The Love of Money is the Root of all Evils.
Wealth and the Wealthy in 1 Timothy

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At first sight there is some ambivalence in the attitude of 1 Timothy (6,5-10.17-19) toward wealth and the well-to-do. This has lead to the assumption that the author1 essentially disparages affluence. Spicq has understood the criticism of the wealthy (1 Tim 6,5–10) as an expression of Paul’s social sensitivity.2 Indeed, φιλαρχία is said to be the root of all evil (6,10), an assertion that apparently represents the perspective of those lacking or scorning material assets. The same impression could be supported by the exhortation to the rich (6,17–19). However, one should not rush to the conclusion that the epistle dismisses wealth or the wealthy. In this essay I argue that the author rehearses contemporary topoi about the dangers and appropriate use of wealth. He does so in order to encourage euergetism, which becomes an identity marker of better-off Christians. The treatment of wealth and euergetism reflects the values of the elites.

I do not enter here into the details of the debates concerning the economic and social status of early Christians.3 To be sure, 1 Timothy makes it clear that we have to consider the existence of better-off Christians in the ekklesia.

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The text

The paraenesis on wealth has two parts (6,6-10 and 17-19). The paraenesis follows from the polemic against the opponents, and the two units frame the exhortation to “Timothy”, the type of the irreproachable official.

The first part (vv. 6-10) addresses the dangers of wealth, and opposes to possessions the virtues of piety and self-contentment. Cupidity is associated with passions and moral corruption leading to perdition (v. 9). The love of money (φιλαργυρία) is the root of all evil (v. 10, ρίζα πάντων τῶν κακῶν). Therefore Christians should be content with the most necessary goods (v. 8, ἐστι τῶν ἀνγέλων τῆς ἀνθρώπους). True profit comes from εὐσέβεια and self-contentment (αὐτάρκεια), not from possessions (v. 6).

The two units of the paraenesis are connected through the topic of the unreliability of wealth. We bring nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything with us into death (v. 7). Fortune is therefore unreliable and its profit temporary (17. v.). The wealthy are rich only in this world (ἐν τῶν αἰῶνι), and their wealth is insecure (πλοῦτος ἀδηλότης, 17. v.).

That is why the second part cautions the rich against being puffed up and putting their trust into possessions instead of God (v. 17). God bestows on humans everything with generosity, to their enjoyment. The wealthy should use their fortune generously, to the benefit of the community. In doing so they can accumulate a treasure, a solid foundation in the life to come (ἀποθεωρείζωντας ἑαυτοὺς θεμέλιον καλὸν εἰς τὸ μέλλον, ἵνα ἐπιλάβωνται τῆς ὀντός ζωῆς).

The paraenesis on wealth incorporate a good number of ancient topoi.4 The love of money (φιλαργυρία) is the root of all evil (v. 10, ρίζα πάντων τῶν κακῶν), of passions and pains. Wealth is unreliable, as we lose it in death. One should look therefore for enduring, spiritual values - justice, wisdom, friends or the knowledge of the gods. Regardless of the external conditions, one should be content with the most necessary goods, holding self-sufficiency above all. The rich should use their wealth in an appropriate manner, sharing being the best way for doing so. While many of these topoi appear in Jewish sources as well, I argue that they are in fact typical for Greco-Roman mentality, and that the PE have been influenced by Greco-Roman thought. In what follows I tackle these topoi.

The unreliability of wealth

Humans come into life without belongings and can take nothing with them in death (v. 7, οὐδὲν γὰρ εἰσηνέχωμεν εἰς τῶν κόσμων, ὅτι οὐδὲ ἐξενεγκεῖν τι δυνάμεθα). Given the prospect of death, which deprives the person of all possessions, earthly goods are unreliable and their benefit transitory. The wealthy are rich only in this world (ἐν τῶν αἰῶνι) and their wealth is insecure (πλοῦτος ἀδηλότης, v. 17). The sense of the ὅτι-clause is obscure.5 It may establish an analogy between the human condition at birth and death (“just as”),6 and/or it may build on a consecutive ὅτι.7

The maxim is generally traced back to Job 1,21 and Qoh 5,14. The author may have been inspired by these scriptural passages that relativise wealth.8 To be sure, none of these books speaks against wealth. The ἡβελ-saying (Qoh 5,9) asserts the ephemeral character of wealth, not its worthlessness. The author finds happiness in simple earthly possessions and joy, in spite of their evanescence. Job does not make a case against wealth either: the main character is rich, and his wealth will be eventually restored. Consequently, 1,21 cannot be read as a relativation, let alone a rejection of wealth, but it merely expresses Job’s acceptance of the trial. While Job 1,21 and Qoh 5,14 use the metaphor of nakedness, 1 Tim 6,7 speaks of the impossibility to take anything into/out of the world. In this it comes closer to Wis 7,6. Both images appear in Greco-Roman sources (see further in this chapter).

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4 DIBELIUS, CONZELMANN, PE, 84–86; SPICQ, Épîtres 1, 561; FIORE, PE, 118–119; MALHERBE, “Godliness” I, 376–405; II, 73–96.
5 On the possible interpretations see H. MARSHALL, PE, 646–648.
6 DIBELIUS, CONZELMANN, PE, 84–85; SPICQ, Épîtres 1, 561–563).
7 BDAG, s.v. ὅτι, 5c.
8 Qoh reflects the influence of Hellenistic thinking. SCHWIEHORST-SCHÖNBERGER, Qoh, 102–103, 108–109; J. COLLINS, Jewish Wisdom, 14. Schwienhorst-Schönberger takes Qoh 5,14 to refer to financial ruin, possibly after capital investment, not to death, p. 334–335. In this case the relevance of 5,14 for our text is debatable.
The unreliability of wealth is proverbial\(^9\) and quite common in Greco-Roman sources. The texts which tackle the topic do not reject wealth, but censure the arrogance coming from it and the excessive reliance on possessions, promoting the appropriate use of material goods. In Menandros’s *Dyskolos* Sostratos convinces his father, the wealthy Kallippides, that money in itself, unshared with others, is an unreliable possession that is subject to the changes of fortune.\(^8\) Kallippides agrees that he will take nothing to the tomb; therefore his wealth should be spent in a deserving and generous manner.\(^11\) Contemplating the end of life, even the exceedingly wealthy Seneca remarks that “nature strips you as bare at your departure as at your entrance. You may take away no more than you brought in.”\(^12\) Death strips us of our belongings and status, shows Lucian in several of his satires.\(^13\) In the *Contemplantes* Charon would like to attention the living who vie for offices, honours and possessions, goods lost in death, to cease this senseless competition, to avoid putting their trust in ephemeral goods and “live with the prospect of Death before their eyes”：“Nothing of the pomp of this world will endure; nor can any man take anything hence when he dies (οὐδ’ ἀν ἀπαγάγοι τις αὐτών σὺν αὐτῷ ἀτοθανόν). He will go naked out of the world (γυμνὸν ὄξεοςθαι), and his house and his lands and his gold will be another’s, and ever another’s.”\(^14\)

### The love of money (φιλαργυρία) is the source of all evil

The denunciation of φιλαργυρία emerges from the polemic against false teachers, accused of spreading their views out of material interest.\(^15\) They are in fact a foil to Paul’s delegates and to legitimate leaders. They teach and display εὐςθέμερα out of greed, for dishonest profit (1 Tim 6,3,5). They upset entire households, teaching what they should not for the sake of shameful gain (Tit 1,11, αἰσχροὶ κέρδους χάριν).\(^9\) This is a stock accusation\(^17\) used to discredit the opponents.

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\(^8\) “You are talking about money, an unstable substance. If you know that it will stay with you forever, guard it and don’t share with anyone (μηδὲν τοῦ σου μεταδοῦσιν). But where your title’s not absolute, and all’s on lease from fortune, not your own, why grudge a man some share in it, father? Fortune might take it all away from you, hand it to someone else who doesn’t perhaps deserve it. So, as long as you control it, father, you yourself I say, should use it generously, aid everyone, and by your acts enrich all whom you can. Such conduct never dies. If you by chance should ever stumble, it will yield to you a like repayment. Better far than hidden wealth kept buried is a visible true friend.” (Men., *Dys.* 797–812, transl. Arnott). See also R. Collins, *1–2 Tim Tit*, 171–172; Malherbe, “Godliness” II, 78–79.  
\(^11\) “What I’ve put by me, I shan’t bury in my grave – How could I? It’s all yours. You’ve proved your man […] Go ahead, good luck to you. No need for sermons […] You may dispose (τῷρίζει), and give (δίδου), and share (μεταδοῦσί).” (Men., *Dys.* 813–818, transl. Arnott).  
\(^12\) Sen., *Ep.* 102.25 (“Non licet plus efferre quam intuleris, immo etiam ex eo, quod ad vitam adutuli, pars magna ponenda est”). For a detailed discussion of Seneca’s financial situation, his generosity and his (uneven) attitude to wealth: Griffin, *Séneca*, 286–314. See also Motto, “Seneca on Trial”, 254–258, who cautions against taking for granted the accusations of P. Suillius against Seneca, preserved in Tac., *Ann.* 13.42. It is impossible to tell whether his fortune had indeed reached the fabulous 300 million HS, but he ranked among the richest persons of the empire.  
\(^15\) Oberlinner, 270, 277, 283.  
\(^16\) The stock rejection of αἰσχροκερδεία in honour and shame mentality (→2.5.5) challenges H. Marshall’s assumption that in Titus it has to do with Cretan’s proverbial greed (*PE*, 198, cf. Phlb. 6.46.3; Cicc., *Resp.* 3.9.15; Liv. 44.45.13). Such “local colour” questions the Cretan setting of this epistle, as Cretan Christians would have hardly accepted their general depiction as greedy (and liars).  
\(^17\) This is Lucian’s charge against Cynics (*Luc.*, *Fug.* 17), and Peripatetics (*Herm.* 16): beside Epicureans who are sensual and fond of pleasures, and Platonists who are fond of glory (φιλόσωφοι), the Peripatetics love wealth (φιλόκληροι). See the discussion in Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 100; id., “Godliness” I, 398–399; Glancy, “Protocols”, 247–249. The greed of the Sophists is attacked by countless authors; see Karris, “Background”, 552 (referring to numerous sources). Such a wide occurrence of the motif questions Kidd’s view that false teachers were themselves wealthy (*Wealth*, 95–98). It is not impossible that some of the opponents were better-off, but the association of rival teachers or philosophers with greed and other vices is too widespread in literature to be taken here at face value.
The idea that love of money (φιλαργυρία), love of possessions (φιλοχρημοσύνη), greed (πλεονεξία) is the source of evils is a common topos that appears under various forms. According to Apollodorus of Karystos, φιλαργυρία is the sum (κεφάλαιον) of all evils, a pseudonymous letter of Hippocrates, and Dio Chrysostom say it is the cause of them (αιτίη). According to several authors, love of money is the μητρόπολις of all evils. Stobaeus attributes the saying to Bion. Diogenes Laertius to Diogenes. A version of the maxim appears in Diodorus Siculus: „All vice should be shunned by men of intelligence, but especially greed (πλεονεξία), for this vice, because of the expectation of profit, prompts many to injustice and becomes the cause of very great evils (μεγίστων κακών αἰτία) to mankind. Hence, since it is a very metropolis of unjust acts, it brings many great misfortunes not only on private citizens but even on the greatest kings.“ Epicureans censure greed and promote self-sufficiency and a simple way of life. A love of money (φιλαργυρείν) is shameful (αἰδρόσων) even when wealth is attained justly (if unjustly, it is utterly impious, ἄσθενες). When someone acquires great wealth while preserving such freedom, this may be shared or distributed (διαμετρίσω) to earn the good will of one’s neighbour (πλησίου). Epicurean denunciation of greed is not equivalent therefore with promoting poverty, but it counters reliance on possessions and it encourages sharing one’s fortune.

Lack of greed (ἀφιλαργυρία) is an ideal value of the elites, a common requirement in ethical writings and in admonitions to officials or candidates for office. A worthy, self-restrained man (σώφρον), preparing for a public career, should hold justice above the desire for wealth and should not emulate those who seek gain by injustice (έξ δικαιῶν κερδωσόμενον). A general should be temperate (σώφρον), free from greed (ἀφιλάργυρος) and should hold a good reputation (ἐνδοξος). The king should have the same concern; he should prefer good reputation to gaining wealth, as unjust profit (παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον) produces danger, not wealth.
Wealth and greed as source of pains and moral corruption

According to 1 Tim 6, desire for wealth leads to temptation; people are trapped by senseless and harmful desires leading to destruction (v. 9). Greed has led some astray from faith and has caused many pains (10b). The destructive effects of (desire for) wealth are common in literature.

In Sophocles’ Antigone, Creon asserts that there is nothing so evil among men as money.31 According to Epicureans, unlimited wealth is great poverty.32 Great wealth (χρήματα πολλά) generally entails enslavement (θηρεία) to the crowds or to those in power. This is hardly compatible with a free life, which otherwise already has everything in abundance. Passions, says (Pseudo-)Longinus (1st cent. CE?), plunge us into the worst of slaveries, and tyrannically drag us wherever they please. Avarice (φιλαργυρία) (that disease of which the whole world is sick beyond a cure) aided by voluptuousness, holds us fast in chains of thralldom, or rather, if I may so express it, overwhelms life itself, as well as all that live in the depths of misery. For love of money (φιλαργυρία) is the disease which renders us most abject.33

Wealth is frequently associated with passions like desire, fear and pain, as well as with vices, says Seneca. Fortunes are the greatest source of human sorrow; for if you compare all the other ills from which we suffer deaths, sicknesses, fears, longings, the endurance of pains and labours – with the evils which our money brings, this portion will far outweigh the other. […] All ye who bow down to riches, where is your shame? Come, turn your eyes upon heaven; you will see the gods quite needy, giving all and having nothing.34

Plutarch, coming from a wealthy family, himself belonging to the elite, repeatedly dismisses cupidty and luxury and depicts the dangers associated with wealth.36 The position of Seneca and Plutarch shows that reliance on wealth can be censured even by the wealthiest representatives of the elites.

Self-sufficiency

Αὐτάρκεια, self-sufficiency, independence from externals, capacity to adapt to less fortunate circumstances was advocated by a wide range of philosophical schools.38 According to Stobaeus, Socrates regarded self-sufficiency as natural wealth.39 Epicureans endorsed self-sufficiency and a simple lifestyle.40 For them, “freedom is the greatest fruit of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια).”41 Cynics promote a radical autarkeia, as they reject wealth and life in society, and advocate contentment with the most necessary things.42 Stoics hold autarkeia in high regard,43 but unlike Cynics, do not promote an antisocial

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31 Soph., Antig. 295–299.
32 Gnom. Vat. 25 (MÜHLL, 63; GEER, 67).
34 Sen., Tranq. 8; compare Cons. Helv. 11.3; Ep. 42.7 (acquiring some possessions may cost us anxiety, danger, loss of honour): 59.14; 80.6; 87.31–33 (yet, considering that riches are the cause of evil [divitias esse causa malorum] not by themselves, but because they incite men to do evil); they can be a source of arrogance (insolentia: 88.32); 88.10–11; 119.6,8–9; Prov. 6.1–4; cf. Ep 84.11–12. See GRIFFIN, Séneca, 295.
35 Sen., Ep. 87.31–32 (“infant animos, superbiam paruint”).
36 Wealth does not secure happiness (Plut., De cap. div. 1, Mor. 523D). Avarice is like a mental disorder (3–4, Mor. 524DE). Luxury and the possession of superfluous belongings is condemnable (8–19, Mor. 527B-F).
37 LSJ, s.v. αὐτάρκεια.
39 Stob. 3.5.31.3/4 (αὐτάρκεια γάρ φύσις ἐστὶ πλοῦτος).
41 Gnom. Vat. 77 (MÜHLL, 68; GEER, 72).
lifestyle. According to Musonius Rufus the greatest wealth is poverty if it is not accompanied by the ability to want for nothing.\textsuperscript{44} Seneca’s Epistle 110 is a plea for unpretentious lifestyle. One should not only discard senseless luxury, but should be content with the simplest food sufficient for survival.\textsuperscript{45} Epictetus holds a good life above a luxurious one. Good life is accompanied by temperance, self-sufficiency, orderliness, whereas a rich life goes together with licentiousness, wantonness and disorderly conduct.\textsuperscript{46}

The proper enjoyment of wealth

God provides to humans richly all things to enjoy (εἰς ἀπόλαυσιν, v. 17).\textsuperscript{47} The proper enjoyment of wealth is a common topic in ancient literature.\textsuperscript{48} Wealth is useless in itself, if the person is unable to enjoy it, in a morally appropriate way. Some argue that 1 Tim 6,17 counters the ascetic tenets of the opponents, based on the goodness of creation (cf. 4,3-4).\textsuperscript{49} The connection is not so obvious, however. The focus is on God as giver of wealth. In a society whose subsistence was largely supported by wealthy benefactors, God is envisaged as generous benefactor. The rich have received their wealth from God,\textsuperscript{50} that is why they are supposed to follow the divine example. They should use the wealth richly bestowed on them to the benefit of the community.

Enduring values instead of a transient wealth

The author advises the wealthy to look for enduring values instead of passing wealth. Isocrates opposes justice after death to love of money.\textsuperscript{51} For Epicureans friendship is valuable than possessions. Autarkeia and the simple lifestyle allow sharing and this endows one with friends and their gratitude.\textsuperscript{52} By great fortune, freedom can be preserved only if possessions are shared or distributed (διαμετρέω), winning the goodwill of the neighbour (τηλησίων).\textsuperscript{53} Friendship is an undying value.\textsuperscript{54} Plutarch considers that true happiness can be found in the pursuit of temperance (τὸ σωφροσύνη), of wisdom (τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν) and, remarkably, through the appropriate knowledge of the gods.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{43} Chrysip., Fr. mor. 272 (αὐτάρκεια δὲ ἔξεσ ἀρκομενή ὥς δὲ καὶ δι’ αὐτῆς πορευτική τῶν πρὸς τὸ ζῇν καθήκοντων); cf. 276 (ἔξεσ κτλ. ... πρὸς τῶν μακάριων συντελούντων βίων); Chrysippus, Fragmenta moralia, in VON ARNIM, SVF 3, 67, 68.

\textsuperscript{44} Mus., Fr. 34: “The treasures of Croesus and Cinyras we shall condemn as the last degree of poverty. One man and one alone shall we consider rich, the man who has acquired the ability to want for nothing always and everywhere.”

\textsuperscript{45} His argument is typical for Cynics and Stoics. See also Mus., Fr. 18b, 19, and 20.

\textsuperscript{46} Epict., Sent. 16.2: Τὸ καλὸς ζήν τοῦ πολυτελῶς διαφέρει: τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ σωφροσύνης καὶ αὐτάρκειας καὶ εὐταξίας καὶ κοσμωτηρίου καὶ εὐτελείας παρεχόμενο, τὸ δὲ ἐξ ἀκομοίας καὶ τροφῆς καὶ ἀταξίας καὶ ἀκομοίας· τέλος δὲ τοῦ μὲν ἐπαινείσθη, τοῦ δὲ ψυχῆς· ἐκ τούτων βούλει καλῶς ζῆν, μὴ ἔχειν μετὰ πολυτελείας· ἐπαινείσθη· note the association of virtues and vices, respectively. Gnomologium Epicteteum (e Stobaei libris 3–4, SCHENKI, Epicteti dissertationes ab Arriano digestae, cf. ThLG, search on December 30, 2009).

\textsuperscript{47} BDAG and LSJ, s.v. ἀπόλαυσις; MALHERBE, “Godliness” II, 73–96 (83-84, 91-93).

\textsuperscript{48} MALHERBE, “Godliness” II, 83-84 (Isc., Dem. 9; 27-28; Men., Fr. 628; Plut., De cup. div. 525B; Phildm., Oec. 18.47-19.1; 10.43-11.3). See also Qoh 5,17-18.

\textsuperscript{49} SPICQ, Épîtres I, 577; OBERLINER, 304-306 (against Gnostic asceticism); MARSHALL, Pastoral Epistles, 672.

\textsuperscript{50} MARSHALL rightly notes that the author does not discuss the reasons of poverty and the unequal distribution of wealth, but offers an ethical perspective on wealth and the chances of the well-off to reach salvation (Pastoral Epistles, 669-670).

\textsuperscript{51} Isoc., Dem. 38–39 (transl. Norlin): “ Prefer honest poverty to unjust wealth (μᾶλλον ἀπόδοξον δικαίων ποιῶν ή τιλοῦτον ἄδικων); for justice is better than riches (κρέττων δικαιοσύνης χρηστῶν) in that riches profit us only while we live, while justice provides us glory even after we are dead, and while riches are shared by bad men, justice is a thing in which the wicked can have no part. Never emulate those who seek to gain by injustice (τῶν ἔστε δικαιωσύνης κραδαιμοσύνης), but cleave rather to those who have suffered loss in the cause of justice (τούς μετὰ δικαιοσύνης ζημιωθέκιν); for if the just (δίκαιοι) have no other advantage over the unjust, at any rate they surpass them in their high hopes.”

\textsuperscript{52} MALHERBE II, 87 (cf. Sent. Vat. 67).

\textsuperscript{53} Gnom. Vat. 67 (MÜHLL, 67; GEER, 71).

\textsuperscript{54} Sent. Vat. 77.

\textsuperscript{55} Plut., De cup. div. 10, Mor. 527F.
1 Timothy is similar insofar as the rich are expected to obtain an enduring good by sharing their wealth. Compared to the examples discussed above, faith in personal life after death and in postmortem reward offers a specifically Christian perspective. Christians may find true, enduring values - wisdom, virtue, friends - not only in this world, but can expect true reward from God after death. On the other hand, it is interesting that for the purpose of analogy v. 19 describes reward after death in economical terms. The beneficent wealthy amass for themselves a valuable treasure, a good foundation or capital (ἀποθησαυρίζοντας ἑαυτοῖς θεμέλιον καλῶν) in the life to come.

Generosity and euergetism

The final part of the paraenesis shows that the proper use of wealth implies its sharing. The author expects the rich to support the community, to do good (ἀγαθοθεραπεύειν), to be rich in noble deeds (πλουτεύων ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς), generous (εἰμιταξιώντοι) and ready to share (κοινωνικώς, 18. v.). We could be tempted to regard the ἔργα καλά as the little gestures of mercy, associated with Christian (Catholic) devotion (offering alms, visiting the sick and the elderly etc.), but the passage is not simply about that. The exhortation should be read in the social-cultural context of ancient euergetism, and we should consider the system of values reflected by terms like καλός and ἀγαθός.

The system of euergetism

The conviction that the rich have to support the community with their wealth was pervasive in Greco-Roman societies. While in the West the dominant system was that of individual patronage, in the Greek East, from the Hellenistic period onward the institution of euergetism flourished. Euergetism succeeded to the practice of paying for liturgies, typical for the classical period, an obligation of the aristocracy to the benefit of the polis. Euergetism, the sponsoring of the various needs and activities of the polis became the moral and social obligation of the elites. It was a system based on symbolic reciprocity, in which benefactors received a return for their generosity through public honours (honorary inscriptions, statues, seats of honour, public funeral). A gradual „liturgisation“ of the offices completed the picture: offices were not remunerated, conversely candidates paid a summa honoraria to acquire the office, and frequently made promises (epangeliai) to pay for building projects, athletic competitions, religious festivals, theatrical performances, public meals, distribution of grains or oil during their term. In theory one could distinguish between spontaneous and ob honorem euergetism (accompanying offices), but in practice the distinction between the two was blurred. Euergetism was practiced not only at the level of the polis, but also in private associations.

The requirement that the rich share their wealth to the benefit of the less fortunate marked elite mentality. The practice proved the moral excellence of the social elites. Generosity and magnanimity were the virtues commonly expected from the officials. According to Plutarch, a statesman should

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56 SPICQ, Épîtres I, 578 (“dépôt”, “capital”).
57 Cf. Acts 14,17; God as benefactor.
58 The most common liturgies were the gymnasiarchia, the choregia and the hestiasis. LSJ, s.v. λειτουργία. In times of war to these added the trierarchia. Xen., Oec. 7.2–3 presents Isomachus as an example, against those who would escape such dignified burdens.
61 ZUIDERHOEK, Politics, 11.
62 SPICQ, Épîtres I, 428.
63 Rightly, ZUIDERHOEK: „there was a strong emphasis on the usefulness to the community of individual wealth, and it was coupled with the notion that an individual’s claim to moral superiority could only be substantiated through a successful contribution to the well-being of the community. [...] Individual wealth was good if it was used for the benefit of the community. Anyone who used his wealth in such a way thereby testified to his moral excellence. He was an ἀγαθός πολίτης, a good citizen par excellence.” (Politics, 130-131, cf. 132-133).
64 Xenophon praises Polydamas of Pharsalos, a fourth century Thessalian statesman, for his noble character, his generosity and magnanimity (φιλόξυνος […] καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῆς). See also Xen., Hell. 6.1.2–3, transl. Brownson).
support honourable and worthy causes, demanding no return on his benefactions.65 For a statesman, who “brings his superior excellence into close contact with the common needs of mankind”, wealth is “not merely one of the necessities of life, but also of its noble things (τῶν καλῶν”)”; the example here is that of Pericles, “who gave aid to many poor men”.66 Plutarch evokes Kimon, the eminent fifth-century Athenian statesman, as an exceptionally munificent man (μεταιμμένως τοκνος), feeding the poor citizens at his table.67 Athenaeus praises a number of eminent men for their generosity, starting with Alexander and ending with one Gellias of Agrigentum, known for his outstanding hospitality.68

Generosity is a quality of the elites in honorary inscriptions, as well.69 Benefactors are praise for their generous willingness to share (μεταδιδομαι).70 One M. Aurelius Antoninus from Prusa (Bithynia) is praised for being φιλόνομος and an εὐεργήτης.71 The Cretan league praises Aglaos of Kos for his generous character and his liberal spending, emerging from the conviction that personal fortune should be used for the benefit of others.72

Beneficence and sharing are frequent topics in moral-philosophical writings. As opposed to radical Cynics, Stoics, Epicureans and Neopythagoreans did not discard wealth, but, as noted, endorsed its proper use. This involved first of all its sharing with the less fortunate.73 In Neopythagorean treatises the king is generally accessible and approachable for all, keeping his house always unlocked as a harbour of refuge for those in need”).

According to Cicero, liberalitas is a marker of a man of high standing, and hospitalitas is the outstanding proof of magnanimity (Off. 2.15.53; 2.18.63: “[..] when generosity is not indiscriminate giving, it wins most gratitude […].] because goodness of heart in a man of high station becomes the common refuge of everybody. Pains must, therefore, be taken to benefit as many as possible with such kindness […].”; cf. Off. 2.18.64). Plutarch writes of a politician: “he is affable and generally accessible and approachable for all, keeping his house always unlocked as a harbour of refuge for those in need”). Praecepta 31, Mor. 823A.

65 Plut., Praecepta 30, 822B-C; in addition he should avoid vain and excessive expenditure. ROSKAM, “Plutarch’s Life of Agis”, 236.
66 Per. 16.6; cf. VAN RAALTE, “More Philosophico”, 88–89.
67 Plut., Cim. 10.4–5 (according to Aristotle he actually invited only his demesmen).
68 Deipnos. 1.5.
69 The Cretan league praises Aglaos of Kos for his generous character and his liberal spending, emerging from the conviction that personal fortune should be used for the benefit of others. IDELOS 1517, (2nd cent. BCE) ll. 27–30 (από τῆς τύχης προστρέμαται καταχρηστικά πρὸς εὐεργεσίαν ἀνθρώπων ἐφ᾽ ὄσον ἐστὶ διανοοῦσα); already referred to by SPICQ, Épîtres I, 428. Aglaos is characterised by εὐθυμία πρὸς τῶν θείων (Il. 36–37). Aglaos was probably a military official in the service of Ptolemy VI Philometer and prozemos at Alexandria. See HALLEAUX, “Décrets des auxiliaires crétois”, 9–23. For numerous other examples: DMITRIEV, City Government, 38–39, 42–43 passim (noting the increasing call for benefactions in the Hellenistic period, with respect to officials).
70 An honorary inscription from Dionysopolis to Akornion, a priest and benefactor says that he shared the essentials with the citizens (μετεδίδωκεν τῶν χρωμάτων); 1st cent. BCE, SIG 2.762 (Dionysopolis, 1st cent. BCE), cf. DANKER, Benefactor, no. 12, followed by KIDD, Wealth, 127–129. An honorary decree of the koimian of the Ionians refers to Dionysios Amenios of Priene, priest of King Nikomedes Epiphanes, as μετακοιμίσας σπονδούς νεκρον: τε καὶ τῆς λοιπῆς φιλανθρωπίας (IPriene 55 = PH 252892, ll. 22, 24; 128/127 BCE). See also IPriene 113 = PH252913, ll. 54–57, 82–83 (ca. 84 BCE): Aulus Aeemilius Zosimos repeatedly offers meals and a share in the sacrificial offers to the population (partial translation in SCHMITT PANTEL, LISSARRAGUE, “Banquet”, 246).
71 IK Prusias ad Hypium 21 = PH 279960, early 3rd cent. CE. He is a primipilaris (a senior centurio) and epitropos Sebastos (probably the procurator Augusti).
72 IDELOS 1517 (2nd cent. BCE) ll. 27–30 (από τῆς τύχης προστρέμαται καταχρηστικά πρὸς εὐεργεσίαν ἀνθρώπων ἐφ᾽ ὄσον ἐστὶ διανοοῦσα); already referred to by SPICQ, Épîtres I, 428. Aglaos is characterised by εὐθυμία πρὸς τῶν θείων (ll. 36–37). Aglaos was probably a military official in the service of Ptolemy VI Philometer and prozemos at Alexandria. See HALLEAUX, “Décrets des auxiliaires crétois”, 9–23. For numerous other examples: DMITRIEV, City Government, 38–39, 42–43 passim (noting the increasing call for benefactions in the Hellenistic period, with respect to officials). See also the inscriptions honoring the Corinthian Junia Theodora (decree no. 3, of Patara, ll. 27–28; compare decree no. 4 by the Lycian federation, ll. 49–51, and no. 5, of the city of Telmessos, ll. 75–76). VENENCIE, CHARITONIDIS, PALLAS, “Inscriptions trouvées à Solômos”, 496–508 (499).
74 Diotog., De regn., THESLEFF, 73, 7; GUTHRIE, 222–224.
75 THESLEFF, 73,25–26: χρηστός καί ἐκ τῶν εὐεργεσίων καί ἐκ τῶν προσβεβλήσεως καί ἐκ τῶν εὐεργεσίως; GUTHRIE, 223, 224.
from the individual to the community, in order to promote sharing and κοινωνία. As shown above, Epicurean denunciation of greed is also paired with the commendation of sharing: αὐτάρκεια enables the wise to share with others (μεταδόθαι). The Stoic Musonius contrasts the costs of luxurious buildings to the true value of sharing and beneficence.

Are not all these things superfluous and unnecessary, without which it is possible not only to live but also to be healthy? […] do they not cost great sums of money from which many people might have benefited (εἰρηκτήρεις) by public and private charity? How much more commendable than living a life of luxury it is to help many people (πολλοίς εἰρηκτήτειν). How much nobler than spending money for sticks and stones to spend it on men. How much more profitable than surrounding oneself with a great house to make many friends, the natural result of cheerfully doing good. What would one gain from a large and beautiful house comparable to what he would gain by conferring the benefits of his wealth upon the city and his fellow-citizens?

Seneca, though regarding wealth as indifferent (like all Stoics do) and depicting the dangers and evils related to affluence (as noted above), also argues that riches are to be preferred to poverty, because they provide the opportunity to exercise virtue. Riches allow the well-to-do to show moderation (temperantia), munificence (liberalitas), diligence (diligentia) and generosity (magnificentia).

Literary sources pertaining to various genres express the same conviction. In Menandros’ Dyskolos Sostratos argues that wealth is valuable only if it is used in a noble manner, to the benefit of many, shared with those in need. This conviction will be embraced by his father, Kalippides: “No need for sermons […] You may dispose (πόριζε) and give (δίδου) and share (μεταδίδου)”.

Those unwilling to share are harshly censured. Plutarch thinks that such an attitude is incompatible with the status of free person, and such a character is “ἀνελευθέρως, unsocial, selfish (ἀμεταδότως), heedless of friends (πρὸς φίλους ἀπηνός), indifferent to country (πρὸς πόλιν ἀφιλοτήμως)”.

**Noble deeds**

Καλὸς and ἀγαθὸς, used in a moral sense, meaning noble, good, are markers of a system of values, of a human ideal. They characterize the noble, generous deeds of the καλὸς κἀγαθὸς person. Spicq has recognised since long that the PE presuppose precisely this ideal of the perfectly good, respectable man. It should also be recalled that in the Greek world the noble and good man, the ἀγαθός, was the representative of the elite: aristocracy involved moral excellence. The good man was implicitly wealthy: fortune endowed him (her) with the ability to do good, to benefit the community. Καλὸς and ἀγαθὸς appear a number of times in the PE. 1 Tim 3,1 speaks of the function of the episkopos as καλὸν ἐργον (in the singular). The idiom is translated as either a good work or deed, a good thing, or a noble, worthy or benevolent task or undertaking. The term may include both aspects.

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76 Malherbe, “Paul’s Self-sufficiency”, 134–135 (referring to Stob. 4.7.66 = Thesleff, 83,18–84,8).
77 “The wise man who has become accustomed to necessities knows better how to share with others than how to take from them, so great a treasure of self-sufficiency has he found (ἀυτάρκειας εἰρήκε θησαυρόν),” Gnom. Vat. 44 (Mühl, 64–65; Geer, 69). See also Phld., Oec. 18,2–7 (μεταδότες); 18,34–35 (μεταδοτικούς), quoted by Malherbe, “Godliness” II, 87.
78 Fr. 19, 22–32, Lutz, 122/123.
79 Vit. beat. 22.1. See also 24.5: “I deny that riches are a good; for if they were, they would make men good. […] Nevertheless I admit that they are desirable, that they are useful, and that they add great comforts to living.”
80 “You yourself, I say, should use it generously (γενναίος), aid everyone, and by your acts enrich all whom you can. Such conduct never dies. If you by chance should ever stumble, it will yield to you a like repayment. Better far than hidden wealth kept buried is a visible true friend.” Men., Dys. 806–812 (transl. Arnott).
81 Als o. V., Per. 16.6; cf. Van Raalte, “More Philosophico”, 88–89
82 De cup. div. 5, Mor. 525CD (LCL). See also Panagopoulos, “Vocabulaire”, 205.
83 LSL s.v. ἀγαθός and καλὸς.
84 Épîtres I, 227.
85 Zijderhoek, Politics, 130–133. See Plut., Per. 16.6; cf. Van Raalte, “More Philosophico”, 88–89
86 Dibelius, Past. 42 (“gutes Werk”); Dibelius, Conzelmann, PE, 50; Quinn, Wacker, 1–2 Tim, 244 with Quinn, Tit, 139–144, 175–176 (“fine deeds”, to be sure, rightly remarking that the author alludes to the common connection between καλὸς and ἀγαθός).
87 Oberlinner, I Tim, 115; R. Collins, I 2 Tim Tit, 78.
be sure, in antiquity assuming an office was regarded as a noble (καλός) act. According to Plutarch a man should engage in politics nor for personal gain, but in order to pursue the noble (τὸ καλὸν), knowing that statesmanship is the most respectable enterprise. Remarkably, he refers to the position of Leonidas, Alexander’s preceptor, in terms of καλὸν ἔργον – he did not shun the title of tutor (of Alexander) (τίς παιδαγωγοίας δόμα), “since the office afforded an honourable and brilliant occupation (καλὸν ἔργον ἔχοντας καὶ λαμπρὸν).” Aegialus calls καλὸν ἔργον any worthy enterprise that may secure him a lasting remembrance. Qualifying the aspiration to episkopē as καλὸν ἔργον, as a noble, valuable, excellent enterprise corresponds to contemporary views on public service.

The plural ἔργα καλὰ (1 Tim 5,10a.25; 6,18) or ἄγαθα (1 Tim 2,10; 5,10b; or the generic πᾶν ἔργον ἄγαθον in 2 Tim 2,21; 3,17) may not have an identical meaning. The plural usually refers to the morally valuable, unspecified individual deeds performed by Christians that mark their faith and their adherence to sound doctrine. However, given the cultural context of the paraenesis to the rich, encouraged to exercise beneficence, one should consider two points, which show that the ἄγαθορθεῖα, and the ἔργα καλὰ are not just any good deeds, but the acts of euergetism, expected from the well-to-do in contemporary society. First, in the PE the good or noble deeds tend to be station-specific. As Merz shows, for the official it is his ministry, in particular teaching that is a good work or noble enterprise, leading to salvation (1 Tim 3,1 with 4,16); for women it is motherhood and perseverance in gender-specific virtues (1 Tim 2,10,15). Therefore, obviously, the good works or noble enterprises specific to the rich are the acts of beneficence, which as seen, also secure their salvation. (Although here σωτηρία is not used, the future true life, the valuable treasure amassed in that life refers to salvation.) Second, since in the PE good works witness to one’s adherence to sound doctrine and true faith, the rich prove their faith, and, in view of 6,3,5, their εὐσεβεία by sharing their fortune to benefit the community. As seen, the author claims that the opponents regard εὐσεβεία as a source of profit (1 Tim 6,3,5; cf. 2 Tim 3,2,5: they are greedy and possess only the appearance of εὐσεβεία). In view of the contrast between the opponents and the wealthy Christians embracing true faith, their autarkēia and beneficence suggest that they truly possess the εὐσεβεία which the opponents (allegedly) lack. We find here the typical association between generosity and εὐσεβεία that marks out the καλὸς κάγαθος.

Εὐσεβεία is one of the foremost virtues in antiquity, comprising piety toward God(s), reverence toward authority, parents, and the homeland. It is the virtue of the reliable, honourable person.

Εὐσεβεία is very common in honorary inscriptions, which depict the honorand, generally a magistrate and benefactor, through a combination of qualities. In the case of benefactors, it goes together with generosity, and beneficence suggest that they truly possess the εὐσεβεία which marks the καλὸς κάγαθōς.

88 SPICQ, Épîtres I, 428–429; ROLLOFF, 1 Tim, 153; VERNER, Household, 151; H. MARSHALL, PE, 475–476 (task, “excellent occupation”).
89 MERZ, Selbstauslegung, 289–291: a noble undertaking and a good work specific to the episkopos, carried out mainly through teaching (cf. 1 Tim 4,16).
90 Xen., Mem. 3.6.2.
91 Plut., Praecepta Mor. 798E; cf. ROSKAM, “Plutarch’s Life of Agis”, 228.
92 Plut., Alex. 5.7.
93 Plut., Apophth. lac. 79, Mor. 215A.
94 SPICQ, Épîtres I, 428–429. In view of its association with the requisite of generosity, the office defined as καλὸν ἔργον is an altruistic deed, a service to be performed by the better-off for the benefit of the less fortunate, a view that matches mentalities typical for elites from the Hellenistic period onward. VERNER, Household, 151 (based on J. Jeremias), 155–156, 160, followed by KIDD, Wealth, 84–85; WAGENER, Ordnung, 177–178.
95 MERZ, Selbstauslegung, 289–291.
96 Oberlinner, 306.
97 Oberlinner, 306.
zealous in σοφροσύνη, pious (εὐσεβής) and loving (φιλόστοργος) toward members of his household (πρὸς τοὺς οίκείους), fair and human (ἐπιμελητικὴ καὶ φιλόθρωπος) toward household slaves.100

The reward of beneficence

The system of euergetism was based on a certain symbolic reciprocity. The polis publicly honoured its benefactors and expressed its gratitude toward them erecting statues, drafting honorary inscriptions exposed in public spaces, according seats of honour at theatrical performances and so on. Private associations honoured their benefactors in similar ways. It seems likely that better-off Christians also expected such expressions of gratitude,101 all the more as the life of the ekklesia, just as that of the polis and of voluntary associations, largely depended on the generosity of its benefactors. However 1 Timothy proposes a religious motivation and reward in return for their benefactions: euergetism is not only an identity marker of well-off Christians, but it also secures their post-mortem reward. In fact the expectation of a reward in the life to come is the only typically Christian element of the exhortation to the rich. They should expect their reward not in this life, from society, but in the future life.

The subtext seems to be that the better-off should not expect honours from the ekklesia. Further, if in society benefactors could exert significant influence due to their euergetism, 1 Tim 6,17–19 seems to limit the influence of wealthier members who do not belong to the ranks of officials, but wish to have a say in the community. With the promise of eternal reward, the author suggests that when wealthy Christians use their fortune properly by sharing it to support the ekklesia, they are not supposed to expect to have a comparable influence as that enjoyed by the benefactors of the polis.

Summary

Reading the paraenesis on wealth in its cultural context shows that the author does not censure wealth as such, but the moral dangers associated with it. The assessment of wealth in 1 Timothy 6 incorporates widespread Greco-Roman topos: the dismissal of greed, the idea that φιλαργυρία is the cause of moral evils and pains, the unreliability of wealth, the higher value of spiritual values (wisdom, virtue, friendship or the knowledge of the gods) compared to possessions, the praise αὐτάρκεια, and the appropriate use of wealth. The rich should share their fortune to the benefit of others. These pronouncements appear in a variety of Greco-Roman sources, from drama to moral philosophy to epigraphy.

B. Fiore, assessing the use of αὐτάρκεια in 1 Tim 6,16, argues that the PE are in conversation with Epicureanism.102 N. Neumann finds Cynical principles in the assessment of wealth.103 As attractive as these suggestions may be, it seems more likely that the author does not reflect the principles of a specific philosophical school, but it expresses the common values of contemporary society.

With the exception of the Cynics, ancient authors do not promote destitution. Moreover, by extolling freedom from possessions and praising the well-off for using their riches to the benefit of others, they express the values of the elites. In a similar manner, even when the author of 1 Timothy cautions against φιλαργυρία and pleads for a simple life (1 Tim 6,7–9), he does not encourage the wealthy to

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100 An honorary decree from the imperial period, bestowing postmortem honours on Agreophon of Perdeikia, gymnasiarx, stephanephoros and agonothete, ΙKaunos 4 = ΡΗ 259542. He was praised for his benefactions in favour of citizens and foreigners, and for having exhibited the magnanimity (μεγαλοφυσία) of a λειτουργός. Agreophon’s benefactions are the usual (bequest of oil, sponsoring of theatrical and athletic performances). Aglaos of Cos, mentioned above, is also characterized by εὐσεβεία πρὸς τῶν θεῶν Περσίδων ΙΔελος 1517 , II. 36–37; cf. ΣΠΙΚ, Ἐπιστ., 428. Beneficence and generosity may express an officials’ εὐσεβεία: KEARSLEY, “A Civic Benefactor of the First Century”, 233–241; R. GORDON, “The Veil of Power”, 133–134 – both on a prytanis Kleanax, priest of Dionysios Pandemos from Kyme (late first century BCE to early 2nd cent. CE); KARRER, “Διαστηματικό”, 184 (several inscriptions from Asia Minor). Prytanis Tullia is commended for her benefactions in Ephesus. BÜYÜKKOLANCI, ENGELMANN, “Inschriften aus Ephesos”, 65–82 (late 1st to early 2nd cent.), IEph 1063, 1064. The epitaph of an Epiphania (2/3rd cent. CE, Tomis), a widow from Greece reads: “to friends abandoned as a woman to women I provided much, with a view to piety” (Φιλές τε λευσμένης ὡς γυνὴ γυνὴν πολλὰ παράσχον, εἰς εὐσεβήν ἄφορωδον). See G. HORSLEY, “Charity”, 55–56 (his transl.).


102 “The Pastoral Epistles in the Light of Philodemus”, 271–293.

103 “Kein Gewinn”, 127–147.
become poor in the manner of the Cynics.\footnote{104} Wealth comes from God and is there for proper enjoyment. The well-off should use their wealth in the service of the community. The mentality and the language is that of euergetism. The wealthy are confronted with the common civic ideal of the noble and generous elites who use their assets for benefactions. By encouraging the liberality of the well-to-do, 1 Timothy reflects the contemporary valuation of euergetism. This social practice receives here a religious motivation: euergetism marks out the Christian identity of the well-to-do and guarantees their post-mortem reward. Implicitly this also suggests that the better-off should not aspire to social recognition in return for their beneficence. Reward is promised in the life to come.

\footnotetext{104}{The rich are not expected to give everything to the poor (M. MACDONALD Pauline Churches, 190), but sharing is clearly in view in 6,18–19.}