the Pauline congregation of Ephesus for being out of bounds both in terms of doctrine and behavior. On the other hand feminist scholars reconstruct a group (more vaguely based geographically) of celibate women at the turn of the century who challenge the Pastor’s theology. In the feminist interpretation it is the Pastor’s utmost concern to silence this group, which he does by means of household regulations, by restricting access to the widow’s circle, and by his suggestion that women will be saved through childbearing.¹⁵ As I noted in the introduction, there are theoretical challenges to such historical reconstruction. From a post-structural point of view, it is not considered possible to get at “what really happened” on the basis of a text.¹⁶ In our particular case, an evaluation of the letter’s genre also calls for caution. The choice of the letter form is here a rhetorical strategy. What is claimed about the opponents cannot be neatly summed up to create a concise

picture: they are law-teachers who don't understand the law (1 Timothy 1:3-7); they are ascetics who prohibit marriage and certain types of food (4:3); they are word-wrangers who think godliness is a means of gain (6:3-4; Titus 1:11); they teach that the resurrection has already taken place (2 Timothy 1:18); they sneak into homes and overpower silly women (3:6); their judgment is deficient and they are ensnared by the devil (2:26; 3:8); they are too interested in myths and genealogies (1 Timothy 1:4; 2 Timothy 4:4; Titus 3:9); they are circumcised and teach Jewish myths (Titus 1:10; 14); their minds and consciences are corrupted and they are unable to do good (1:15-16). These descriptions have led to different assessments of the opponents beliefs by different scholars as Jewish,¹⁷ Gnostic with ascetic tendencies,¹⁸ or, postulating a hybrid, "Judaizing Gnosticism."¹⁹ Deborah Krause has criticized these attempts, arguing that it is problematic to lump all the characterizations together for it creates a group of opponents so vague that it fits "any Christian expression opposed to the Pastorals' brand of 'orthodoxy.'"²⁰ Rather, these labels serve as invective, in order to categorize the opponents as "other," as outside of orthodoxy.

How can we know that the letter-writer is describing his opponents in a truthful way? This question is particularly pertinent if one assumes that the letters are written pseudonomously, as I do. In agreement with most scholars, I regard the Pastoral Epistles as post-Pauline, pseudepigraphical letters, written around the turn of the first century.²¹ The rhetorical strategy of the author is to construct a Pauline letter-writer, and a context that predates the actual time of origin. As Jay Twomey has argued, the descriptions of opponents are generalized polemical attacks and seem to be driven by the author's pseudepigraphical impulse.²² The description of the opponents is not meant to say anything accurate about "them," but rather to describe the boundaries of the in-group. Lone Fatum has compared the Pastoral tactic to former US President George W. Bush's rhetoric of the "axis of evil:" "the best way to subjugate and control your own is by launching a war, qualifying the Other as common enemy in the process."²³ In my opinion it is reasonable to assume that little can be gleaned about the specific nature of the opponents from these letters.

The Pastorals and Greco-Roman Gender Discourse

Let us take a first look at the text (1 Timothy 2:9-3:1):

⁹ Likewise (I want) women to adorn themselves in respectable clothing, with modesty and chastity; not with braids, gold, pearls or expensive garments, ¹⁰ but with what is fitting for women who profess piety, through

good works.¹¹ A woman must learn in silence with complete submission.¹² I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but she should be in silence.¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve;¹⁴ and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was seduced and entered into transgression.¹⁵ But women will be saved by means of childbearing, if they remain in faith, love and holiness with modesty.^{3:1} The word is trustworthy! (My translation)

When the attention turns to women in 1 Timothy 2:9, the first concern is how they should dress (vv. 9-10). Expensive, elaborate clothing should not be part of godly women's attire, while good deeds and the virtues of modesty (αἰδώς) and chastity (σωφοσύνη) are promoted. The following verses (vv. 11-12) forbid women's teaching in relation to men. Rather, they should learn in silence. Vv. 13-14 give warrants for these instructions based on the archetypal story of Adam and Eve, while v. 15 deals with the possibility of women's salvation in connection to childbearing. In the list of virtues added in v. 15b, note that σωφοσύνη makes its second appearance.

How does this interest in women's behavior and virtues conform to what is said elsewhere in the Pastorals? In these letters, the community of believers is conceived of as a household – the household of God (οἶκος θεοῦ). In 1 Timothy 3:14-15 the purpose of writing the letter is stated:

“I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know *how one ought to behave in the household of God* [οἶκῳ θεοῦ], which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.” (My emphasis)

David Verner has argued that the individual households of believing families are the key building blocks of the metaphorical “household of God”-structure. All believers must live according to their place in the household. Men are instructed to lead decent family lives and women, children, and slaves are urged to obedience and submission (1 Timothy 3:4; 3:12; 5:1-6:2; Titus 2:2-10). Each believer has a specific place and responsibility as a member of his or her household, and that place in turn requires a particular kind of behavior or certain duties in the *ekklesia*.²⁴ Older men must be treated like fathers, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers and so on (1 Timothy 5:1-2). Only if proper household conduct is demonstrated can a person be entrusted a leadership position

in the *ekklesia*. For example, the overseer, *episkopos*, must, according to 1 Timothy 3:4-5, “manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way – for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God’s church?”

The household metaphor we find in the Pastorals differs from the image of the community most prevalent in the Pauline letters, which is the metaphor of the body. Many scholars have noted this shift from body metaphor to household metaphor in deuterio-Pauline Christianity.²⁵ This shift has often been linked to the use of the so-called “household codes,” which we find in some of the later epistolary writings of the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers. Although this literary form is fragmentary in Timothy 2:8-15, one recognizes the influence from “rules for the household” here as well as in other instances in the Pastorals.²⁶ According to David Balch, this literary *topos* is ultimately dependent on Aristotle’s description of Greek domestic and political life.²⁷ However, such rules about household management must be seen together with a wider range of texts from the early Empire. We find an entire household *discourse*, embedded in Roman law (e.g. marriage laws) as well as imperial propaganda and art (e.g. Ara Pacis), in philosophical and medical writings as well as novels and epitaphs.²⁸

For feminist scholarship it is important to be aware of the intersecting power structures we find in this discourse.²⁹ The Roman idea of *familia* as well as the Greek concerning *oikos*, is not only patriarchal, but *kyriarchal*, where the free male rules over wife, children, and slaves. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza has coined the neologisms *kyriarchal/kyriocentric*: “derived from the Greek term lord, this coinage underscores that domination is not simply a matter of patriarchal, gender-based dualism but of more comprehensive, interlocking, hierarchically ordered structures of domination, evident in a variety of oppressions, such as racism, poverty, heterosexism, and colonialism.”³⁰ By employing these terms, Schüssler Fiorenza shows how important the role of the *kyrios/paterfamilias* is for understanding the intersecting power structures of antiquity. Recent feminist studies on the Pastorals have taken into account a variety of texts from Greco-Roman antiquity to analyze the gender patterns of these letters. From the perspective of masculinity studies, Mary Rose D’Angelo and Jennifer Glancy pinpoint the drive for control and domination by the householder over his household in the Pastorals. While D’Angelo sees this particularly in relation to imperial family values,³¹ Glancy compares the Pastorals to moralists and to Stoic philosophers, such as Plutarch and Seneca.³² Similarly, Lone Fatum argues that

the Pastorals' author builds his notion of church on "the unabridged model of the *paterfamilias*-institution."³³

Along similar lines, I argue that an *oikos* ideology saturates these letters and gives them a clear governing principle. There is a strong emphasis on control both in the individual households and the *ekklesia*. The ideal man depicted in the Pastorals is a householder, who has authority over his wife (1 Timothy 2:11-12), control over his children (1 Timothy 3:4, Titus 1:6), and slaves that are submissive and respectful (1 Timothy 6:1; Titus 2:9-10). On the community level, the *oikos* ideology requires that all leaders be well-esteemed householders. Even Paul, the fictive sender of the letters, is constructed as such an ideal male. Paul calls Timothy and Titus his children in the opening greetings, where also God is called father (1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4). In addition to the role of fatherhood, the relationships between Paul, and Timothy and Titus also serve as a model for a teacher-pupil relationship. Paul is the teacher of the Gentiles appointed by God (1 Timothy 2:7), while Timothy and Titus are under his instruction, as in 1 Timothy 1:18: "I am giving you these instructions, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies made earlier about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight." According to D'Angelo, the construction of a fictive sender as well as fictive recipients presents the letters as "man-to-man talks". Male leaders and members of the congregation can identify with this "chain of command" from Paul on to Timothy and Titus, while women, children and slaves are "not so much hearers as overhearers of this instruction."³⁴

What, then, is the female ideal in the Pastorals? What are the constructions of femininity within this *oikos* ideology? Women's lives and their virtue as believers are repeatedly stated in the language of domesticity and subordination: women are to be submissive and silent and should take care of children and house. The instructions about young widows in 1 Timothy 5:14 serve almost as a slogan. The "Pastor" wants them "to marry, to bear children, and to manage the household" (γαμεῖν, τεκνογονεῖν, οἰκοδεσποτεῖν). This command complements the description of the older widow, worthy of entering "the widow's circle": "Let a widow be put on the list if she is not less than sixty years old and has been married only once; she must be well attested for her good works, as one who has brought up children [ἐτεκνοτρόφησεν], shown hospitality, washed the saints' feet, helped the afflicted, and devoted herself to doing good in every way." Good deeds, then, seem to be closely linked to a woman's place in the household. In Titus 2:3-5 as well, women are instructed to care for husband, children and house.

Women's submission under their husbands is central here as well as in 1 Timothy 2:11-14, where a reference to Adam and Eve gives scriptural support for the instruction. Yet, the women instructed in these passages have their own realm of authority, as they are instructed to rule in their households (οἰκοδεσποτέω, 1 Timothy 5:14) and care for household duties (οἰκουργός, Titus 2:5).³⁵ These women appear to be thought of as the wives of householders. Only the passage about women (married to?) δῖακονοι (servers) in 1 Timothy 3:11, does not explicitly connect women to their position in the household.³⁶ Note however that the following verse instructs male servers to be "married only once, and let them manage their children and their households well" (3:12).

In Greco-Roman society, the primary role of the married woman was to produce legitimate heirs for the couple.³⁷ A concern for women's procreative role is evident from the medical writings of this era, e.g., the Hippocratic collection, Aristotle's writings, Soranus' *Gynecology* and Galen's massive *oeuvre*. When women are considered in this literature, it is first and foremost their reproductive capacity that is scrutinized.³⁸ A procreative concern also comes to the surface in many instances in the Pastorals. The importance of women bearing children is clear in the reference to τεκνογονία in 1 Timothy 2:15 and the related verb τεκνογονέω in 1 Timothy 5:14. Some of the odd regulations about widows in 1 Timothy 5 may be understood from a procreative perspective. The limitation of the widow's circle to women past sixty has been understood as a means to reduce the group's power by decreasing their number.³⁹ However, that the age limit is set this high may not be only to reduce numbers, but to make sure that no women with childbearing capacity enter the group. Sixty years was considered the upper limit for the onset of menopause. According to Soranus, women could menstruate until the age of sixty, although fifty was considered a more normal time to enter menopause.⁴⁰ Augustan marriage-legislation required women up to the age of 50 to remarry within a period of two years.⁴¹ The demand, in 5:9, that widows entering the group should be "married only once," excludes the younger widows commanded to marry (5:14) from any future possibility of entering the group. The *univira*, the "once married" woman, was a Roman ideal, although widows were likely to remarry from the time of the late Republic.⁴² Being "once married" is held up as a requirement for office in many instances in the Pastorals, for men (1 Timothy 3:2; 12; Titus 1:6) as well as women (1 Timothy 5:9). In 1 Timothy 5:14, however, young women are actually advised against adhering to that ideal. As was the case with the Augustan marriage laws, the Pastorals defy their reverence of the *univira* by their regulations as well. Perhaps it is also for the same reason as the

Augustan legislation: out of a procreative concern. The value of generating citizen children by means of a second marriage counted more for the emperors, when all came to all, than the idealized image of the ‘once married.’ The *univira* could still be praised on tombstones and in epideictic speeches.⁴³ In the Pastorals it is only in relation to younger widows that this principle is overruled. For male offices in the *ekklesia*, the expectation is that all should be married only once. Nowhere is it stated that young men should rather remarry than take on such a duty. Thus, the procreative role seems to be more important for women than for men.

Eve in Hellenistic Jewish Thought

The interpretation of Genesis 2-3 went through significant changes from its first appearance until the Hellenistic period. According to James Barr, the creation story is never used as an explanation for sin and evil in the Hebrew Bible.⁴⁴ In Hellenistic times, however, this idea was developed in books such as the Wisdom of Solomon and IV Ezra.⁴⁵ Interest in the figure of Eve also grew at the same time. The Wisdom of Ben Sira proclaims: “From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die” (25:24). In a range of Hellenistic Jewish texts Eve’s deception and sin, rather than Adam’s, is in focus. In some of these, the transgression seems to be understood sexually, as a seduction of Eve by the snake.⁴⁶ Let us look at some of these texts.

In *Questions and Answers on Genesis*, Philo explains why the serpent speaks to woman and not man:

[...] woman is more accustomed to be deceived than man. For his judgment, like his body, is masculine and capable of dissolving or destroying the designs of deception; but the judgment of woman is more feminine, and because of softness she easily gives way and is taken by plausible falsehoods that resemble truth.⁴⁷

Elsewhere, Philo understands the story of the fall allegorically, where woman stands for feeling, man for the rational mind, and the snake represents pleasure.⁴⁸ Dorothy Sly points out that Philo’s allegory does not only work on an individual level but also as a social type where Adam is the prototype of man as husband, Eve the prototype of woman as wife and the snake represents lust – and the dangerous temptation in the husband to listen to his wife’s advice.⁴⁹ In the different versions of the *Life of Adam and Eve* the story of the fall is retold by Adam and Eve to their sons at the ends of their lives. The consequences of the fall

are explored together with the possibilities of ultimate salvation. In the Latin, Greek and Armenian versions Adam accuses Eve of having brought death into the world.⁵⁰ Eve readily and repeatedly admits that she is the cause of the human conditions of pain, illness, and death. The nature of the sin in this cluster of texts seems to be desire. For instance, in the Greek version, the devil tampers with the fruit before giving it to Eve. He places upon it “the poison of his wickedness – which is (the sense of) desire (ἐπιθυμία), for it is the beginning of every sin” (19.3).

The notion of a sexual seduction emerges even more explicitly in 4 Maccabees, when the mother of the seven sons contrasts her own chaste behavior to that of Eve:

I was a pure virgin and did not go outside my father’s house; but I guarded the rib from which woman was made. No seducer (λυμεών) corrupted me on a desert plain, nor did the destroyer, the deceitful serpent (λυμεών ἀπάτης ὄφις), defile the purity of my virginity (τὰ ἀγνὰ τῆς παρθενίας) (18:7-8).

In early Christian texts, traces of this Hellenistic Jewish gender discourse can be found, for example, in Paul’s (and the entire NT’s) only reference to Eve. This occurs in 2 Corinthians 11:2-3, in a context in which Paul is arguing for his own authority as apostle to the Corinthians against other apostles:

I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived (ἐξηπάτησεν) Eve by its cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

Paul is here using the metaphor of betrothal to explain his relationship with the Corinthians. Paul is the father and the Corinthian congregation is the virgin bride in danger of being seduced by a deceitful lover, viz. Satan.⁵¹ It seems reasonable to assume that Paul is thinking of sexual deception here.

In the *Protevangelium of James* we find another reference to this tradition. This second century narrative elaborates on the story of Mary’s conception and birth of Jesus, and her virginity is a central issue.⁵² According to the *Protevangelium*, Mary was preserved from childhood in the temple of Jerusalem, but when she

reached puberty she was married to Joseph. Before the marriage is consummated, Joseph goes away on a journey, and upon returning six months later finds Mary pregnant. There is no end to his distress, as he laments the situation:

What prayer shall I offer for this maiden? For I received her as a virgin out of the temple of the Lord my god and have not protected her. Who has deceived (θηρεύσας) me? Who has done this evil in my house and defiled the virgin? Has the story of Adam been repeated in me? For as Adam was absent in the hour of his prayer and the serpent came and found Eve alone and deceived (ἐξηπάτησεν) her, so also has it happened to me.”⁵³

In this passage it is quite clear that Eve’s deception is understood as a sexual seduction by the snake. The *Protevangelium* is dated about fifty years later than the Pastoral Epistles, and can thus not be used as evidence that the tradition was known in Christian circles at the “Pastor’s” time. Still, it indicates that the idea was taken up and elaborated in various Christian settings.⁵⁴ The Greek verb used here, ἐξαπατάω, is the same that Paul uses when he refers to Eve’s deception. The verb refers to sexual seduction as well as deception.⁵⁵ Interestingly, another verb is used for the deception or trickery Joseph – and by analogy – Adam experienced: θηρεύω means “to hunt” and thus bears entirely different connotations, far from the semantic field concerning illicit sex.⁵⁶ Note also that in the *Protevangelium* it is suggested that Eve is alone when she encounters the snake and Adam is at prayer.⁵⁷ Similarly, in the different versions of *Life of Adam and Eve*, Adam is in a different part of the Garden when the snake tricks Eve.⁵⁸

A Fresh Look at 1 Timothy 2:9-15

Salvation through Childbearing?

Bearing in mind the above-sketched gender discourses, let us now take a fresh look at the passage in question. Due to the reference to men at prayer in 2:8, some scholars regard the whole passage as regulations for the worship service.⁵⁹ In my opinion, this passage is one of the instances where the *oikos* ideology blurs the boundaries between household and community. Since the household is the metaphor for the community, the two contexts become indistinguishable. Moreover, the same type of behavior seems to be expected in both contexts, thus, these instructions should not be limited to a worship context.

As noted above, clothing is the first issue when the attention turns to women (vv. 9-10). Starting with “likewise” and lacking a main verb, this sentence is grammatically linked to the previous statement. In verse 8, the writer wants (βούλομαι) men “to pray” (προσεύχεσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας). Verse 9 has a similar grammatical construction of accusative with infinitive (γυναῖκας ... κοσμεῖν ἑαυτάς). Thus, the clause is most likely also controlled by βούλομαι from verse 8.⁶⁰ “I want men to pray... I want women to adorn themselves...”. Why is the female dress so important? Because it reveals something about a woman’s virtue, according to the author. The term καταστολή can either mean the character one exhibits in personal deportment or something to cover the body, and this ambiguity is exploited here.⁶¹ A woman’s virtues should be her “outfit.” But to adorn oneself with virtue also means *not* to put on pearls or expensive clothing. The way a woman dresses says something about her modesty and decency, and also reflects honor or shame on her husband.⁶²

Scholars disagree on whether the main problem addressed here is ostentation (women should not show off their wealth) or whether it concerns prudence (women should not dress immodestly).⁶³ The virtue of σωφροσύνη, when used in association with women, has a particular emphasis on sexual modesty.⁶⁴ The connection between adornment and immorality on the one side and “a plain look” and moral superiority on the other, was a *typos* in Greek and Latin literature in this period.⁶⁵ Writers such as Plutarch and Philo draw a connection between modest dress and sexual modesty. Plutarch’s *Advice to Bride and Groom* is well known for its views on the ideal wife: “It is not gold or precious stones or scarlet that makes her such, but whatever invests her with that something which betokens dignity (σεμνότης), good behaviour (ἔθταξία), and modesty (αἰδώς).”⁶⁶ The opposite of the modestly dressed, virtuous woman is the prostitute. Philo describes a harlot as “being a person alienated from good order (κοσμιότης), and modesty (αἰδώς), and chastity (σωφροσύνη).”⁶⁷ It should be noted that Philo’s invective towards deviating women also follows a class logic. The upper class matron and the socially inferior (usually slave) prostitute, are in his view moral opposites. We also find a connection between decent dress and modesty in Seneca’s praise to his mother, “Consolation to Helvia.” Here, he lauds his mother as an ideal woman who has born children and always dressed modestly. This is seen in contrast to most women, who are promiscuous and too fond of glitter and pearls:

[...] never have you, in the manner of other women whose only recommendation lies in their beauty, tried to conceal your pregnancy as if an unseemly burden, nor have you ever crushed the hope of children that were being nurtured in your body; you have not defiled your face with paints and cosmetics; never have you fancied the kind of dress that exposed no greater nakedness by being removed.⁶⁸

Suzanne Dixon notes that women served as symbols of decadence and degeneration in some genres of Roman literature. It was a trope in Roman historians and epic poets that the current age was a decline from the “good old days.” In particular, the rejection of maternity was seen as a sign of this decadence.⁶⁹ Women were accused of secretly seeking abortions out of vanity or due to adultery.⁷⁰ In the eyes of writers such as Seneca, Ovid and Juvenal, women of their day lived luxurious and promiscuous lives, in contrast to the great mothers of history – and the occasional exemplary exception – who were upheld as guardians of traditional culture and values.⁷¹ It seems then, that in the discursive environment where the Pastorals were first circulated, the themes of ostentation and sexual immorality are intertwined and that the concern for sexual modesty is quite central. The following discussion of Eve’s sin and the reappearance of the virtue of σωφροσύνη in connection to childbearing in v. 15, also shows that something more than ostentation is at stake.

In vv. 11-12 the tone becomes more severe. From a wish (βούλομαι) for a certain type of conduct in the previous verses, there is now a clear prohibition (οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω). What should signify women in relation to teaching and learning is silence (ἡσυχία) and submission (ὑποταγή). The quiet and meek disposition of the kyriarchally submissive partner, whether wife to husband (1 Timothy 2:11-12), slave to master (Titus 2:9), child to father (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6) or citizen to ruler (1 Timothy 2:1) is a recurring theme in the Pastorals. The household codes in 1 Peter 3:1; Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18 are also all concerned with the submission of the wife to the husband, but the parallel theme of learning and teaching is not present in any of these. The inclusion of this topic reflects the two-tiered structure of the household of God in the Pastorals. D’Angelo notes how the Pastorals construct masculinity by a careful distinction of male and female roles, rather than for example exhortations to displays of courage or manliness (*andreia*).⁷²

Is it the overall category of teaching that is prohibited to women with the expression “διδάσκειν ... οὐδὲ ἀθθεντεῖν,” or only women teaching men? Titus 2:3 says that women should be καλοδιδάσκαλοι – teachers of what is good. Some claim that women’s instruction is reduced in the Pastorals to instructions *on* behavior; women are allowed only to teach other women how to perform the roles of wife, childbearer and housekeeper.⁷³ According to Bassler, for example, the instructions to older women in Titus 2:3 differ from the prohibition in 1 Timothy 2:10-11 “in a number of ways. It was done in the context of the home, not the worship service; it concerned only domestic issues, not doctrinal ones; and the students were young women, not the church at large.”⁷⁴ I suggest that it is not the overall category of teaching that is prohibited for women with the expression διδάσκειν ... οὐδὲ ἀθθεντεῖν, but teaching *men* and thus breaking the gendered code of behavior embedded in the *oikos* ideology. Grammatically, one should take ἀνδρός to be the object of both verbs: “I do not permit a woman to teach (a man) or exercise authority over a man.” A woman can teach, as long as it takes place within the proper guidelines of authority and submission, but she can neither teach a man nor rule over him, neither her own husband nor any other (authoritative, kyriarchal) man in the community. Thus women can teach – doctrine as well as domestic behavior – but only to other women, children (of both sexes) and slaves (of both sexes). This distinction is so important to the author that it is even given biblical backing in the following verses.

Vv. 13-14 give two arguments for why women are prohibited from teaching men: Adam was formed first, and Adam was not deceived. The choice of words in vv. 13-14 draws heavily on the language of Genesis 3 in LXX. In Genesis 3:13 the woman admits that “the serpent tricked me [ὁ ὄφις ἠπάρησέν με].” In the Pastorals the same verb is used to insist that Adam was *not* deceived (ἀπατάω). The second reference to Eve in verse 14 (simply as γυνή) also mimics the LXX phrasing. Eve is called ἡ γυνή throughout Genesis 2-3 (she is first called Εὕα in 4:1). But the term γυνή in verse 14 also connects what is being said here to the preceding verses, where γυνή (first in plural, then in singular) has been a recurring word. Thus, women in general are connected to the primordial woman. Even though Eve’s punishment from Genesis 3:16 is not specifically mentioned in our passage, there are echoes of it. According to Genesis, a woman is to bear children in pain (ἐν λύπαις τέξαι τέκνα, 3:16a) and her husband is to rule over her (αὐτός σου κυριεύσει, 3:16b). That her husband is to rule over her can be heard in the call for submission in verses 11-12, whereas childbearing is the focus of verse 15.

The author gives an argument for the superiority of Adam, and thus men, with reference to the order of creation. More importantly, there is a claim that woman was deceived but not Adam. This interpretation of Genesis 3 implies that women are more susceptible to deception, and serves as a reason why women should not teach or have authority. The claim that Eve was deceived but Adam was not represents a very tendentious reading of Genesis 3. After all, God explicitly chastises and punishes both man and woman for their transgression (3:16-17). As noted above, some Hellenistic Jewish interpretations of the story of the fall implied that Eve was more to blame, and even that Eve's transgression was sexual. Is Eve's transgression also understood as sexual here? The verb used (ἐξαπατάω) has, as already noted, the connotation "to seduce" and seems to be the preferred verb in texts drawing on these traditions. The LXX uses ἀπατάω to describe Eve's deception ("The serpent tricked me, and I ate," Genesis 3:13), whereas the Pastorals only use this term for Adam's "non-deception". Ἐξαπατάω is only used for whatever the snake did to Eve. In a study from 1968, Anthony T. Hanson traced these connections and drew the conclusion that Eve's transgression should be understood as sexual in v. 14.⁷⁵ Dibelius and Conzelmann have suggested the same, but few scholars have followed them.⁷⁶ Having traced the discursive trajectory of Eve in Hellenistic Jewish writings, I find it plausible that these exegetes are right: 1 Timothy 2:13-14 is shaped by the tradition that Eve was sexually seduced.

Returning to v. 14, the author clinches his argument by pointing out that through this seduction, woman "became a transgressor," as the NRSV translates "ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν." Γίνομαι also has the nuance of "entry into a new condition,"⁷⁷ and the emphasis seems to be on the continuing effect of the action, which is the *state* of transgression or deviation (παράβασις).⁷⁸ The argument seems to go like this: because of Eve's deception, she entered into a particular condition of transgression. This is the state all women are in now, and therefore they should not be allowed to teach men with authority. The biblical exegesis seems to end up with a fundamental difference between men and women. A difference, I would argue, that in the Pastor's mind exists on an ontological level.⁷⁹ The author solves the problem of teaching and authority by giving biblical warrants for the silence and submission of women, but he also creates a new problem. If women are ontologically in a different condition than men, how do they get out of it? How are women saved?

The answer is given in v. 15. The solution to the state of Eve, and thus all women, is childbearing, *τεκνογονία*. This verse is difficult to understand, both lexically and syntactically. Who is the subject of *σωθήσεται* and how should we interpret *σώζω*? How should we understand *διὰ* in this context? What does the rare noun *τεκνογονία* mean? Finally, why is there a shift in verb form from singular *σωθήσεται* to plural *μείνωσιν*? Close attention to the grammatical challenges in this verse is necessary in order to arrive at an understanding of the statement.

The meaning of *σώζω* in all other instances in the Pastorals refers to salvation in a cosmic sense as God's salvation from sin,⁸⁰ and, I would argue, also here. Salvation has been a recurring theme in the letter so far: Christ Jesus came to the world to save sinners (note that this is a "faithful saying", 1:15); God, our savior, wants everyone to be saved (2:3-4). The proximity of the statement in verse 15 to the "faithful saying" in 3:1a is also an argument in favor of a theological understanding of *σώζω*. Frances Young argues persuasively that this phrase, which occurs five times in the Pastorals, always appears in connection with a soteriological statement.⁸¹ Moreover, a cosmic understanding fits with the logic of the passage, as I have interpreted it. The previous verses, which conclude that (generic) woman is in a state of transgression, calls for a means of redemption. The means is *τεκνογονία* and a certain set of virtues.

Τεκνογονία, a NT hapax legomenon, is found in a few other instances from Greek antiquity, mostly in medical discussions of childbearing.⁸² The focus in these instances is on the female role, but usually has a wider reference than birth. It also encompasses conception and pregnancy, though birthing is at the center. In my opinion, the term here clearly echoes God's first punishment in Genesis 3:16, where the focus is on woman's particular role and extreme pain in bringing forth children through pregnancy and birth.⁸³ In 1 Timothy 5:14, where the related verb is used (*τεκνογονέω*), it is also quite clear that to bear children is one of the fundamental roles of a woman's place in the household. To raise children, and to love them, are expressed with other terms (*τεκνοτροφέω*, 1 Timothy 5:10; *φιλότεκνος*, Titus 2:5), thus *τεκνογονέω* probably refers primarily to giving birth to children.⁸⁴ To bear children, then, is the primary function of the respectably married woman, in the Pastorals, as it was in the Greco-Roman world in general. The definite article (**τῆς** *τεκνογονίας*) should therefore be understood as generic.⁸⁵ Porter points out that the definite article is used in 1 Timothy 2:8 as well: "men [*τοὺς ἄνδρας*] should pray . . ." There is no reason to assume that the definite article refers to a particular childbirth, i.e. that of Mary giving birth to Jesus, as

Witherington argues,⁸⁶ since childbearing is woman's primary role in the *oikos* ideology of the Pastoral Epistles. Concerning the preposition, the most common uses of διά, with the genitive denote instrument or agency: "by means of, through, with."⁸⁷ A temporal sense ('during') is less likely if one accepts that σῶζω is used in a cosmic sense. Thus, I agree with Porter that "'childbearing' is the instrument (the means or the channel) by which salvation is accomplished."⁸⁸

The grammatical challenges continue in verse 15b. Is the implied plural of generic woman made explicit with the plural verb form μείνωσιν? Or is there a shift in subject from women to the children they get through their childbearing?⁸⁹ According to the *oikos* ideology of the Pastorals, the places of children and women are somewhat similar – submission is the key word (ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ, of women in 1 Timothy 2:11; τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ, 1 Timothy 3:4). This might explain why it is difficult to decide whether it refers to childbearing women or to their children – these instructions fit both groups equally well. If it pertains to children, the instructions comply with the requirements of male leaders (1 Timothy 3:4; 12) as well as of women (1 Timothy 5:10; 14, Titus 2:4-5) to raise children in the faith. If, on the other hand, it is read as concerning women, the conditional clause (ἐάν μείνωσιν) qualifies which women the verse is referring to – i.e. only believing women, who would hold such virtues.⁹⁰ In that case, verse 15b assures that not all women are saved by their childbearing, but only if it is accompanied by the Christian virtues of faith, love, holiness, and modesty.⁹¹ The repetition of σωφροσύνη, which links the clause to the virtue list in verse 9, persuades me to favor women rather than children as the subject. Such a reading retains a consistent subject (generic woman) throughout the passage, and also creates an *inclusio* by returning to the plural form that opened the passage (γυναῖκες, vv. 9-10). Understood as generic "woman," (γυνή) in verse 11 is an implied collective that is rendered explicit with the plural form of the verb (μείνωσιν) in 15b. I therefore translate the phrase σωθήσεται δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας as "but women will be saved by means of childbearing." The list of virtues concluding the clause in verse 15b also forms a link back to verse 9, thus creating a chiasmic pattern: The passage ends where it started, with a list of highly valued virtues for women. There is thus a smaller chiasmic pattern in verses 11-12 with the repetition of silence (ἥσυχία) and a wider one framing verses 9-15 with two sets of virtue lists (with σωφροσύνη occurring in both). The concern for modesty and chastity in women both opens and concludes the passage.

The argument has come full circle, with only one thing lacking: the exclamation mark. The textual unit that started with verse 8 ends with 3:1a: “the saying is sure” [πιστὸς ὁ λόγος], or, more literally, “the word is trustworthy.” Raymond Collins argues that this literary formula is, in the Pastorals, attached to “religious axioms whose authority within the community is thereby endorsed.”⁹² It can precede or follow the material to which it is joined in much the same way as the Hebrew “Amen.” As noted, the phrase always occurs in connection with a soteriological statement.⁹³ By ending the instructions with this formula, a core belief about salvation is singled out for acclamation by the hearer.

Conclusion

What does it mean that women will be “saved through childbearing”? I have argued that the biblical interpretation in vv. 13-14 creates an ontological difference between Adam and Eve, which is then transmitted to men and women accordingly. This difference makes it plausible to read verse 15 as saying that childbearing has soteriological implications. Despite the state that all women are in due to Eve’s fatal action, there is a way out: By bearing children, women will be saved, claims the Pastorals’ author. Women, who are in a special state of transgression, will be saved through special means, seems to be the implication. This means fits the nature of the first transgression, when it is understood as seduction. Moreover, it also echoes God’s punishment of pain in childbirth. Women’s struggle in childbearing is, for this letter-writer, not only punishment or result of the transgression, but it is also part of the redemption. Does this mean that any woman who bears a child is saved and anyone who does not is condemned? To be within the realm of possible salvation, a woman at least has to submit to marriage and potential childbearing – she must live according to the *oikos* ideology. What about infertile, unmarried or widowed women, one might ask? I do not know that this text is concerned with the exceptions to the rule. Rather than trying to smooth out the discrepancies inherent in the Pastorals’ soteriology, the interpreter’s role should be to point them out.

Feminist scholars have argued that 1 Timothy 2:15 was coined as a response to ascetic Christian teaching.⁹⁴ To silence these opponents, then, the author used the heaviest arsenal at his hands and argued that childbearing is a matter of eternal life or death. I have tried to show that such a reconstruction of historical background is not necessary. “Salvation through childbearing” is an integral part of the world view expressed in this text – its *oikos* ideology. This ideology is influenced by a

concept of masculinity that distinguishes male and female roles and a gender etiology based on the Genesis story about Adam and Eve. My suggestion is that “salvation through childbearing” is better explained as a conviction based on a supposed ontological difference between male and female, rather than a teaching provoked by ascetic opposition.

¹ All biblical citations are from the New Revised Standard Version unless noted.

² Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, ed. Helmut Koester, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 48-49; Margaret Y. MacDonald, *The Pauline Churches. A Socio-historical Study of Institutionalization in the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 180; Jouette M. Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1996), 61.

³ Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses. Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 11. See also the following works by Clark: Elizabeth A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text. Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004); Elizabeth A. Clark, “The Lady Vanishes: Dilemmas of a Feminist Historian after the ‘Linguistic Turn’,” *Church History* 67, no. 1 (1998), 1-31.

⁴ For Foucault on discourse see e.g. Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (London and New York Routledge, 2002); Michel Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, trans. Robert Hurley, vol. 3, *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Vintage Books, 1986). For the application of this framework to early Christian texts, see e.g. Caroline Vander Stichele and Todd C. Penner, *Contextualizing Gender in Early Christian Discourse. Thinking beyond Thecla* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2009); Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory. Early Christian Culture Making* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Jorunn Økland, *Women in Their Place. Paul and the Corinthian Discourse of Gender and Sanctuary Space* (London: T&T Clark, 2004); Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self. Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (London: Routledge, 1995); Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire. The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1991).

⁵ Ben Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, 2 vols., vol. 1, A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2006), 230. See also Porter who gives a more extensive (and somewhat different) overview of scholars and positions than I do, Stanley E. Porter, “What does it Mean to Be ‘Saved by Childbirth’ (1 Timothy 2.15)?,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 49(1993), 87-102.

⁶ Danker, F. W., W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed. Chicago, 2000, (BDAG).

⁷ Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives. Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1992), 118-20. Cf. also the translation in the New American Standard Bible (NASB): “women shall be preserved through the bearing of children.” (Original emphasis).

⁸ Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows. The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003), 110-11. Towner draws heavily on Winter in his commentary, but ends up with a more general interpretation. Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2006), 234-35.

⁹ See Kenneth Waters, “Saved through Childbearing: Virtues as Children in 1 Timothy 2.11-15,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123, no. 4 (2004), 703-35.

¹⁰ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 235; Raymond F. Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. A Commentary* (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 2002), 77; Benjamin Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles. First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus*, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2007), 68-69. Quinn and Wacker argue that the verse includes men as well as women into this soteriology through parenthood, see Jerome D. Quinn and William C. Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy. A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*, ed. David Noel Freedman, The Eerdmans Critical Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 230-34.

¹¹ Luke Timothy Johnson, *Letters to Paul's Delegates. 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1996), 134. In his later commentary, Johnson seems to skirt the question. He reviews the exegetical options in v. 15 in the “notes” part of his commentary, but stops at v. 14 in the “comment” part. See Luke Timothy Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 202-03, 08.

¹² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 219-20; Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, 231-32; Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows. The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities*, 121-22. Porter too, although he criticizes “ideological criticism,” seems close to blaming the women targeted by the author when he argues that “the women were habitually spending time gossiping in each other’s houses” and that they were “telling all sorts of silly myths.” See Porter, “What does it Mean to Be ‘Saved by Childbirth’ (1 Timothy 2.15)?,” 101-02. For an assessment of different scholarly trajectories in Pastoral Epistles research, see Marianne Bjelland Kartzow and Anna Rebecca Solevåg, “Who Loves The Pastorals and Why?” (paper presented at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Diego 2007). Published in Norwegian as Anna Rebecca Solevåg and Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, “Hvem bryr seg om Pastoralbrevene? Nyere trender i Pastoralbrevsforskningen,” *Norsk teologisk tidsskrift* 111, no. 4 (2010), 255-269.

¹³ See e.g. Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 48-49; Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 61; Deborah Krause, *1 Timothy* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 64. See also Porter, “What does it Mean to Be ‘Saved by Childbirth’ (1 Timothy 2.15)?,” 87-102.

¹⁴ Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 61.

¹⁵ See e.g. Jouette M. Bassler, “Adam, Eve and the Pastor. The Use of Genesis 2-3 in the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Genesis 1-3 in the History of Exegesis. Intrigue in the Garden*, ed. Gregory Allen Robbins (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1988), 43-65; Jouette M. Bassler, “The Widows' Tale: a Fresh Look at 1 Tim 5:3-16,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 103, no. 1 (1984), 23-41.

¹⁶ Clark, “The Lady Vanishes: Dilemmas of a Feminist Historian after the ‘Linguistic Turn’.”

¹⁷ Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles. First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus*, 14-15.

¹⁸ Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. A Commentary*, 116; Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 27-28.

¹⁹ Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 17.

²⁰ Krause, *1 Timothy*, 36.

²¹ For a substantial discussion of pseudepigraphy in the Pastorals, see Lewis R. Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1986). See also the introductions in Benjamin Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles. First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus* (2007); Krause, *1*

Timothy; Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*; Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*.

²² Jay Twomey, *The Pastoral Epistles Through the Centuries*, Blackwell Bible Commentaries (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2009), 19. See also Krause, *1 Timothy*, 35-38; Margaret Davies, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996a), 89-99.

²³ Lone Fatum, "Christ Domesticated: The Household Theology of the Pastorals as Political Strategy," in *The Formation of the Early Church*, ed. Jostein Ådna (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 185-86.

²⁴ This is Verner's central argument: "The author of the Pastorals sets forth in his composition a coherent concept of the church as the household of God. This concept is two-pronged, informing the author's understanding both of the household as the basic social unit in the church, and of the church as a social structure modeled on the household." David C. Verner, *The Household of God. The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983), 1.

²⁵ Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 73; Fatum, "Christ Domesticated: The Household Theology of the Pastorals as Political Strategy," 187; Margaret Davies, *The Pastoral Epistles. I and II Timothy and Titus*, ed. Ivor H. Jones, Epworth Commentaries (London: Epworth, 1996b), 114.

²⁶ Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 44, 82, 139. On the use of household codes in the New Testament in general, see James L. Bailey and Lyle D. Vander Broek, *Literary Forms in the New Testament. A Handbook* (London: SPCK, 1992), 68-72.

²⁷ Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World. Households and House Churches* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 118-19.

²⁸ For the family ideology of the Roman emperors, see e.g. Eve D'Ambra, *Roman Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 152. Elaine Fantham, et al., *Women in the Classical World. Image and Text* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 307-21.

²⁹ See e.g. Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, "'Asking the Other Question': An Intersectional Approach to Galatians 3:28 and the Colossian Household Code," *Biblical Interpretation* 18, no. 4 (2010), 364-89; Laura Salah Nasrallah and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Prejudice and Christian Beginnings. Investigating Race, Gender, and Ethnicity in Early Christian Studies* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2009); Stichele and Penner, *Contextualizing Gender in Early Christian Discourse. Thinking beyond Thecla*; Anna Rebecca

Solevåg, “Perpetua and Felicitas: Reinterpreting Empire, Family and Gender,” in *Identity Formation in the New Testament*, ed. Bengt Holmberg and Mikael Winninge (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 269-284.

³⁰ Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic. The Politics of Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), ix.

³¹ Mary Rose D’Angelo, “‘Knowing How to Preside over His Own Household’: Imperial Masculinity and Christian Asceticism in the Pastorals, Hermas and Luke-Acts,” in *New Testament Masculinities*, ed. Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson (Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 266-67.

³² Jennifer A. Glancy, “Protocols of Masculinity in the Pastoral Epistles,” in *New Testament Masculinities*, ed. Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson, *Semeia Studies* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 235.

³³ Fatum, “Christ Domesticated: The Household Theology of the Pastorals as Political Strategy,” 2 179.

³⁴ D’Angelo, “‘Knowing How to Preside over His Own Household’: Imperial Masculinity and Christian Asceticism in the Pastorals, Hermas and Luke-Acts,” 271-72.

³⁵ Οἰκοδεσποτέω: “to be master of a house or head of a family,” Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), (LSJ). Οἰκουργός: “working at home,” LSJ; “carrying out household responsibilities,” BDAG.

³⁶ As also Kartzow has observed. Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, *Gossip and Gender. Othering of Speech in the Pastoral Epistles* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 134.

³⁷ The procreation of children is the stated purpose of marriage in both Greek and Latin sources. See e.g. Xenophon, *Oec.*, 7,18-19; Aristotle, *Pol.* 1253b; *Digest* 1.1.1.3.

³⁸ Ann Ellis Hanson, “The Medical Writers' Woman,” in *Before Sexuality. The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World*, ed. David M. Halperin, Winkler, John J and Zeitlin, Froma I. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 334.

³⁹ Bassler, “The Widows' Tale: a Fresh Look at 1 Tim 5:3-16,” 34.

⁴⁰ Soranus, *Gynecology*, trans. Owsei Temkin (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1965), 1.20.

⁴¹ Beryl Rawson, “The Roman Family,” in *The Family in Ancient Rome*, ed. Beryl Rawson (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 31.

⁴² Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Family* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 77.

⁴³ Rawson, “The Roman Family,” 32.

⁴⁴ James Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1993), 6.

⁴⁵ Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 17-18.

⁴⁶ Anthony Tyrell Hanson, *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles* (London: SPCK, 1968), 65-66; Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 48.

⁴⁷ Philo, *Questions and Answers on Genesis*, trans. Ralph Marcus, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), I.33.

⁴⁸ Philo, *On the Account of the World's Creation Given by Moses (De opificio mundi)*, trans. F. H. Colson, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929), §165.

⁴⁹ Dorothy Sly, *Philo's Perception of Women*, vol. 209, Brown Judaic Studies (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1990), 94-95.

⁵⁰ Gary A. Anderson and Michael E. Stone, *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1999), 47.

⁵¹ Hanson, *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles*, 70-71.

⁵² Hock places it between 150 and 200 CE. Ronald F. Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas* (Santa Rosa, Calif.: Polebridge Press, 1995), 12.

⁵³ John K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament. A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 48-52.

⁵⁴ The tradition also has a further history in rabbinic tradition, but these texts are of course centuries later.

⁵⁵ Ἐξαπατάω: “deceive or beguile, deceive thoroughly; seduce a woman,” LSJ.

⁵⁶ LSJ.

⁵⁷ This is, of course, quite contrary to the tale told in Genesis 3:6: “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, *who was with her*, and he ate.” (My emphasis).

⁵⁸ In these stories, Adam and Eve are allotted different portions of the garden to guard. Anderson and Stone, *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve*, 48.

⁵⁹ Dibelius and Conzelmann regard it as traditional material originally referring to women’s lives in general, but “here doubtless is intended for the worship service.”

Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 45. Quinn and Wacker posit a church order as the underlying source and regard the unit 2:8-3:1a as instructions on public worship. They translate v. 11b: “Let a married woman quietly learn in the assemblies of worship...” Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy. A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*, 220-21. See also Ulrike Wagener, *Die Ordnung des “Hauses Gottes.” Der Ort von Frauen in der Ekklesiologie und Ethik des Pastoralbriefe* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 69. For a wider setting, see Krause, *1 Timothy*, 53, 55; Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 46.

⁶⁰ Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 57; Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 199. Dibelius and Conzelmann argue that also προσεύχεσθαι should be added from v. 8, as the regulations are “doubtless intended for the worship service.” Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 45.

⁶¹ “Outward attire, either the character one exhibits in personal deportment or something to cover the body,” BDAG; “Equipment, dress; modesty, reserve,” LSJ.

⁶² Alicia J. Batten, “Neither Gold nor Braided Hair (1 Timothy 2.9; 1 Peter 3.3): Adornment, Gender and Honour in Antiquity,” *New Testament Studies* 55 (2009), 486-87.

⁶³ See e.g. Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy. A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*, 218-19; Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 205. Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 58.

⁶⁴ Dibelius and Conzelmann also note that σωφροσύνη when used about women, takes on the nuance of “almost the equivalent of chastity.” Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 46.

⁶⁵ Batten, “Neither Gold nor Braided Hair (1 Timothy 2.9; 1 Peter 3.3): Adornment, Gender and Honour in Antiquity,” 486.

⁶⁶ Plutarch, *Conj. Praec.* 141e. Plutarch, “Advice to Bride and Groom,” in *Plutarch's Moralia in Fifteen Volumes* (London/Cambridge, MA: William Heinemann, 1962).

⁶⁷ Philo, *On the Special Laws*, trans. F. H. Colson, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1937), 3.51

⁶⁸ Seneca, “Moral Essays,” ed. John W. Basore (Cambridge, Mass. London: Harvard University Press/William Heinemann LTD, 1928), 16.3-5.

⁶⁹ Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Mother* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), 94-95; Rebecca Flemming, *Medicine and the Making of Roman Women. Gender, Nature, and Authority from Celsus to Galen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 169.

⁷⁰ Ovid, *Amores* 2.14; Juvenal 6.592-9.

⁷¹ Suzanne Dixon, *Reading Roman Women. Sources, Genres and Real Life* (London: Duckworth, 2001), 56.

⁷² D'Angelo, "‘Knowing How to Preside over His Own Household’: Imperial Masculinity and Christian Asceticism in the Pastorals, Hermas and Luke-Acts," 273.

⁷³ Linda M. Maloney, "The Pastoral Epistles," in *Searching the Scriptures. A Feminist Commentary*, ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (New York: Crossroads Publishing Company, 1994), 374.

⁷⁴ Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 194.

⁷⁵ Hanson, *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles*, 72-73.

⁷⁶ Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 48. Jouette Bassler, who is the only feminist exegete that refers to this interpretation, argues against it. Bassler, "Adam, Eve and the Pastor. The Use of Genesis 2-3 in the Pastoral Epistles.," esp. 50-52.

⁷⁷ Γίνομαι: "to experience a change in nature and so indicate entry into a new condition, become someth." BDAG.

⁷⁸ Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy. A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*, 204.

⁷⁹ According to Boyarin, Philo also regards Eve/women to have lower ontological status. Daniel Boyarin, *Carnal Israel. Reading Sex in Talmudic Culture* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1993), 79-80.

⁸⁰ Margaret Davis, *The Pastoral Epistles*, ed. A.T. Lincoln, New Testament Guides (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 83.

⁸¹ Frances M. Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 56-57; Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 28-29.

⁸² Hippocrates, *Epistulae* 17, Aristotle, *HA* 582a, Galen *In Hippocratis de natura hominis librum commentarii*, 3.49.

⁸³ Τεκνογονία: "the bearing of children," BDAG; "child-bearing," LSJ.

⁸⁴ "Bear young, bear children," LSJ. Porter, "What does it Mean to Be 'Saved by Childbirth' (1 Timothy 2.15)?," 96.

⁸⁵ Porter, "What does it Mean to Be 'Saved by Childbirth' (1 Timothy 2.15)?," 92.

⁸⁶ Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, 230.

⁸⁷ BDAG.

⁸⁸ Porter, “What does it Mean to Be ‘Saved by Childbirth’ (1 Timothy 2.15)?,” 98.

⁸⁹ For the position that the subject changes from women to children in v. 15b, see Jarl Henning Ulrichsen, “Noen bemerkninger til 1 Tim 2,15,” *Norsk teologisk tidsskrift* 84, no. 1 (1983), 23-24; Cornelia B. Horn and J. W. Martens, “Let the little children come to me”. *Childhood and Children in Early Christianity* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 139-40.

⁹⁰ Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 48.

⁹¹ Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. A Commentary*, 77.

⁹² For this and the following quotation: Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. A Commentary*, 42-43.

⁹³ Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, 56-57; Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 28-29.

⁹⁴ Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 61; Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 265-66; Maloney, "The Pastoral Epistles," 370-71.

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