

Anthropological perspectives in 1 Timothy. Cultural Background and Rhetoric

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As opposed to the authentic and deuteropauline epistles, σῶμα never occurs in the Pastoral Epistles. Σάρξ appears once, in the traditional 1 Tim 3,16, referring to the mystery of incarnation (ἐν σαρκί). There is one reference in the Pastoral corpus to the “bodily” (σωματική) aspect. According to 1 Tim 4,8 σωματική γυμνασία is less profitable compared to piety (εὐσέβεια), which holds the promise of the present of the coming life. This brief summary may appear to suggest that the author is uninterested in the body or in the bodily realm. However this is far from being the case. In fact the author dedicates much attention to matters pertaining to the body. This attention is revealed by those texts that deal with the goodness of creation, with marriage and with alimentary rules. Thus his position concerning the bodily realm surfaces in the texts connected to creation. The same texts reveal the anthropology of the author, a matter that shall be examined in this paper.

One may argue with good reason that the Pastoral Epistles offer a positive perspective on creation and implicitly on the bodily existence.² To be sure, creation and anthropology are not autonomous theological issues, but the topics are addressed in order to sustain ethical principles or decisions concerning church order. The reference to creation and fall in 1 Tim 2,13-15 offers the theological legitimation for women’s exclusion from teaching. The thesis of the goodness of creation (1 Tim 4,4-5) is used as argument in the polemic against the asceticism advocated by the opponents. 1 Tim 6,13 refers to the attribute of God (the ζωογονοῦντος τὰ πάντα) as theological ground for the ability and obligation of “Timothy”, the type of the church leader, to be an irreproachable witness of the right doctrine, referred here as καλή ὁμολογία.

Notwithstanding the positive view on creation, the anthropology of the PE is ambivalent. The references to male and female nature and roles suggest that the author stands on the one hand in the line of early Jewish relectures of the story of creation and fall. On the other hand he embraces views shared with Greco-Roman sources on human nature and gender roles.

In this paper I examine first the widespread view that the opponents embrace Gnostic views hostile to creation and to the body, allegedly demonstrated by 1 Tim 4,3-5, and I argue that the opponents belong to an ascetic group. Subsequently, I focus on the *relecture* of Gen 2–3, examining the underlying anthropology, and mapping the Jewish and Greco-Roman background of these views. My main point is that the ktisiological and anthropological statements have a rhetorical function, aiming at contesting ascetical tendencies, consolidating traditional gender roles and excluding women from positions of authority in the church.

1. The Opponents - Gnostic Heretics Denying the Goodness of Creation?

It has become a commonplace to argue that the Pastoral Epistles reflect a struggle with heresy, and all commentators attempt to identify the nature of the heterodoxy fought by these epistles.³ This is most frequently defined as a form of (early) Gnosticism,⁴ in view of the allusion to the false knowledge proposed by the adversaries (ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως, 1 Tim 6,20), and of the repeated contention that the opponents and their followers are denied access to the knowledge of truth (ἐπίγνωσις ἀληθείας, 2 Tim 2,25; 3,7). Additional arguments for a Gnostic heresy are taken from the opponents’ asceticism, their abstention from certain foods, thought to deny the goodness of creation (1 Tim 4,3-4),⁵ as well as from women’s alleged rejection of motherhood, postulated on the basis of 1

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² Donelson speaks of creation as a “friendly place”, *Pseudoepigraphy*, 141.

³ A survey by Jerry L. Sumney illustrates the diversity of heretical movements postulated and number of reconstructions based on reading external evidence into the text and on mirror-reading; ‘*Servants*’, 253-300; id., “Studying Paul’s Opponents”, 39-44.

⁴ Dibelius/Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 5 (Judaizing Gnosticism), 65-67; Brox, *Pastoralbriefe*, 32-38 (Jewish Christian gnosis), 169; Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 14, 179-180 (with a strong Judaizing component: *1. Timotheus*, 13-14), cf. id., *2. Timotheus*, 101, 131; Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 43, 46, 64, 224; Wolter, *Pastoralbriefe*, 265-267; Young, *Theology*, 9-13 (Jewish Gnosticism); Hultgren, *Rise*, 70-71 (an early form of Gnosticism with Jewish and Christian elements”); Montague, *1-2 Tim, Tit*, 34-35. Hesitantly Collins, *1 2 Timothy Titus*, 75, 114-116.

⁵ Brox, *Pastoralbriefe*, 167, 169; Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 224 (their alleged “Schöpfungsfeindlichkeit”); Young, *Theology*, 95, 131; Wilson,

Tim 2,15. In this perspective even the myths and genealogies (1 Tim 1,4, possibly also the Jewish myths in Tit 1,14) become a mark of Gnosticism. The other hypotheses (referring to a Jewish Christian heterodoxy, - 1 Tim 1,7, cf. Tit 1,5.10.14;⁶ a docetic heresy,⁷ an enthusiastic piety due to a realised eschatology⁸) shall not be addressed here, for reasons of space.

To anticipate, a more plausible approach defines the opposition not that much in terms of heresy, but as an ascetic movement, as suggested by 1 Tim 4,3 and by the exhortations to widows (ch. 5). Many of those who take this stance approximate this form of asceticism with the one reflected later in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.⁹

The attempts to identify the opponents essentially reflect the presupposition that since the author rejects their teaching as heterodox, and takes such pains to rebuke them, they must indeed be heretics.¹⁰ This approach often also indicates the view that heterodoxy is preceded by an established doctrine,¹¹ and takes heresy as corruption of a previously existing, pure teaching, i.e. of orthodoxy.¹² Yet, such a view is historically problematic. "Orthodoxy" and "heresy" are in fact interdependent concepts.¹³ As Wagener notes, while these epistles are written, there is not yet a well-defined system of doctrines that may be identified with orthodoxy, from which the opponents fall off. Orthodoxy itself starts to be defined here, and the Pastorals label as heterodox any position which is not congruous with their own theological and especially ethical-social views.¹⁴

Several other reasons preclude the description of the opponents as heretics. (a) There is no primary, dependable evidence on what these may have taught,¹⁵ but we have only unspecific references to their views;¹⁶ thus descriptions are often based on reconstructions of early Christianity, on evidence not only external to the text, but also much later than the PE.¹⁷ (b) The statements against the opponents are highly polemical, using stock accusations well-known from ancient polemical sources, intending to vilify the adversaries,¹⁸ therefore biased. (c) Even when the opponents had alternative views on eschatology and very likely embraced asceticism, any mirror-reading drawing conclusions from the accusations made by the author is hazardous.¹⁹ (d) In addition, the author is eminently interested in

⁶ Luke, 47; Montague, 1-2 Tim, Tit, 94.

⁷ Spicq, *Épîtres I*, 91-92, 97-98, 101-103, 108-110, 114 (pre-Gnostic Jewish Christianity); Schlarb, *Gesunde Lehre*, 83-93; Murphy O'Connor, "2 Timothy Contrasted", 415-416; Thiessen, *Christen*, 319-338; Michael Gouldner, "The Pastor's Wolves", 242-256; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 51; Witherington, *Letters*, 119-122, 254-255; Sumney, 'Servants', 260, 267-268 (1 Tim: opponents draw on the Law to promote regulations on food and marriage stricter than the author would want), 292-293, 294-301; id., "Studying", 44 (for Tit, possibly also for 1 Tim, p. 42); Fiore, *Pastoral Epistles*, 14-15; Aageson, *Paul*, 65-66 (1 Tim and Tit); Montague, 1-2 Tim, Tit, 223.

⁸ Brox, *Pastoralbriefe*, 34; cautiously Oberlinner, 1. *Timotheus*, 164; Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles* (21990), 43-44; Young, *Theology*, 141, 151.

⁹ Schlarb, *Gesunde Lehre*, 117-121. Cautiously Sumney for 2 Tim ('Servants', 280, 282, 285-286, 289, 301)

¹⁰ MacDonald, *Legend*, esp. 57-66. See also Dibelius/Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 48; Young, *Theology*, 13-16, 18; MacDonald, *Pauline Churches*, 181-183; Collins, 1 2 Tim Tit, 75, 114-116; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 51; Merz, *Selbstausslegung*, 320-333, 373-374, passim; Klauck, *Apokryphe Apostelakten*, 62-63; Aageson, *Paul*, 206 (denying however a dependence like that postulated by MacDonald); Fatum, "Christ Domesticated", 200, 202-204. The polemic certainly worked the other way round as well; see Häfner, "Gegner", ZNW 92 (2001) 42-77; Lau, "Enthaltbarkeit", esp. 86-90.

¹¹ E.g. Spicq, *Épîtres I*, 85-119. Skarsaune reduces the essence of first to second century Christian heresy to what he calls the "blasphemia creationis" (to become "blasphemia creatoris"), as in his view the Christian understanding of heresy implies the rejection of the core of Jewish belief in God the Creator and in the goodness of creation. This allows him to claim, in spite of awareness of the theoretical and historical problems of the very concept of heresy, that the PE reflect struggle with Gnosis, centred on the *blasphemia creationis* ("Heresy", esp. 9-14; followed by Campbell, "Rhetorical Design", 195). One may wonder however whether a Hellenistic Christian community would have found the denial of this (no doubt essential) doctrine the single reason to qualify opponents as heterodox.

¹² Spicq, *Épîtres I*, 322.

¹³ Schindler, "Häresie II", TRE 14, esp. 320-322.

¹⁴ Wilson, "Gnosis/Gnosticism II", TRE 13, 535-550 (541); id., *Gnosis*, 30. See also Thiessen, *Christen*, 22, 24; Aageson, *Paul*, 208-209;

¹⁵ Burrus, "Heretical Woman", 230.

¹⁶ Wagener, *Ordnung*, 220-221. See also Crouch, *Origin*, 140-141.

¹⁷ Horrell, "Converging Ideologies", 97.

¹⁸ Fiore, *Personal Example*, 234; cf. Trummer, *Paulustradition*, 161-172.

¹⁹ On the dangers: Sumney, 'Servants', 20-21.

¹⁸ Karris, "Background", 549-564; Sumney, 'Servants', 25-26; 256-259, 264-267, 269-270, 283-285, 290-297; Fatum, "Christ Domesticated", 184-186.

¹⁹ Johnson, 1-2 Timothy, 73; Sumney, 'Servants', 260, 269 (for 1 Tim 4,3-4 as suggestive for Gnosticism; yet I find here rather reliable indication for asceticism), 271 (1 Tim 4,7b-8); 272-273 (1 Tim 2,4-7 as alluding to Gnostic views). For caution pleads Wolter, *Pastoralbriefe*, 260-261 as well.

matters of conduct and social roles, far less in theological doctrines.²⁰ For all these reasons it is impossible to formulate objective conclusions on the truth or falsity of these views, and to say with certainty that the opponents were indeed teaching heresy (how ever one would define it).

To take some specific issues, the reference in 1 Tim 6,20 to false γνώσις is no solid proof that the opponents adhered to a Gnostic system.²¹ The main aim of the epistle is to oppose the true teaching, transmitted by “Paul” and by those authorised by him, i.e. by contemporary leadership, to that promoted by the opponents. In this context the sound and legitimate doctrine is described as ἐπίγνωσις ἀληθείας (1 Tim 2,4; Tit 1,1; cf. 1 Tim 4,3),²² that is told to be withheld from the opponents (2 Tim 2,25; 3,7). Therefore ψευδωνύμος γνώσις may be seen as the negative foil of sound teaching. Knowledge (*gnosis*) of truth may be claimed by both parties, and labelling the other party’s “truth” as “falsely called truth” does not *necessarily* make the others Gnostics.

Despite the fact that myths and genealogies (1 Tim 1,4; compare 4,7, and 2 Tim 4,4) are often thought to belong to Gnostic speculations, neither the interest in myths or genealogies, nor the association of the two concepts may be regarded as a specific mark of (Jewish) Gnosticism. These terms are used for instance for ancient Greek recollections of religious narratives.²³ Although myths are not always discredited as false, at times they are explicitly said to be fabricated stories in opposition to truth.²⁴ For that reason myths are in no way specific to any specific system, but, in a polemical context such qualification is meant to disparage the opponents.²⁵

More concrete is the assertion in 1 Tim 4,3 that the adversaries oppose or even forbid marriage (κωλύοντων γαμεῖν) and promote abstention from (certain) foods (ἀπέχεσθαι βρωμάτων, possibly referring to meat).²⁶ Yet even these statements are made in a polemic context that limits our access to what the opponents truly taught.²⁷ The two assertions, when read together, are often thought to reflect hostility to creation typical to Gnosticism. Yet this conclusion is based on the mirror-reading of 4,3b-5 (all creation of God is good and everything is sanctified by the word of God, thus should not be rejected).²⁸ There is no conclusive proof, however, that the opponents embrace a typically Gnostic hostility to creation.²⁹ Merz argues with good reason that the assertion of the goodness of creation in 1 Tim 4,4-5 may be understood not as a contestation of the opponents’ alleged hostility to creation, but as a shared theological ground that allows the author to reject asceticism or purity laws.³⁰

Rejection of marriage,³¹ even if one would take it to represent the views of the opponents, does not mean in any way that these *had to be* Gnostics. Sexual asceticism is far from being specific to Gnosticism. Moreover, abstaining from marriage may be easily and reasonably understood as fidelity to the ideal of celibacy/virginity promoted by in Paul in 1 Cor 7,7-8.32-34.38b, as a form of total commit-

²⁰ Horrell, “Converging Ideologies”, 97-98; more recently, and more cautiously id., “Disciplining Performance”, 112. See also Fiore, *Personal Example*, 234; Fatum, “Christ Domesticated”, 184, 186-187.

²¹ Sumney, ‘*Servants*’, 264.

²² For ἐπίγνωσις ἀληθείας as knowledge and acceptance (*recognition*) of the truth, i.e. of the Christian deposit of faith (“Glaubenswahrheit”) as proper to the community, and as synonymous to πίστις, Lips, *Glaube*, 37, for ἀληθεία being synonymous with ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία, id., 39.

²³ Plato, *Tim.* 22AB, 23B. See also Schlarb, *Gesunde Lehre*, 87-88. On Greek myths concerning genealogies being more frequent than cosmogonic myths: Burkert, “The Logic of Cosmogony”, 87, 97-98, 10). On various mythical genealogies unrelated to Judaism: Bremmer, “Rationalization”, 80-81.

²⁴ Plato, *Tim.* 26E; also *Tim.* 22CD; Strabo, *Geogr.* 11,5,3; Epict., *Disc.* 3.24.18. Egyptians contrasted Isis’ πράξεις ἐναργεῖς (manifest/splendid deeds) with the μυθολογία on Greek gods (Oster, “Holy days”, 80). For more examples: Fiore, *Pastoral Epistles*, 41.

²⁵ Sumney, ‘*Servants*’, 257. This is not to say that they cannot possibly be part of such systems. But these texts cannot be used to identify a specific religious system.

²⁶ Cf. LSJ, s.v. βρῶμα.

²⁷ Sumney, ‘*Servants*’, 262.

²⁸ Rightly Sumney, ‘*Servants*’, 260.

²⁹ Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 51; Sumney, ‘*Servants*’, 260, 262, 278. Aageson, *Paul*, 65.

³⁰ Merz, 40-44. She criticises Roloff’s assertion of the Gnostic nature of the opposed doctrine as a circular argument: that 1 Tim 4,4 refers to Gnostic position could be proved only if other texts would show the opponents’ Gnostic affiliation. Thiessen, *Christen in Ephesus*, 326, and Sumney, ‘*Servants*’, 260-269, also consider that a rejection of the goodness of creation does not belong to the thesis of the opponents, but is part of the author’s theological (counter)argument.

³¹ Sumney is even more cautious, suggesting that the author may distort their position, and thinks it plausible that the opponents merely impose stricter regulations on marriage, than the author would have them (‘*Servants*’, 260-262).

ment to Christ. It is not by accident that later on the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* endorse radical sexual asceticism in the name of Paul and identify his opponents with those named in 2 Tim as having abandoned Paul for the sake of this world.³² Abstaining from foods (cf. 1 Tim 4,3) may also refer to Jewish alimentary rules.³³ Yet Judaism was not the sole to promote alimentary restrictions, since various philosophical schools encouraged not merely moderation in eating and drinking, but also abstention from meat.³⁴

To sum up, it is not absolutely impossible that the opponents embraced an early form of what was to become later a full-fledged Gnosticism. Yet, reference to *gnosis* in itself, without any evidence for the adherence of the opponents to a dualistic system, without a theory of emanations, in the absence of any explicit statement about the evil character of creation, is not sufficient to prove that they were indeed (proto)Gnostics. This would mean going beyond the evidence found in the text. Hostility to creation can be supposed only based on the mirror-reading of 1 Tim 4,4, and this is far from compelling evidence. Given the polemic context, the denigration of the opponents' teaching, and the contrast between true/legitimate and false/illegitimate knowledge or teaching, a more simple and plausible reading that stays within the text is that the author rejects the position of the opponents as false. One may intimate in addition that restrictions on marriage and food, if advocated by the opponents, suggest that they adhered to an ascetic lifestyle.

The point is not that the opponents had no theological views, or that these could not differ from those held by the author of the Pastorals. But caution is needed at any attempt to reconstruct their views from the charges made by the author, or extrapolating from other early Christian sources. While from the perspective of the author the adversaries may have taught heterodoxy, one may not conclude that they were indeed proponents of heresy "objectively" speaking. All the more so as many of the views reflected in this polemic may be traced back to Paul. Such are his idealisation and appraisal of virginity over against marriage, and his sense of eschatological imminence. The Pastoral Epistles very likely fight against such competing, ascetic interpretation of Paul. Although the author appeals to the authority of Paul, he also takes further and modifies Paul's position in specific ways, placing the emphasis on marriage, childbearing, and on respectable life in society.

2. Anthropological views in 1 Timothy

2.1 The Argument from Creation: Priority and authority

Several authors think that the relecture of Gen 2–3 in 1 Tim 2 is a necessary reaction to women's involvement in teaching heresy and/or to dangerous emancipatory tendencies.³⁵ Yet, women's role in disseminating heterodox teachings stands on a rather shaky ground, and is not explicitly stated in this context.³⁶ It will be argued here that women are excluded from teaching and offices involving authority for being what they are, namely women. The religious argument from Gen 2–3 is meant to justify the social, familial and ecclesial order that subordinates women to men and excludes them from posi-

³² I address elsewhere the asceticism promoted by the APT_h under the authority of Paul, and their polemic against the PE ("Λόγος θεοῦ περὶ ἐγκρατείας καὶ ἀναστάσεως. Asceticism and Otherworlds in the Acts of Paul and Thecla", in T. Nicklas, J. Verheyden, F. Garcia Martinez, E. Eynikel (eds.), *Otherworlds and their Relations to this World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions* (JSJS), Leiden, Boston: Brill, forthcoming.

³³ Sumney, 'Servants', 260-262; cautiously Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 541, 544 (one of the possibilities, next to Gnostic dualism); Aageson, *Paul*, 65.

³⁴ Grimm, *Feasting*, 58-59, with 118-119. See also Redalié, " 'Sois un modèle' ", 93.

³⁵ Brox, *Pastoralbriefe*, 133-134; Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 97-98; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 441, 464-466; Towner, *Letters*, 222-224.

³⁶ The critique of the common view that women were involved in teaching heresy would take too much space. Many commentators articulate this view either on the hypothesis of a Gnostic heterodoxy, or to give a "reasonable" explanation for women's exclusion from teaching. (I address the topic in a forthcoming volume on roles and ministries in the PE.) In addition, while many authors parallel women's silencing with that of false teachers, they miss the fact that the PE do not silence *all* men because *some* were involved in teaching what the author regarded as heterodoxy.

tions of authority. The author contends thereby that such decision pertains to an order that was instituted already in creation, threatened in the fall because of the woman, but re-established by means of subordinating the woman to the authority of the man. The prohibition from teaching is largely based on the dichotomy between man as teacher, possessing authority, and woman as learner being required submission. The point of the *relecture* of both creation and fall is that women should be excluded from public teaching and should be subordinated to male authority in view of their second rank in creation and due to their deceivable-deceiving nature.

While the argument from priority in creation is taken from a literal interpretation of Gen 2, i.e. of a Jewish source, the reasoning coincides with Greco-Roman cultural patterns. Greco-Roman sources commonly argue from the natural order of relationships, sometimes seen as rooted in the divine will,³⁷ and describe man's rule over woman as according to nature.³⁸ 1 Timothy adopts a similar essentialist understanding of (gender) roles, constructing the case on the order of creation.

A detailed exegesis of the creation narratives would go beyond the purpose of this assessment. Some considerations are nonetheless needed to show the degree to which 1 Timothy reinterprets its pre-text. It is generally accepted that Gen 1,26-27 and 2,7.21-24 belong to different traditions, and describe in other manner the creation of humans.³⁹ According to the first account there is no temporal sequence in the creation of man and woman (Gen 1,27).⁴⁰ God creates humans or humanity (the generic אָדָם)⁴¹ as male and female, without asserting a temporal succession in the creation of the sexes, and without postulating a hierarchical relation.⁴² Humans created as male and female are made in the resemblance (צִלְמֵי) and likeness (דְּמוּת) of God, a notion that most probably implies the idea of divine representation in the created world, drawing from ancient Near-Eastern royal theology.⁴³ Conversely, Gen 2,⁴⁴ focusing on the creation of humans, describes a sequence of events that sets out from the generic, but in the context of the story implicitly androcentric image of the אָדָם.⁴⁵ Distinction according to gender becomes explicit with the creation of the woman (הָאִשָּׁה), when the אָדָם, the earthly creature, becomes אִישׁ, man.⁴⁶ The narrative is implicitly androcentric, since in the end the woman is created for the man. The main message of the imagery, – the creation of the woman from the rib of the אָדָם, as well as of the אִשָּׁה-אִישׁ wordplay, the joyful exclamation of the man at the sight of the woman and the idiom “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”, commonly used in the Hebrew Bible to describe kinship, express the idea of intimate relationship, consubstantiality and belonging together.⁴⁷ Superiority and inferiority, rule and subordination are not (yet) in view,⁴⁸ although the effective his-

³⁷ Xen., *Oikon.* 7.16; Plato, *Laws* 3, 690 A-C. For Stoicism, nature is generally normative for human acts and relations. See the complex discussion on τὰ κατὰ φύσιν in Bonhöffer, *Ethics*, 209-239 (pages refer to the Engl. transl.). See also Cic., *De off.* 1.28.98,100, 103, 107; 3.13.77, *passim*; Sen., *Ep.* 41,9; 45,9.

³⁸ Plato, *Laws* 11, 917A; Arist., *Polit.*, 1254B, cf. 1254A; Plut., *Amatorius*, Mor. 755BC; Okkelos, *De univ. nat.* (Thesleff, 136.46.22-25); Callicratidas, *De dom. felic.* (Thesleff, 106, 4.19).

³⁹ This can be held in spite of contemporary synchronic approaches that tend to disregard a source-critical approach.

⁴⁰ Noort, “Creation”, 7-10.

⁴¹ On אָדָם as a generic, collective, gender-inclusive term for “human” or “humanity”: BDB s.v.; F. Maass, s.v., *ThDOT* 1, 75-87; V.P. Hamilton, *NIDOTTE*, s.v. Compare Westermann, *Genesis I/1*, 275-276; Seebass, *Genesis*, 81; Tribble, *God*, 18. Pace Barr, “One Man”, 3-21. Barr’s contention is challenged by de Moor, “The First Human”, 22-27, and by Cline, “אָדָם”, 297-310.

⁴² Westermann, *Genesis I/1*, 221; Vervenne, “Genesis”, 55.

⁴³ von Rad, *Genesis*, 58. Westermann’s questioning the idea of representation is not convincing (*Genesis I/1*, 211-212, 214-218). See also Seebass, *Genesis I*, 80-83; Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 29-33; Scharbert, *Genesis 1-11*, 44-45. On the interpretation of צִלְמֵי and דְּמוּת see also Miller, “Image”, 289-304; Millard, Bordreuil, “Statue”, 135-141; Schüle, “Made in the Image of God”, 1-20; Ferrer, “Imatge”, 11-30.

⁴⁴ For a reassessment of the debate on the priority of the creation narratives, see Vervenne, “Genesis”, 35-79.

⁴⁵ The אָדָם-אִשָּׁה wordplay expresses the intimate relation between human beings and earth (clay) and as such it underscores the broad sense of אָדָם as frail creature. So at least in Gen 2 אָדָם does not designate a man named Adam (even on the problematic 2,20: Westermann, *Genesis I/1*, 312), nor is the term necessarily gender-specific; it may be taken as androcentric-inclusive. See also the discussion in Dohmen, *Schöpfung*, 250.

⁴⁶ Tribble, *God*, 98; Clifford, “Genesis”, 12; Noort, “Creation”, 11; Merklein/Gielen, *1. Korinther*, 50-51. Pace Kawashima, “A Revisionist Reading”, 46-57.

⁴⁷ Westermann, *Genesis I/1*, 313-314, 317-318.

⁴⁸ Seebass, *Genesis I*, 115; Noort, “Creation”, 10-12; Cotter, *Genesis*, 31-32. On בְּשָׂר as anthropological concept designating the human being as a whole: R. B. Chisholm, בְּשָׂר, *NIDOTTE*, 262-266; Westermann, *Genesis I/1*, 318. On the various meanings of בְּשָׂר see also Wolff,

tory of the text will attach this meaning to the narrative.

From a historical-critical perspective, 1 Tim 2,13 is a one-sided *relecture* of the second account of creation (Gen 2),⁴⁹ the first (Gen 1) being both neglected in some details, and read in the light of Gen 2.⁵⁰ In fact the author envisages a synchronic reading of Gen 1–3 LXX that already modifies to some extent the Hebrew narrative, and, as translation, removes meanings inherent to the Hebrew text.⁵¹ Such is the alternating translation of אָדָם with ἄνθρωπος or with the male proper name Adam, leading to the identification of the generic אָדָם of Gen 1,26-27 with the male Adam, a change that will contribute to the later interpretation of being in the image and likeness of God as male attribute. The loss of the meaning inherent to the אָדָם-שָׂרָה wordplay explains why Gen 2 LXX has less emphasis on the deep interrelation between man and woman.

A synchronic reading of Gen 1–3 appears already in earlier sources. In *Jubilees* chronology explicitly connects the two accounts.⁵² It is Adam to be created in the sixth day of creation, while the woman only on the sixth day of the second week. Moreover, her creation occurs outside the garden, and she enters the garden only eighty days after creation, and forty days after the man.⁵³

Temporal priority is commonly used in ancient sources, both Greco-Roman and Jewish, as an expression of pre-eminence, to emphasise superiority and to buttress authority.⁵⁴ Gods, (culture) heroes or outstanding humans are defined as the πρῶτοι εὑρεταί or founders of cities, crafts, arts, laws or traditions. This is a common topic of *encomia*. Orpheus and Pythagoras are founders of culture, Homer and Hesiod are πρῶτοι θεολογήσαντες, Democrit and Socrates the first in various branches of philosophy, Empedocles the founder of rhetoric, Thales of physics. The priority of cities is grounded in their old age. Athens is described as founder of philosophy. The motive is nonetheless not without difficulties, since Greeks will be confronted with the priority of Egypt and/or Asia. Judaism will have to face the priority of Greek culture and philosophy. Subsequently Jewish apologetic literature will strive to prove the old age of Mosaic religion and laws, to describe Abraham as the founder of Chaldean astrology, or Moses of writing and law, and to prove the dependence of Greek philosophy on Jewish wisdom.⁵⁵ The topos of priority is meant to prove the superiority of Jewish religion and wisdom over that of the Greek.

Discussing the qualities required from the guardians, Plato establishes a relationship between age and authority that goes in a similar direction: “that the rulers must be the elder and the ruled the younger is obvious,” and certainly “the rulers must be their best”.⁵⁶ Age is evidently also a temporal priority to which value is added by means of greater wisdom and experience.⁵⁷ An even clearer point is made in his *Laws*:

Now the better are the superiors of the worse, and the older in general of the younger; wherefore also parents are superior to their offspring, men to women and children, rulers to ruled. And it will be proper for all to re-

49 *Anthropology*, 26-31 (29: on Gen 2,24: common body, fellowship of life).

In spite of contemporary preferences for narratological and canonical approaches that look only at the story or the canonical text in its present form (for the former: e.g. Cotter, *Genesis*, xxiii-xxiv, 26), it remains my conviction that understanding the (process of) composition of texts is essential to the meaning we give to texts.

50 Jewett, *Man*, 119. Such a synchronic reading is done already by Paul in 1 Cor 11, Merklein/Gielen, *1. Korinther*, 50.

51 For the differences of the LXX from the Hebrew text, and the way these influenced early Christian exegesis, see Bouteneff, 10-12, 83, 173-174.

52 I refer to the edition of Vanderkam, *The Book of Jubilees*. The tendency to harmonise of the two accounts by omissions and rearrangements is noted by van Ruiten, *Primaeval History*, 75, passim. Interestingly, in this line, *Jub* 3.8 takes Gen 1,27 (i.e. male and female) to refer to Adam and his wife – the rib.

53 *Jub*. 2.13-14; 3. 6,8-9. The use of this chronological precedence of man over woman to explain purity laws is not of immediate interest here, yet it obviously also implies male superiority.

54 See the discussion of the topos by Thraede, *Erfinder II*, 1191-1278. Pilhofer has produced an impressive number of examples from Greek, Roman and Jewish sources for what he calls the “Altersbeweis” (*Presbyteron*, esp. 8-12, 17-205). See also Spicq, *Epîtres I*, 380-381, 386; Wolter, *Pastoralbriefe*, 53-54.

55 See Droge, *Homer*, 18-19 (Moses’ priority), 22 (Enoch and Abraham in astrology), 25-27 passim.

56 *Polit.* 3, 412C.

57 On age expressing superiority see also Barclay, “Neither Old?”, 225-241, with further examples from Thucydides, Plutarch, Cicero, and Philo.

vere all these classes of superiors, whether they be in other positions of authority or in offices of State above all.⁵⁸

Man's priority in creation and woman's derivation from man, stated in connection with male superiority, are also argued in Plato's *Timaeus*: men who fail to live justly, are ruled by passions, act cowardly or do evil, will be turned into women at the second birth or reincarnation.⁵⁹ This shows that women are originally men who have failed to live according to their noble vocation. This claim should be read in connection with the assertion introducing the creation of humans that man is the better sex.⁶⁰

Discussing at length the conditions that make someone worthier of praise, Aristotle states that "virtues and actions are nobler, when they proceed from those who are naturally worthier (τῶν φύσει σπουδαιότερων), for instance, from a man rather than from a woman".⁶¹ He goes emphasising somewhat further the importance that should be assigned to the singularity or priority of a deed: "if a man has done anything alone, or first, or with a few, or has been chiefly responsible for it; all these circumstances render an action noble (εἰ μόνος ἢ πρῶτος ἢ μετ' ὀλίγων ἢ καὶ ὁ μάλιστα πεποίηκεν ἅπαντα γὰρ ταῦτα καλά)."⁶²

Küchler and Wolter have offered a detailed discussion of the topos of priority in the Old and New Testament and in rabbinic literature. The eminence of the first-born is not only social, but the title may express the eminence of the king (Psa 89,28), of Israel (Exod 4,22), of Wisdom (Prov 8,22) or of the Messiah (Ex R 19,7, on Exod 13,1).⁶³ Rabbinic literature ascribes the title even to Adam.⁶⁴ The eminent religious importance of Abraham or Moses is related to their priority.⁶⁵ The argument from age is also meant to express superiority in Jewish literature.⁶⁶

The New Testament uses on several occasions the topos to establish someone's authority. Peter is the first (πρῶτος) on the list of the apostles in Matt 10,2,⁶⁷ and the first witness of the Resurrected (1 Cor 15,5).⁶⁸ Jesus is superior to John the Baptist because he existed before him (πρῶτός; John 1,15.30), and he is greater than Abraham, because he preceded him (John 8,53-58). Christ being the first-born (πρωτότοκος) from the perspective of both creation and of resurrection (Col 1,15.17-18), he is assigned priority implying authority (ἐν πᾶσι αὐτὸς πρωτεύων). The πρώτοι are those in authority in Mark 6,21.⁶⁹ The first place assigned to the apostles on the list of ministries in 1 Cor 12,28 most likely suggests their eminent importance.⁷⁰ The subtle play on priority in John 20,4.8, and in 21,7 is a special case: the beloved disciple is the first to reach the tomb, although Peter enters it first; later on

⁵⁸ *Laus* 11, 917A. Aristotle goes in the same direction when he states that every household is ruled by the eldest (πᾶσα οἰκία βασιλεύεται ὑπὸ τοῦ πρεσβυτάτου; *Polit.* 1.7, 1252B), and that the male is by nature better fitted to command, just as the older and more mature: *Polit.* 1.5.2, 1259B).

⁵⁹ Plato, *Tim.* 42b, 90E. See also 76D.

⁶⁰ διπλῆς δὲ οὐσης τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως, τὸ κρεῖττον τοιοῦτου εἶη γένος ὃ καὶ ἔπειτα κεκλήσεται ἀνὴρ (42A).

⁶¹ Arist., *Rhet.* 1.9.22 (1367A).

⁶² Arist., *Rhet.* 1.9.38 (1368A). For the application of this motive to the doxologies in 1 Timothy see Neyrey, "«First»", 59-87 (further citing *Rhet.* 2.7.2, Cic., *De Orat.* 2.85.347, Quint., *Inst. Orat.* 3.7.16, Theon, 9.35-38, Lys., *Funeral Oration* 17-18, the Isis-aretalogy in Di-odor of Sicily, 1.27.4). Neyrey looks at the rhetorical power of the divine attributes in 1 Tim 1,17, that demonstrate God's excellence. On the topos of priority used to prove "Paul's" eminent authority in 1 Tim 1,12-17, see the detailed discussion Wolter, *Pastoralbriefe*, 51-56.

⁶³ Küchler, *Schweigen*, 21-32, here 22-23. See also Spicq, *Épîtres* I, 380-381.

⁶⁴ Num R 4,8 to Num 3,45, quoted by Küchler, *Schweigen*, 23.

⁶⁵ Memar Marqah 4,12, cited by Wolter *Pastoralbriefe*, 55.

⁶⁶ As in Sifre Deut 37 to Deut 11,10 (the priority of Hebron over Zoan, of Israel over Egypt). The argument is analysed in detail by Küchler, who adds Sifre Deut 69, 74, 135 and 141 stating the eminent value of the first member of a list. Yet he cites other passages that contradict the principle (Mechilta de-Rabbi Jishmael, Pischa 1 on Exod 12,1, on Moses over Aaron, heaven over earth). See *Schweigen*, 24-30. I would however not situate 1 Tim 2,13 within an inner-Jewish debate over the superiority of the first listed, as I reckon with a Hellenistic background for the PE, and as shown above, the same topos may be found in Greco-Roman sources as well.

⁶⁷ He is the first of the list in the parallel passages as well (Mark 3,16; Luke 6,14), nevertheless without the explicit πρώτος.

⁶⁸ See Wolter, *Pastoralbriefe*, 52, and further 104-107, on Petrin.

⁶⁹ Just as the πρώτοι τοῦ λαοῦ in Luke 19,47, the πρώτοι τῆς πόλεως in Acts 13,50, the πρώτοι τῶν Ἰουδαίων in Acts 25,2; 28,17.

⁷⁰ To be fair, however, one should also note the reversal of priority in Mark 9,35 and 10,44, par. Mat 20,27, in Mark 10,31 par.19,30; 20,10.16 and Luke 13,30.

the beloved disciple is the first to recognise the identity of the Resurrected, although Peter will be the first to reach shore and encounter him.⁷¹

Interestingly enough, in 1 Cor 15,45-47 Paul refers to Adam as πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος. Yet, he does not employ the concept from an anthropological perspective. Paul opposes to the first man or first Adam, earthly, natural and receiver of life, the last (ἔσχατος) Adam, the δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος, Christ, spiritual, heavenly and life-giving. Temporal priority obviously alludes here to the same creation account, yet Christ, the second and last man, is superior to the chronologically prior earthly Adam.⁷² Thus although Paul refers to Adam's priority in creation, his relation to the creation of the woman is not an issue here. This Pauline reference to the second account of creation even reverses to a certain point the topos of priority. As opposed to this, 1 Tim 2,13 will propose the classical reading "the first, the best", by means of a *relecture* of both Gen 2 and of Paul's argument in 1 Cor 11.

In 1 Timothy the topos of priority is introduced already with respect to Paul, to emphasise his authority. The entire sequence in 1,12-17 deals with Paul's legitimizing. By means of a fictitious thanksgiving, Paul is introduced as the first to have experienced Christ's magnanimity and salvation. He is the πρῶτος, the first saved sinner (1,15), and subsequently the authentic and normative proclaimer of the gospel, equipped with an exceptional authority.⁷³ It is therefore remarkable that already before 1 Tim 2,13 the topos is used to legitimise the authority of those in charge with teaching. The matter is crucial in the epistle. Paul, as πρῶτος, is eminently the teacher who possesses the appropriate authority to teach the sound doctrine and to reject the false teaching. The authority of the apostle is the foundation for that of "Timothy", of the contemporary church leader (in view of 1,2-3.18-19).⁷⁴

The motive is similarly used to emphasise authority and implicitly the right to teach in 1 Tim 2,10-13. Taking further the argument from priority, the same reasoning is applied to Adam in 1 Tim 2,13, again referred to as the πρῶτος. Here Adam and Eve are paradigmatic characters, archetypes that both predetermine the fate and symbolise the nature of man and woman. Subsequently, Adam's priority in creation and Eve's being formed second are determinant and relevant for man as possessing authority and woman as subordinated being.

The reinterpretation of the creation narrative(s) proposed by 1 Tim 2,13 is not only a *relecture* of Gen, but very likely also of 1 Cor 11,3.7-12, a text that already refers to creation to make a point on gender relations in the *ekklesia*.⁷⁵ In this reinterpretation, Timothy entirely drops from its sources the idea of interrelation and mutuality, sharpening the implicit androcentrism of Gen 2. The only idea preserved is that of Adam's priority, which is unequivocally understood as superiority.

In 1 Cor 11, the priority and superiority of man are expressed in the κεφαλή-metaphor (v. 3),⁷⁶ in the man being referred to as εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα of God (v. 7), while the woman only as δόξα of man, and in the emphasis on man's anteriority in creation and on the derivative nature of the woman (vv. 8-9).⁷⁷

⁷¹ See the discussion in Wolter, *Pastoralbriefe*, 107-112.

⁷² This is not to say that the earthly Adam is unimportant, since in the context Paul argues for the resurrection of the dead, against a spiritualised understanding of resurrection.

⁷³ I take πρῶτος for temporal priority; cf. Wolter *Pastoralbriefe*, 50-51; Brox, *Pastoralbriefe*, 115-116; Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 96; see also LSJ s.v. πρῶτεω (πρῶτος). Pace Donelson, *Pseudoepigraphy*, 103; Fiore, *Function*, 199; id., *Pastoral Epistles*, 50; Johnson, *1-2 Timothy*, 180, who interpret it as a superlative. I have dealt elsewhere with the significance of this text for legitimising the authority of third generation church leadership, "Thanksgiving as Instrument of Legitimation in 1 Timothy 1,12-17", *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Theologia Catholica Latina* 1 (2009), 3-14.

⁷⁴ On the significance of "Timothy" as type of the third generation leader: Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 5, 52-53; *2. Timotheus*, 22-25. The apostolic authority is manifested in that of Timothy, Paul's legitimate successor (1,2-3.18-19; cf. 2 Tim 1,13-14; 2,1-2).

⁷⁵ See Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 128-130; Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 93; Payne, "Fuldensis", 248-249; Merz, *Selbstauslegung*, 334-339; Towner, *Letters*, 193-194, 215. Roloff admits that 1 Tim has used the argument regarding man's priority in creation, but eventually parallels only 1 Tim 2,11-15 with 1 Cor 14,34-36 (pp. 129-130). For Paul's reading of the creation accounts in 1 Cor 11, compare Merklein/Gielen, *1. Korinther*, 50-51.

⁷⁶ Κεφαλή is understood either as source or as authority. The first reading is argued by Murphy-O'Connor, "First Corinthians", 808; Schrage, *1. Korinther* (EKK VII/2), 501-505 (suggesting nevertheless that authority is very likely implied); Klauck, *1 Kor*, 81. For "ruler" or authority plead Fitzmyer, "Kephale", 52-59; cf. id. "Meaning", 80-88; Lietaert Peerbolte, "Man", 76-92. The latter reading will be preferred by Eph 5,22-24, which legitimates woman's submission with the headship of man.

⁷⁷ See the discussion in Schrage, *1. Korinther* (EKK VII/2), 509-512; Lietaert Peerbolte, "Man", 84-86; Trummer, *Paulustradition*, 147 (noting the contradictions in Paul's argument). Merz has offered an excellent intertextual analysis of 1 Cor 11,2-5 as pre-text of 1 Tim 2,13: 1 Tim 2,13 functions as a fictitious self-reference correcting its pre-text (*Selbstauslegung*, 339-343).

The precedence of the man is connected with the difficult *διὰ τοῦτο ὀφείλει ἡ γυνὴ ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς* in v. 10, which is variously translated as woman possessing authority or conversely being under authority.⁷⁸ The issue is of some importance due to the integration of the topic of female authority in the context of male-female relations and of their definition from the perspective of creation. Even when Paul argues for the derivative origin of the woman, his subsequent reflection appears to correct this one-sided perspective, as he goes on asserting the interdependence of man and woman, even in terms of origin (11,11-12).

In 1 Tim 2,13 there is no positive statement like that of the woman being the *δόξα* of man (vs. 1 Cor 11,7),⁷⁹ even less of humans being made in the image of God as male and female. The chronological precedence of the man in creation (Gen 2), understood as a sign of his superiority, becomes even more categorical: there is nothing comparable to the reciprocity-statement of 1 Cor 11,11-12.⁸⁰ The function for the argument from priority in creation is obvious. Since the man is superior to the woman and holds authority over her, a woman publicly teaching and exerting thereby authority over men would reverse the order of creation. To summarise, the argument from creation, proposed by 1 Tim 2,13, is essentially a re-reading of Gen 1–2, with a rather narrow focus on male priority and authority, and the elimination of all elements that would allow for woman's similar dignity and for reciprocity in the relationship between sexes. While 1 Corinthians has already eliminated much of these details, 1 Tim 2,13 takes the process further, removing even more the positive aspects of the creation accounts.⁸¹

1 Timothy is not the first to propose a one-sided relecture of the creation account in Gen 2, but probably relies on Jewish patterns of interpretation. Man's superiority in creation may be traced back to Jewish authors, even when these emphasise not that much the idea of priority, but the derivative character of the woman's creation and her subsequent inferiority. Philo's double, literal and allegorical reading of Gen 2 offers an ambivalent view on the relationship between man and woman. The creation of the woman from the rib of the man suggests that man and woman make up together in equal manner the human race; nonetheless allegorically the man symbolises the intellect, and his rib, the woman, sense-perception ("virtus sensitiva").⁸² This symbolic interpretation of the male as the rational/intellectual, thus superior principle, and of the female as the derived and inferior, emotional/affective element will be decisive for patristic exegesis as well.⁸³ The woman was not formed out of earth, like the man and the animals,

first, because the woman is not equal in honour with the man ("ne aequalis dignitatis cum viro sit mulier").
Second, because she is not equal in age, but younger. [...] Third, he wishes that man should take care of woman as of a very necessary part of him; but woman, in return, should serve him as a whole. Fourth, he counsels man figuratively to take care of woman as of a daughter, and woman to honour man as a father.⁸⁴

The derivative nature of the woman expresses thus her inferiority, and her subordination to the

⁷⁸ Schrage, *1. Korinther* (EKK VII/2), 514: women's authority over their head, i.e. they should exert authority by doing what is appropriate. Similarly, according to Lietaert Peerbolte, a woman should have control over her head ("Man", 86-87).

⁷⁹ In v. 7 Paul not only alludes to, but also reinterprets Gen 1,26-27: being in the image of God (*εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα*) is explicitly a male attribute.

⁸⁰ Merz rightly speaks of the „neutralisation“ of the potential corrective function of 1 Cor 11,11-12 (*Selbstauslegung*, 341–343).

⁸¹ Küchler suggests that 1 Tim 2,13 is based on a haggadic interpretation of Gen 2, meant to establish an early Christian *halacha* prohibiting women from teaching (*Schweigen*, 30-32, cf. 20-21). He shows that 1 Tim 2,13, while consonant with the patriarchal social structure implied by Gen 2, does not do justice to the sense of this creation account (cf. also Jewett, *Man*, 126).

⁸² QG I,25 (LCL, 14; SC 34 A, 88/89, 90/91). (The Greek text was not preserved.) Marcus suggests that the Greek had *πλευρά* (LCL, 14, note e.) The Latin reads: "vir et mulier, ceu sectiones naturae, coaequales ad constitutionem generis, quod vocatur Homo [...] vir est symbolice intellectus; et hujus costa una, virtus sensitiva; sensatio autem consilii magis variabilis erit mulier". The body of the woman is quasi the half of the man's body, as suggested by her corporeal and spiritual abilities (*vires animae*). For that reason the fashioning of the male is more perfect, and yet requires only 40 days, i.e. half of the time needed for creating the less perfect, the female. According to QG I,37 (SC 34A, 104/105): "Mulier est symbolice sensus, et vir intellectus."

⁸³ Ambr., *De paradiso* 3.12, (CSEL 32.1, p. 272); Aug., *De Genesi contra Manicheos* 2.11.14-27, compare 2.14.28-30 (CSEL 91). See Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, for a discussion of the interpretation of Gen 1-3, especially in the Eastern fathers.

⁸⁴ QG I,27 (LCL, 16; compare SC 34 A, 91, 93).

man. Philo even develops the distinction of gendered spaces and roles from this account.⁸⁵ Referring to Gen 2,24, Philo comments that the man has the authority of a master (κυρίαν ἔχων ἐξουσίαν), and “the woman, taking the rank of a servant, is shown to be obedient to his life”⁸⁶ The same view is expressed by Josephus: “The woman, says the Law, is in all things inferior (χείρων) to the man. Let her accordingly be submissive, not for her humiliation, but that she may be directed; for the authority has been given by God to the man (μὴ πρὸς ὕβριν, ἀλλ’ ἵν’ ἄρχηται· Θεὸς τὸ ἀνδρὶ τὸ κράτος ἔδωκεν).”⁸⁷ All these passages, whether directly commenting upon the creation account or not, connect superiority with authority, and inferior nature with submission and servitude. Nevertheless, priority as such is not an immediate concern in these Jewish authors.

2.2. Fall and Subordination

Just as the discourse on creation, the hamartiological argument is adduced by 1 Timothy to legitimise the exclusion of women from public teaching. While, as seen above, 1 Cor 11 has already used the argument from male precedence in creation to reinforce the rule concerning appropriate gender behaviour at worship, 1 Tim 2 adds thereby a new element, to make a case for teaching as exclusively male attribution. Again, no detailed exegesis of Gen 3 will be proposed here, yet, the main points of the narrative will be rehearsed, to show the manner in which 1 Tim 3,14 uses its pre-text.

In Gen 3 the woman has a role to play in the transgression of the divine commandment,⁸⁸ but she is not the sole actor of the fall, nor does she bear sole responsibility,⁸⁹ even when the *Wirkungsgeschichte* will go in that direction. While one may say that man’s transgression is intermediated by the incentive of the woman, the man is not freed from responsibility. The woman eats because of the apparent goodness of the tree and its fruit (Gen 3,6). While the Hebrew, beside the positive שׂוּב has the ambivalent תַּאֲוָה (desire) and תִּשְׂתַּחֲוֶה (to desire, take pleasure), the Greek (most likely known to the author of 1 Timothy) uses only positive terms to describe the tree and its fruit: καλόν, ἀρεστόν, ὠραῖον. The deed of both woman and man is recorded in a very concise manner in v. 6: she took, ate, gave to the man, and he ate. The narrative has no reference to female evil or weakness, persuasion or enticement.⁹⁰ This theme appears only in intertestamental and other Jewish writings.⁹¹ At short term transgression affects both is the same way (v. 7), and the story goes on with both deflecting responsibility unto someone else. The man unto the woman who gave him to eat, and eventually unto God, who gave him the woman (both times נָתַן, LXX δίδωμι). The woman unto the serpent who deceived her (שָׁרֵפ, LXX ἀπατάω). After God having questioned all three characters, “punishment” goes to all three. The etiological character of the “punishment” episode has long been recognised.⁹² The narrative explains the loss of a supposed primordial bliss – a common motive in many ancient myths, and proposes the aetiology of the *conditio humana*: suffering, gender-specific distress and possibly death enter the world due to humans’ primeval challenge to God. Tribulations affect both woman and man, and their specificity reflects the social condition of each sex in antiquity. The aetiology directs the

⁸⁵ “Ex viro et muliere congregatio concordiae, et plenitudo, symbolicae est domus: at imperfectum et domo carens omnino est omne, quod desolatum est a muliere. Nam viro publicae res civitatis commissae sunt, mulieri vero res propriae domus; cujus defectus destructio erit [domus], praesentia autem actualis oeconomiam ostendit.” QG I,26 (90, 92/91, 93).

⁸⁶ QG I,29 (SC 34A, 96/97). An identical view is expressed in *Hypoth.* 7,3, yet here not deduced from the creation account, but stated within the discussion of various types of rule, reminding the treatment of the topic by Aristotle: “Wives must be in servitude to their husbands, a servitude not imposed by violent ill-treatment but promoting obedience in all things (γυναικίως ἀνδράσι δουλεύειν, πρὸς ὕβρεως οὐδεμιᾶς, πρὸς εὐπειθειαν δ’ ἐν ἅπασιν).” *Hypoth.* 7,3.

⁸⁷ Ap. 2.201. Thakeray, the editor of the LCL volume refers here to Gen 3,16.

⁸⁸ I subscribe to the interpretation of knowledge of good and evil proposed by von Rad as expression of *hybris* that makes humans wish to transcend their human condition, *Genesis*, 86-87.

⁸⁹ Cotter, *Genesis*, 35.

⁹⁰ Higgins, “Myth”, 639-647; Dohmen, *Schöpfung*, 132.

⁹¹ Kvam, Scheearing, Ziegler, *Eve*, 41-68; Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 17, 26.

⁹² von Rad, *Genesis*, 89, 93; Westermann, *Genesis* I/1, 352-354, 356-357; more recently Cotter, *Genesis*, 35; Mettinger, *Eden Narrative*, 72-73, 84.

attention to woman's affliction as wife and mother,⁹³ and to her subordination, while man is said to be affected in his labour for subsistence, carried out in the outside world.

1 Tim 2,14-15 is a relecture of the account of the fall, with a clear reference to Gen 3,13b in v. 14 and an allusion to Gen 3,16 in v. 15. Küchler suggests that this brief account is a *Kurzformel*, intended to present what a reader regards to be the main point or argument of the narrative.⁹⁴ This may well be the case: whether intentionally or not, the author proposes his view of the essence of Gen 3, to be sure, in a very particular way. What strikes the commentator is the total decontextualisation of Gen 3,13b (ὁ ὄφις ἠπάτησέν με) in 1 Tim 2,14 that reads: Ἀδάμ οὐκ ἠπατήθη, ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν. This decontextualisation is obvious even when we leave aside all historical-critical considerations regarding the genre, the mythical frame, the metaphorical sense and the etiological motivation of the narrative in Gen 3. The woman (the generic γυνή, not Eve) is the only actor and the sole to fail. The contrast between Adam and the γυνή is used to suggest woman's intrinsic liability to deception. The role of the serpent is implied, but the man as actor is absent. The verse is an enhanced quotation of Gen 3,13ba (ἐξαπατάω instead of the ἀπατάω of the LXX):⁹⁵ the woman was fully deceived (ἐξαπατηθεῖσα). It also modifies the meaning of the pre-text, denying that Adam was deceived, a statement contradicting Gen 3,⁹⁶ according to which both woman and man are beguiled by the hope of becoming like gods and disobey the prohibition. In Gen 3,13, when Eve affirms that she was seduced by the serpent, she gives a reason for her transgression. The same is done earlier, with other words, by Adam: he transgressed because he was induced by the woman given to him by God. Both these affirmations are meant to explain the deed and to avert responsibility. The pattern is identical, even when the words differ, – an important element of the pre-text which 1 Timothy leaves aside. This allows the author to formulate the puzzling assertion that Adam was not seduced. The underlying logic will be: what is not explicitly stated in these precise words may be denied.⁹⁷

Ἐξαπατάω (to deceive or beguile thoroughly⁹⁸) occurs a number of times in the NT. Once it refers to the individual, deceived by sin through the commandment (Rom 7,11). Remarkably, the four other NT occurrences refer to dissent in the community caused by erroneous views. Paul uses the verb in Rom 16,18, with respect to those of the dissension and scandals (16,17), obviously the false teachers, who deceive the heart of the innocent with smooth words; the faithful should instead stick to what they have learnt (v. 17). Corinthians are warned against deceiving themselves (1 Cor 3,18); the context is that of Corinthian dissent brought about by support to factions, and of adherence to false wisdom.⁹⁹ 2 Thess 2,3 invites Christians not to be deceived by those who promote an imminent parousia.

The closest parallel of our text is 2 Cor 11,3. As Merz has shown, 1 Tim 2,14 is actually an intertextual relecture of 2 Cor 11,3,¹⁰⁰ therefore the meaning of this Pauline text deserves some consideration. After his self-defence in ch. 10 (taken up again in 11,5ff), Paul expresses his fear that just as the serpent deceived Eve (ὁ ὄφις ἐξηπάτησεν Ἐύαν), the mind of the community might also be led astray (lit. corrupted) from its single-minded devotion (lit. simplicity) and chastity in Christ.¹⁰¹ The follow-

⁹³ For a critical assessment of the etiological character of v. 16, emphasising the originally positive connotation of procreation, see Dohmen, *Schöpfung*, 122-130.

⁹⁴ Küchler, *Schweigen*, 33.

⁹⁵ Only Theodoret cites Gen 3,13 using ἐξηπάτησε, but in the commentary to 1 Tim, thus clearly under the influence of that text (*Interpret. ep. I ad Tim.*, 651, ad 1 Tim 3,14, PG 82, 801; see also Wevers, *Septuaginta* 1, ad Gen 3,13). Trummer notes the v.l. of Theod. without closer reference (*Paulustradition*, 148).

⁹⁶ Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 139; Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 99.

⁹⁷ See Küchler, *Schweigen*, 34-35. He astutely notes that not only Adam's participation in transgression is denied, but surprisingly also Eve's persuading Adam to eat, a detail that could have offered the author a good argument for the prohibition imposed on teaching. He argues therefore that the reference to the woman being seduced strengthens the *Schmuck-Paränese*, not women's silencing, a deduction that will not be followed here (35-39, 50-53).

⁹⁸ Cf. LSJ, s.v. Ἐξαπατάω appears twice in the LXX, in Exod 8,25 and Dan 13,56, in neither referring to sexual deception.

⁹⁹ Schrage, *1 Korinther* (VII/1), 311-312; Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief*, 91.

¹⁰⁰ Merz, *Selbstauslegung*, 344-358.

¹⁰¹ καὶ τῆς ἀγνότητος is omitted by κ² H Ψ 0121 0243 1739 1881 20 b f^e vg sy^p Jul^C, but it appears in the most important witnesses (P⁴⁶ κ^{*} B and other).

ing verse makes it clear that such estrangement would be caused by those proclaiming a different teaching than Paul. In view of 2 Cor 11,5.22-23 and 12,11-12, Paul appears to fear the harmful influence that Jewish Christian opponents, ranking among “the most eminent apostles”, may have in the community. This context is important, since countering the negative impact of the opponents is also essential to 1 Timothy.

Some authors suggest that 2 Cor 11,3 takes over the sexual re-interpretation of Gen 3,13 in Jewish sources,¹⁰² a view rehearsed by 1 Tim 2,14 when claiming that Adam was not deceived.¹⁰³ In such a specific sense therefore Adam was not seduced. Without any doubt ἀπατάω has erotic overtones in the LXX, in Hellenistic and early Jewish literature.¹⁰⁴ In my view, however, this hypothesis is not necessary. Ἀπατάω may well be used in its general sense of misleading someone. Paul, speaking of the possible corruption of the community by apostles teaching a different doctrine refers to both Eve’s and the Christian’s deception in a metaphorical sense. Eve was deceived (not necessarily in a sexual way) to break God’s commandment and thus her faithfulness to God (not Adam!). The community may be induced by the opponents to break fidelity to Christ.

Although 2 Cor 11,3 explicitly refers to Eve’s seduction, it is unlikely that Paul ascribes a greater responsibility to Eve in the fall, since in this context he applies the marriage symbolism: over against Christ, the Groom, the community is represented by a feminine character (the Bride in v. 2),¹⁰⁵ which explains the reference to Eve’s seduction, but also implies the motive of Israel’s infidelity to her divine Groom, common in prophetic literature.¹⁰⁶ Therefore the danger of being deceived is not necessarily presented as a female trait, since the whole community can be led astray. Otherwise, describing the fallen human condition, Paul commonly refers to Adam (1 Cor 15,21-22.45-49; Rom 5,12-14.16-19)¹⁰⁷. While Paul fears deception for the community as a whole, 1 Timothy modifies the Pauline pre-text insofar as deceivability is stated only for women, and men are explicitly absolved.¹⁰⁸

If 1 Tim 2,14 relies indeed on 2 Cor 11,3, given the context of the latter text, it is more than likely that within a debate over women’s role in the community and their function of teachers, it uses ἐξᾶπατάω in a metaphorical sense: since women fall easily pray to deceit, – probably to the teaching of the opponents – they are not suited for teaching.¹⁰⁹

The denial of Adam’s being seduced may be explained otherwise. Namely it has to do with a device common to midrashic exegesis that frequently takes sentences out of their context, using them to make a very different point. In Gen 3 Adam does not say that he was deceived, while Eve does. The conclusion may easily be that if he did not *say so*, he was *not* deceived.¹¹⁰ The point of such an asser-

¹⁰² Küchler, *Schweigen*, 41-44 (paralleled with 4 Macc 18,7-9a); cf. already Dibelius/Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 48. The argument is taken over by Merz, *Selbstaulesung*, 348. More cautiously Thrall, 2. *Corinthians*, 662-663, noting the late date of *Yebam*. 103b.

¹⁰³ Küchler, *Schweigen*, 34-36, followed by Wagener, *Ordnung*, 105-106, and to some extent by Roloff, 1. *Timotheus*, 139, Merz, *Selbstaulesung*, 344-345. Because of this interpretation Küchler connects v. 14 to the *Schmuck-Paränese*, and not to the prohibition to teach. Wagener follows Küchler in connecting the argument from fall to the paraenesis on adornment, yet she rightly remarks the unitary character of the passage, noting that the whole envisages well-to-do, independent women who claim a position in the community (*Ordnung*, 111). Küchler’s connection is not convincing. *Kai* shows that v. 14 is a continuation of the argument in v. 13, and the latter is clearly the argument for v. 12, not for v. 9. See Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 460-461, Merz, *Selbstaulesung*, 351 (v. 14 as argument for the prohibition to teach).

¹⁰⁴ As extensively shown by Küchler, *Schweigen*, 36-50.

¹⁰⁵ Schüssler Fiorenza, *Memory*, 234-235; Merz, *Selbstaulesung*, 349, n. 284.

¹⁰⁶ The latter is rightly noted by Thrall, 2 *Corinthians* II, 661; Merz, *Selbstaulesung*, 349. Israel’s involvement in foreign cults is commonly described as breaking of the marital fidelity to YHWH (Hos; Jer 2-3; Ezek 16). True, it is always a female character, Eve or Israel, to stand for marital and religious infidelity.

¹⁰⁷ Rightly Roloff, 1. *Timotheus*, 140, noting that in Paul’s view all humans are affected by Adam’s sin.

¹⁰⁸ Appropriately noted by Merz, *Selbstaulesung*, 350-351.

¹⁰⁹ Rightly Roloff, 1. *Timotheus*, 139. Marshall notes the common concern of the two passages with false teaching, but doubts that 1 Tim argues for women’s greater weakness and liability to deception, given the positive estimation of women’s teaching role elsewhere in the PE (*Pastoral Epistles*, 465-466). His perception is far too optimistic. The argument from heresy is unconvincing, because it would than prohibit women to teach heresy in public, but it would allow them to do the same in private.

¹¹⁰ Though a late witness, this is precisely how Chrysostom explains the text (*Hom. 9 on 1Tim*, PG 62, 544-548 [CPG 4436]; Engl. *NPNF* XIII, 435-437, ad locum). The man did not literally assert: “the woman deceived me”. Only of the woman it is told that she saw the tree was good to eat, which means that the woman was captivated by her appetite (ἐπιθυμία), while the man merely transgressed because of the persuasion of the woman. Admitting that “the woman gave me and I ate” does not qualify as deception. For Chrysostom it is *not the same* to be beguiled by someone of the same kind (παρὰ τῆς ὁμοφύλου καὶ συγγενούς), by a free person (ἐλευθέρῃ), as

tion is that Eve, and subsequently women are weaker in nature than man.

Eve is not charged only of being deceived, but also of having transgressed (ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν). The idiom obviously refers to transgressing God's commandment and acquiring an enduring status of transgressor.¹¹¹ The assertion shows that Adam is here indeed absolved from blame (not only of not being deceived), since no reference is found in the text to him breaking the same commandment.¹¹²

The deceivable nature of woman is a common motive in apocrypha and (Hellenistic) Jewish authors, and for that reason 1 Tim 2,14 is often paralleled with such interpretations.¹¹³ Yet, 1 Hen 69.6 merely states that it was Gadre'el who led Eve astray.¹¹⁴ Narrating the fall, *Jubilees* is rather faithful to the biblical version, except that it has Eve realising her nakedness first, but nevertheless giving Adam to eat from the fruit.¹¹⁵ One of the most negative images of Eve is provided by the Greek *Life of Adam and Eve* that proposes a retrospective assessment of the consequences of fall, depicting Adam's disease, toils and death as a result of Eve's deed.¹¹⁶ She is repeatedly blamed and blames herself for the evil that occurred to Adam and to humans in general. As opposed to the narrative in Gen, Adam is told to have been absent when the serpent deceived Eve, moreover she persuades Adam to eat after she becomes conscious of the deception and of its consequences.¹¹⁷ In this latter detail the narrative comes close to *Jub.* 3.21. Conversely 2 Esdr has Adam burdened with an evil heart transgress and be overcome.¹¹⁸ Similarly, the early second century 2 Baruch repeatedly emphasises Adam's responsibility.¹¹⁹

In Philo, allegorical interpretation identifying man with νοῦς and woman with αἰσθήσις, the mediator of ἡδονή (the serpent), is combined with low esteem for women.¹²⁰ The serpent addresses the woman and not the man because

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

the man was, or by an inferior and subordinate animal (παρὰ θηρίου, τοῦ δούλου, τοῦ ὑποτεταγμένου), as the woman was. Elsewhere he states that the woman's fault is so much more serious, that compared to this the man's cannot even be regarded a sin, a point made by citing 1 Tim 2,14 (Ep. X.3.a; *Lettres à Olympias*, SC 13b, 248/249). For Theodoretus "Adam was not deceived" means that he was not deceived first, and it was not him to pick the fruit (*Interpret. ep. I ad Tim.*, ad 1 Tim 3,14, PG 81, 651). Montague has a similar explanation, puzzling to a modern reader's mind, that may have been nevertheless close to the argument of the author: "Adam was not deceived; he just did it" (Montague, *1-2 Tim, Tit*, 67, emphases in the original).

111 Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 464.

112 Pace Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 140.

113 Spicq, *Épîtres*, I, 381; Quinn/Wacker, *1-2 Timothy*, 229-230; Fiore, *Pastoral Epistles*, 68.

114 *1 Hen* 69.6.

115 *Jub.* 3.21. van Ruiten could be right that the emphasis on her covering her nakedness before his eyes were open, could stress that he did not see his wife naked (*Primaeval History*, 96). Even so, she becomes first aware of the change, and yet gives Adam the fruit. He is also right that *Jub.* minimises the negative aspects of the Eden-narrative, especially through a more positive image of Adam (109-110).

116 GLAE 7.1-3; 9.2; 14.2-25.4; 32.1-2; see also 10.1-11.3: she is responsible for the altered relationship between humans and animals. In Levison's text form I (i.e. mss. D/Ambrosiana, C 237 Inf., and Strasbourg/S/Argentoratium, 1913) Adam's toils are a consequence of Eve's deed (9.2, the end is missing from later mss). See Tromp (ed.), *The Life of Adam and Eve in Greek* (2005); cf. also Levison, *Texts in Transition. The Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (2000).

117 GLAE 15.2; 20.1-21.5. I do not think that 20.1-4 and 27.2 exonerate Eve, *pace* Levison, *Texts*, 40-41. Conversely, by having Adam absent and her persuading him after becoming aware of the deception, the narrative puts the entire blame on Eve; Adam's taking full responsibility in 27.2 only shows his magnanimity. Levison's text form II (mss. R/Vaticanus, 1192 and M/Patmos, 447) surely adds to her blame, when including her second failure to fast and repent by the Tigris, while Adam, praying in the Jordan, circled by angels, is immune to temptation (29.7-13). That the Satan appeared to her as an angel may mitigate her fault, but the reader remembers that at her first temptation the Satan appeared under a similar guise. For a more differentiated treatment of the topic of exhoneration: Levison, "Exhoneration", 251-275.

118 *2 Esdr* 3.21.

119 *2 Baruch* 48.42; 54.15; 56.6. He becomes the type of the eternal human (54.19), or at least the text puts greater emphasis on individual responsibility.

120 *Leg alleg.* 2, 49, with 3.61: the woman "gave" to man, and the serpent "beguiled" (ἠπατηκέναι) the woman, because to give is characteristic to sense-perception but to cheat and beguile of pleasure with its serpent like subtility"; *Cher.* 57-62; *Opif.* 151 (sexual pleasure as beginning of wrongs and breaking of the law), 157 (the serpent as symbol of ἡδονή; a long discussion on pleasure tackles with its universality, its role in procreation, and its dark side); cf. also 161, and 165.

truth.¹²¹

In his view the man is first mentioned to have hidden after the transgression, because “it was the more imperfect and ignoble element, the female, that made a beginning of transgression and lawlessness, while the male made the beginning of reverence and modesty and all good, since he was better and more perfect.”¹²² Adam, and not the woman is questioned by God because he did not consider her worthy, “although she was the beginning of evil and led him into a life of vileness”. The allegorical meaning however is that reason, the ruling or male principle, when listening to another, introduces the vice, the female part or perception.¹²³ Declining responsibility in Gen 3,12-13 is understood to show that the woman is by nature more easily deceived instead of having great thoughts, while the man is just the opposite.¹²⁴

Josephus is rather faithful in rendering the biblical account of the fall, but omits from Adam’s justification the reference to God having given him the woman, probably in order to defend God from any shadow of responsibility. Adam is being punished because he gave in to a woman’s counsel.¹²⁵ In his description of the Essenes, portrayed according to a(n almost Stoic) model of holiness, temperance and self-restraint, he notes that they disdain marriage, not in itself or because they would condemn the propagation of the human race, but because they want to keep themselves away from women’s licentiousness (ἀσελγεία), considering that none of them could remain faithful.¹²⁶

It is difficult to tell whether some of these texts could have influenced 1 Timothy. Except the emphatic blame on Eve, and woman’s greater liability to be deceived, there are no verbal connections with Philo, nor similarities in the interpretative pattern (there is no sign of allegorical interpretation in 1 Tim, thus no allusion to the νοῦς-αἰσθήσις pair).¹²⁷ At any rate it is difficult to think that could have Philo has influenced the author.¹²⁸ *Jub.* is earlier than 1 Tim, but rather moderate, just as *1 En.* The *GLAE* is sometimes thought to depend on a first century Jewish (Hebrew or Aramaic) original, and this would have made it or the Greek translation contemporaneous with the PE,¹²⁹ but both the Jewish origin and the early dating have been considerably challenged.¹³⁰ Thus one may not be sure that this writing was available to the author. To sum up, one cannot argue for a direct dependence of 1 Tim 2,14 on any of the Jewish sources that emphasise Eve’s eminent deceivability. It is very well possible that oral traditions on the topic circulated in Hellenistic Judaism, and were variously reproduced in Philo, 2 Cor 11,3 and 1 Tim 2,14, and in various other writings. It is likely that 1 Tim draws on 2 Cor 11,3, but in that case it certainly amplifies Eve’s guilty gullibility (which is not the main point for Paul), and turns it into a condition said to be universally relevant for women.

¹²¹ QG I, 33, LCL 380, 20; cf. SC 34A, 100/101: „Mulier autem consuevit potius quam vir decipi. Hujus enim consilium, sicut et corpus, masculinum est, et sufficiens ad solvendam sententiam seductionis; mulieris autem magis effeminatum, ita ut propter mollietatem facile concedit, et captatur falsitate persuasiva, veri similitudinem imitante.”

¹²² QG I, 43, LCL 380, 25; compare SC 34A, 108/109: „Initium praevaricandi peccadique in legem facit imperfecta et prava (natura) femina; erubescendi vero pudendique, immo totius boni, mas, utpote melius et perfectius (opus).” Also QG I,37-38: the woman ate first, and subsequently gave to the man as well, to show that man rules over immortality and everything good, while woman over death and vileness.

¹²³ QG I,45, LCL 380, 26; SC 34A, 110/111 (“Mulierem vero interrogare minime dignatus est, tamquam principium mali, et ducem ei turpis vitae factam”).

¹²⁴ QG I, 46, LCL 380, 26, SC 34A, 112/113: “mulier solet potius decipi, quam majora quaedam cogitare; vir autem e contra.”

¹²⁵ Jos., *Ant.* I, 48-49, LCL, London/Cambridge, MA, 1961, 22/23.

¹²⁶ Jos., *Bell.* II, 119-120.

¹²⁷ Towner notes the differences between 1 Tim 2,14 and Philo, and Philo’s emphasis on the weakness of human nature, less on Eve’s deception as such (*Letters*, 230).

¹²⁸ In Runia’s view it is has not been proved beyond doubt that the Apologists have known Philo (though he seems to admit an influence on Justin’s doctrine of the Logos and on Theophilus’ interpretation of the first chapters of Gen (*Philo in Early Christian Literature*, 335). It is therefore even less probable that he was available to the author of 1 Tim. As to the interpretation of the Eden-narrative, Runia finds no direct influence of “Philo’s amalgam of specific themes here [Opif. 151-152], i.e. sexual desire, pleasure, the end of the good life and the beginning of misery and wretchedness” (*Creation*, 361). This is true for 1 Tim, but less defensible for later authors.

¹²⁹ Quinn/Wacker parallel the *LAE* with 1 Tim 2,14 opting for a late first century date for the former (*1-2 Timothy*, 230). For a Jewish origin see M. Meiser, in this volume.

¹³⁰ de Jonge, Tromp, *Life of Adam and Eve*, 1997, 66-77 (a date between 100-600 CE); de Jonge, “Christian Origin”, 347-363.

The narrative of the fall in 1 Tim 2,14 legitimises woman's subordination: she has proved to be weak, and as a consequence of her being deceived, God submitted her to the man. The issue at stake is therefore again that of authority: woman needs to submit to man not only because she is the second created and thus inferior, but also because of the divine will that subordinates her to the man (αὐτός σου κυριεύσει, 3,16). Under these circumstances both the ktisiological and the hamartiological argument bolster the same idea: a woman may not possess authority, but should be ruled by the man. The woman is from her creation, one might say, by nature, second, derived from the man, and thus inferior. To her created inferiority adds her weakness, shown by her fall, that leads to her subsequent subordination to the man's rule. Submission is therefore rooted in the divine will. Since under these circumstances authority may be exercised lawfully only by the man, a woman should refrain from any activity that would place her in a position of authority in the community and in the *oikos*, as this would mean the reversal of this divine order.

Merz has suggested with good reason that the relecture of 2 Cor 11,2-3 by 1 Tim 2,14-15 may also have countered the asceticism embraced by the opponents.¹³¹ As reception-history shows, 2 Cor 11,2 was understood to promote sexual asceticism, and very likely so already at the turn of the century. The relecture of Gen 3,13.16 in 1 Tim 2,14-15 may have also occasioned a "correction" of such ascetic reading of 2 Cor 11,2-3, establishing that childbearing remained women's eminent role and their specific way to salvation.

2.3. Childbearing – Women's Chance to Overcome their Fallen Condition

Childbearing is the eminent female role in the Pastoral Epistles, as attested by 1 Tim 2,15; 5,10.14 and Tit 2,4.11. Motherhood is a gender-specific way of salvation, women's fallen condition notwithstanding (1 Tim 2,15).¹³² The subject of the singular σωθήσεται in 1 Tim 2,15 is obviously the γυνή in v. 14, and the plural μένωσιν is most likely a generalisation, clarifying that all women are required – beside accepting motherhood – to practice the Christian and specifically feminine virtues.¹³³ Τεκνογονία obviously presupposes marriage. In spite of the concrete meaning of childbearing, a number of authors suggest that τεκνογονία should be taken not only under its biological aspect, but it very likely includes mothers' role in raising their children and/or providing for their religious education.¹³⁴ This may or may not be the case, since contemporary mentality regarded education as the task of the father, and emphasised the mother's role in nurturing her children.

The objection that σωθήσεται διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας, that is by carrying out a human act, may not be taken in an instrumental sense, since it would suggest self-salvation,¹³⁵ is not compelling. Wagener's point is pertinent: salvation by way of completing a specific role may be problematic for exegetes, but not so for the author, particularly if one has in view the emphasis laid by 1 Timothy on deeds.¹³⁶ At any rate, to childbearing necessarily adds perseverance in faith, love, holiness and σωφροσύνη, showing that not the biological act of birth-giving is salvific, but the fulfilment of a role assigned by

¹³¹ Merz, *Selbstausslegung*, 352-358; ead., "Pure Bride", 131-147.

¹³² For the various meanings proposed for σωθήσεται διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας, see Spicq, *Épîtres*, I, 382-383; Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 140-141; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 467-470; Merz, *Selbstausslegung*, 296-300. I take σωτηρία for eschatological salvation, conditioned by fulfilling one's vocation in this world. Winter's assumption that the text would refer to women continuing their pregnancy instead of interrupting it is unconvincing (*Roman Wives*, 109-111; also Towner, *Letters*, 235). 1 Tim 4,3 claims the problem to be unwillingness to marry; if this is meant to reflect asceticism practiced by certain members of the community, this is a much more appropriate ground for encouraging motherhood (1 Tim 2,15; 5,10.14; cf. Tit 2,4), and marriage (1 Tim 5,14).

¹³³ Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 101; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 471, cf. also Trummer, *Paulustradition*, 150; Merz, *Selbstausslegung*, 302.

¹³⁴ Spicq, *Épîtres*, I, 391; Brox, *Pastoralbriefe*, 136; Trummer, *Paulustradition*, 149, n. 182; Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 101; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 468. Childrearing may be supported by the use of τεκνοτροφεῖν in 1 Tim 5,10, but education has no solid proof.

¹³⁵ Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 140-141. Marshall is somewhat cautious, questioning the instrumentality expressed by διὰ; yet shows that the epistle sustains the "normativity of childbearing against those who [...] deny it" (*Pastoral Epistles*, 470).

¹³⁶ *Ordnung*, 107-108. Besides, Collins may well have a point when understanding σωθήσεται as *passivum divinum* (1 2 Timothy Titus, 76). One should avoid projecting the Protestant-Catholic debate over the salvific role of grace/faith vs. deeds into 1 Timothy.

God,¹³⁷ embedded in a life of Christian abnegation. Merz parallels 1 Tim 2,15 with 4,16 that connects Timothy's salvation to his accomplishing the task of teaching; childbirth is therefore a soteriological "Sonderweg" to women to whom teaching (a good deed *par excellence*) is forbidden.¹³⁸

Δέ in 1 Tim 2,15 connects the assertion about salvation through childbearing to the description of the fallen female condition in v. 14, and thus provides evidence for τεκνογονία being an allusion to Gen 3,16. Of all the aspects of the "punishment" episode in Gen 3, 1 Timothy takes over explicitly only the reference to maternity. Nevertheless to a reader familiar with the pre-text, this unmarked allusion to Gen 3,16 would have probably brought to mind the other element of "punishment", namely the subordination of the woman to the man, all the more so as the whole preliminary discussion explicitly tackles with male authority and female submission.

1 Timothy proposes once more a relecture of the pre-text. While Gen 3,16 calls attention to the painful dimension of the female condition in both motherhood and in the relationship between woman and man, in our text childbearing does not appear as chastisement, but as a valuable vocation and a way to salvation.¹³⁹ Not only are the birth pangs omitted, but the clearly positive element of σωτηρία, actually missing from the pre-text, shows that motherhood should not be taken here as punishment or expiation for Eve's sin.¹⁴⁰ Conversely, maternity becomes in 1 Timothy a woman's eminent chance to obtain salvation, her created inferiority and her fallen condition notwithstanding. Moreover, it is a reaffirmation of the view that Christian women manifest their faith and love by complying with gender roles resulting from the natural order.¹⁴¹

The valuation of childbearing and motherhood is indeed characteristic for the Pastoral Epistles, as also shown by 1 Tim 5,10.14 and Tit 2,4.¹⁴² Acceptance of motherhood (5,10: εἰ ἐτεκνοτρόφησεν) is one of widows' qualifications needed for their enrolment. Younger widows have to be rejected by the church leader, and to be demanded to fulfil instead their female role (v. 14: γαμεῖν, τεκνογονεῖν).¹⁴³ Thus maternity is here, too, encouraged in order to settle the question about the proper vocation of women, and to counter thereby their engagement in the public affairs of the church. This is shown precisely by the fact that vv. 10 and 14 constitute the frame of the harsh rebuttal of widows' undesired activity outside the household, a matter discussed earlier.¹⁴⁴ Tit 2 reflects a similar valuation of motherhood as eminent female vocation. Older women are encouraged to teach the younger ones to be domestic, loving of husband and children (φιλόανδρους εἶναι, φιλοτέκνους, v. 4). This expectation is entirely concordant with the feminine ideal reflected in epigraphic material¹⁴⁵ and in moral-

¹³⁷ Rightly Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 104: childbearing means accepting the will of God.

¹³⁸ Merz, *Selbstauslegung*, 295-296. See already Spicq, *Épîtres I*, 382: "La femme sera sauvée non en enseignant (IV,16), mais en enfantant", cf. also 384, 400.

¹³⁹ Appropriately Brox, *Pastoralbriefe*, 136-138; Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 101.

¹⁴⁰ See Küchler, *Schweigen*, 40; Wagener, *Ordnung*, 108; Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 101; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 469 ("the point is rather the contrast between teaching and bearing children"); pace Dibelius/Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 48; Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 139, 141.

¹⁴¹ Spicq, *Épîtres I*, 399-401 (400: "normalement une femme est faite pour avoir des enfants. [...] Selon cette optique le sens de I Tim. II, 15 est claire : chacun son rôle; la femme n'a pas à jouer le docteur, elle est normalement destinée au mariage (cf. I Cor. VII, 9, 36) et c'est en accomplissant toutes les tâches qu'implique une telle condition qu'elle aboutira au salut, grâce à la pratique persévérante des vertus chrétiennes."

¹⁴² Merz, *Selbstauslegung*, 297.

¹⁴³ Τεκνοτροφεῖν may mean more than the mere act of birth-giving (τεκνογονεῖν), and may imply rearing one's children. Cf. Wagener, *Ordnung*, 178-186. Yet, despite the ancient parallels cited by Wagener, where the verb is used for rearing all of one's children, I doubt that the specific use of avoiding child exposure is implied by the author. Pace Wagener, 183-186. This view is contradicted by the contrast set in 1 Tim 5 between accepted, older widows (v. 9-10), who have already reared children (ἐτεκνοτρόφησεν), and younger widows, to be rejected, as they are still to marry and bear children (v. 14, τεκνογονεῖν). This suggests that τεκνοτροφεῖν and τεκνογονεῖν are actually used synonymously, and both refer to bearing and rearing children, as fulfilling a typically feminine task. The issue at stake is not rearing *only some* of the born children, but of accepting motherhood at all, with the related domestic tasks (οἰκοδεσποτεῖν), instead of meddling into matters of no concern for women.

¹⁴⁴ Wagener therefore rightly speaks of „Heirat der jungen Frauen als Gegenstrategie“, *Ordnung*, 211.

¹⁴⁵ A Valeria is commemorated by her husband Lucius Dexios from Herculaneum as εὖνον φιλόστοργον· σεμητὴν· ἄμωμον/φίλανδρον· φιλοτέκνον· εὐνουχον (late first/early second century, Cairo, cf. Horsley, "A Woman's Virtues", 40. Horsley lists several other inscriptions where women are depicted with the attributes φιλόστοργος, φίλανδρος, φιλοτέκνος (41-43). The honorary inscription to the wife of the *lyciarch* Flavius Antiouchus describes her as ἀρετὴ καὶ σω[φ]ροσύνη καὶ φιλανδρία καὶ φιλοτέκνικα διαφέρουσαν (FdXanth VII 71, Xanthos, Lycia); the one dedicated to Claudia Arescoussa speaks of her φιλανδρία, φιλοτέκνικα, σωφροσύνη (TAM II 443, Patara/Lycia);

philosophical writings.¹⁴⁶

The endorsement of childbearing in the Pastoral Epistles is variously explained. Not few are those who regard it as part of an anti-Gnostic polemic.¹⁴⁷ This background would explain the emphasis on marriage and childbearing in the exhortations to women (1 Tim 2,15; 5,14; cf. Tit 2,4-5). The same context would explain the need to prohibit women from public teaching, given their prominent representation in the Gnostic movement. Nevertheless this conclusion is far from compelling. As shown earlier, there is no unquestionable evidence for the opponents belonging to a Gnostic movement, and there is even less evidence for women teaching Gnostic doctrines. 1 Tim 2,15 may easily be explained from the previous verse, therefore needs not be seen as expression of an anti-Gnostic polemic.¹⁴⁸ It is much more probable that marriage and motherhood are encouraged against ascetic tendencies (that need not be associated *a priori* with Gnosticism), and against trends that promoted a larger share for women in society and in the life of the church, teaching included.¹⁴⁹

Conclusion

1 Timothy expresses a creation-friendly attitude, and promotes a lifestyle congruous with the order of creation. Creation, and implicitly the body, marriage, motherhood and food are good. However the statements about creation and marriage aim at regulating certain attitudes and roles. These statements are at least partly a reaction against ascetic tendencies. The anthropology of 1 Tim is ambivalent. In the relecture of the narratives on creation the author uses the ancient topos of priority, to prove male superiority and authority. The reinterpretation of Gen 2–3 suggests that the woman is a secondary, inferior being, prone to deception, therefore unable to fill in ecclesial roles linked to holding authority. Motherhood offers women the chance to overcome their fallen condition and reach salvation. The Pastorals come close to those ancient sources that regard maternity as the typical, natural function and social role of women,¹⁵⁰ in order to keep them in their appropriate place. Thus positive statements on the goodness of creation and of its order, as valuable as they may be in themselves, do not always serve constructive goals. Therefore anthropological statements are meant to consolidate traditional gender roles.

the epitaph of Eragatiane Menodora, daughter of the sophist Eragatianos Menodoros, wife of Aurelius Faustinus refers to her *φιλανδρία, φιλοτέκνια, σωφροσύνη* (IK Perge 316, Perge/Pamphilia, 3rd cent. CE).

¹⁴⁶ See also Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, II, 620; Dibelius/Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 140; Collins, *1-2 Tim Tit*, 342.

¹⁴⁷ Roloff, *1. Timotheus*, 224-228, 234-238; Oberlinner, *1. Timotheus*, 94, 97-98; Dibelius/Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 48-49; Wolter, *Pastoralbriefe*, 265-266; Collins, *1-2 Tim. Tit*, 75, 114-116 (with some hesitation). Yet asceticism may well exist unrelated to Gnosticism (Wilson, *Gnosis and the New Testament*, 41-42 and his cautious discussion of Gnosis in the PE).

¹⁴⁸ Merz, *Selbstausslegung*, 309; even Wolter, *Pastoralbriefe*, 260-261 (although he finds the opponents' belonging to a form of proto-Gnosticism likely). See also Witherington, *Letters*, 253-254, on 1 Tim 4,3.

¹⁴⁹ MacDonald, *Pauline Churches*, 181-183; Wagener, *Ordnung*, 108-109; Merz, *Selbstausslegung*, 298-300, 302; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 51.

¹⁵⁰ Spicq, *Épîtres*, I, 392-393; also Trummer, *Paulustradition*, 150.

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