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Is the *ekklēsia* a *Household* (of God)? Reassessing the Notion of οἶκος θεοῦ in 1 Tim 3.15*

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1 Timothy defines the *ekklēsia* as the οἶκος θεοῦ. This has led to the conclusion that the Pastoral Epistles regard the *ekklēsia* as an enlarged *oikos*, where the roles of the officials and the norms regulating the behaviour of its members reproduce the relationships of the patriarchal household. However, οἶκος θεοῦ is not a household properly speaking. *Ekklēsia* is a term with political connotations, and thus the community acquires a public dimension. In addition, *oikos* is used metaphorically, for a larger community. In this, the definition reflects the ancient custom of describing larger communities (the cosmos, the *polis*, or an association) through the metaphor of the *oikos*. The *ekklēsia* is therefore a public, quasi-cosmic space, whose laws and structures receive divine legitimation.

Keywords: 1 Tim 3.15, *ekklēsia*, *oikos*, *polis*, cosmos, metaphoric language, public space

The ecclesiology of the Pastoral Epistles,[1] centred on the metaphor of the οἶκος θεοῦ, has been analysed in a number of works, notably from

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1 I read the Pastoral Epistles (henceforth PE) as pseudonymous (forged) epistles, which, in spite of their individual features, belong to a corpus. See J. Roloff, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus* (EKKNT 15; Zürich: Benzinger/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988) 23–39, 41–6; L. Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe: Kommentar zum ersten Timotheusbrief* (HTKNT 11/2; Freiburg: Herder, 1994) xxxiii–xxxix, xlii–xlvi; L. R. Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles* (HUT 22; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986); M. Frenschkowski, 'Pseudepigraphie und Paulusschule: Gedanken zur Verfasserschaft der Deuteropaulinen', *Das Ende des Paulus: Historische, theologische und literaturgeschichtliche Aspekte* (ed. F. W. Horn; BZNW 106; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001) 239–72, at 251, 262; A. Weiser, *Der zweite Brief an Timotheus* (EKKNT 16.1; Düsseldorf/Zürich: Benzinger/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2003) 53–4, 56–9, 63; A. Merz, *Die fiktive*

the perspective of the ancient *oikos*.[2] This approach has led to the conclusion that the PE regard the *ekklēsia* as a divine *oikos*, where the order of the community, the roles of the officials and the norms regulating the behaviour of its members reproduce the relationships of the patriarchal household. Thus, in his fundamental work on *The Household of God*, David Verner discussed in detail the ancient household, to illuminate the use of *oikos*-terminology in the PE.[3] Jürgen Roloff explicitly described the church as a large household in which the same norms apply as in the family. As a consequence he rejected the idea that the PE conceived the *ekklēsia* as a public

Selbstauslegung des Paulus: Intertextuelle Studien zur Intention und Rezeption der Pastoralbriefe (NTOA 52; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004) 72–86, 221, 224, 383–4; J. W. Marshall, '"I Left You in Crete": Narrative Deception and Social Hierarchy in the Letter to Titus', *JBL* 127 (2008) 781–803; M. Tsuji, 'Persönliche Korrespondenz des Paulus: Zur Strategie der Pastoralbriefe als Pseudepigrapha', *NTS* 56 (2010) 253–72.

2 Οἶκος θεοῦ appears only in 1 Tim 3.15, but the metaphor is implied elsewhere as well. The house (οἰκία) in 2 Tim 2.20, which hosts different members (vessels), is a metaphor of the community. The representation of the *episkopos-presbyteros* (and *diakonos*) as head of household (1 Tim 3.4–5, 12) or, symbolically speaking, as an *oikonomos* of God (Tit 1.7) implies a similar image of the *ekklēsia*. L. Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe: Kommentar zum zweiten Timotheusbrief* (HThKNT 11.2.2; Freiburg: Herder, 1995) 104; I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; London: T&T Clark, 1999) 759, 761; D. G. Horrell, 'From ἀδελφοί to οἶκος θεοῦ: Social Transformation in Pauline Christianity', *JBL* 120 (2001) 293–311, at 308. D. C. Verner, *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles* (SBL Dissertations 71; Chico, CA: Scholars, 1983) esp. 91–111; Roloff, *1 Tim*, 213–15; U. Wagener, *Die Ordnung des Hauses Gottes: Der Ort von Frauen in der Ekklesiologie und Ethik der Pastoralbriefe* (WUNT 2.65; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994) 62–5, 113, 235–45; L. Oberlinner, 'Öffnung zur Welt oder Verrat am Glauben? Hellenismus in den Pastoralbriefen', *Der neue Mensch in Christus: Hellenistische Anthropologie und Ethik im Neuen Testament* (ed. J. Beutler; Freiburg: Herder, 2001) 135–63, at 148–63; id., 'Gemeindeordnung und rechte Lehre: Zur Fortschreibung der paulinischen Ekklesiologie in den Pastoralbriefen', *ThQ* 187 (2007) 295–308; id., '"Paulus" versus Paulus? Zum Problem des "Paulinismus" der Pastoralbriefe', *Pneuma und Gemeinde: Christsein in der Tradition des Paulus und Johannes; Festschrift für Josef Hainz zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. J. Eckert, M. Schmidl, H. Steichele; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 2001) 170–99, at 177–86. Horrell, ἀδελφοί, 295–9, 306–11; id., 'Disciplining Performance and "Placing" the Church: Widows, Elders and Slaves in the Household of God (1 Tim 5,1–6,2)', *1 Timothy Reconsidered* (ed. K. P. Donfried; Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum 18; Leuven: Peeters, 2008) 109–34, at 132–4; L. Fatum, 'Christ Domesticated: The Household Theology of the Pastorals as Political Strategy', *The Formation of the Early Church* (ed. J. Ådna; WUNT 1.183; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) 175–207, at 178–80, 186–94, 196–201; P. Trebilco, 'What Shall We Call Each Other? I: The Issue of Self-Designation in the Pastoral Epistles', *Tyndale Bulletin* 53 (2002) 239–58, at 249–53; J. Wagner, *Die Anfänge des Amtes in der Kirche: Presbyter und Episkopen in der frühchristlichen Literatur* (Tübingen: Francke, 2011) 175–82.

3 Verner, *Household*, esp. 27–70.

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space.[4] Raymond Collins associated 1 Tim 3.15 with the formula κατ᾽ οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησία (Rom 16.5 and similar), notably because he primarily took *oikos* to mean 'house', and emphasised the role of household churches in earliest Christianity.[5] In a comparable manner Margaret MacDonald noted the 'close association of church offices with traditional household roles', the interest of the PE in household structures and the understanding of the church 'in terms of the model of the household'.[6] Frances Young noted that the hierarchical relationships of the church in the PE were 'modelled on a typical Greco-Roman household'.[7]

The impact of the household model will not be questioned here. However, these analyses take insufficiently into account the fact that from a sociological perspective the *ekklēsia* is not a household, but a larger social entity constituted of several households, a community with a certain structure, with members and officials. Therefore, the *ekklēsia* is not a household, and 1 Timothy uses the *oikos*-terminology as a metaphor for a community. In this essay, I will focus on the metaphorical character of the *oikos*-terminology, to show that the term involves the understanding of the community as a public space. This aspect is implied already in the public dimension of *ekklēsia*, a term intimately linked to the political sphere. Further, the theophoric designation of this *oikos* invests the *ekklēsia* with a quasi-cosmic dimension. The metaphorical use of *oikos* for a larger social or religious entity refers to a community that transcends the limits of the private sphere. Consequently, the οἶκος θεοῦ paradigm has broader implications than generally acknowledged. The equation *ekklēsia* – οἶκος θεοῦ actually describes the community as a *polis* and a quasi-cosmic *oikos* ruled by God, thus as the public sphere par excellence.

1. Do *ekklēsia* and *oikos (theou)* Refer to Opposite Realities?

1 Timothy refers to the community as the *ekklēsia* of God (3.5, 15), more specifically as the assembly of a community belonging to the living God

4 Roloff, *1 Tim*, 137–8 n. 143. Discussing John 4, Jerome Neyrey claimed that '[t]here was no "public" Christian world for males or females. All Christians met in "private" space and adopted the customs appropriate for households and kinship groups' (*The Gospel of John in Cultural and Rhetorical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 145–6). Jorunn Økland also challenged the contrast between the household as private and the *ekklēsia* as public space (*Women in their Place: Paul and the Corinthian Discourse of Gender and Sanctuary Space* (JSNTSup 269; London/New York: T&T Clark, 2004) 38, 58, 140–1).

5 R. F. Collins, *1&2 Timothy and Titus: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002) 104.

6 M. MacDonald, *Early Christian Women and Pagan Opinion: The Power of the Hysterical Woman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 156–7, 171.

7 F. M. Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters* (NTT; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 121.

(ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζῶντος) or the household of God (οἶκος θεοῦ) (1 Tim 3.15). The theophoric appellation links *ekklēsia* and *oikos* to the worshipped deity. The implications of this point will be addressed later on, in connection with the Greco-Roman background of these metaphors.

Traditionally, *ekklēsia* was derived from the LXX, where it translated קהל and was meant to designate the assembly of the Christ-believers as the new people of God.[8] Yet, I shall argue that the term was more probably borrowed from the profane sphere, from the life of the Hellenistic *polis*.[9] (Without a doubt, Greek-speaking Christians, just as earlier the translators of the LXX, were aware of this meaning.) Therefore, the profane-political background of the term should be seriously taken into account.[10] Hans-Josef Klauck has had good reasons to translate *ekklēsia* as the 'Bürgerversammlung Gottes'.[11]

In this case, the definition of the community in 1 Tim 3.15 apparently combines two terms taken from different, if not opposite, spheres, the public (*ekklēsia*) and the private (*oikos*) space. However, should we consider the metaphorical use of *oikos*, it will become clear that no such contrast is involved, but in fact both terms – *ekklēsia* and *oikos* of God – point to the public character of the community.

1.1 *The* ekklēsia *and the Heavenly* polis

Many years ago Erik Peterson made a compelling case for the connection between *ekklēsia* and *polis* and for the public character of the Christian *ekklēsia*, based on the markers of the homonymous institution of the Hellenistic *polis*.[12] Several of these insights were taken up again by Klaus Berger and, more recently, by Hans-Ulrich Weidemann and Matthias Klinghardt.[13] Peterson has understood

8 K. L. Schmidt, ἐκκλησία, *TDNT* III.501–36, at 503, 527–9; U. Schnelle, *Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005) 560 (though noting that with the neologism ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ Paul turns to the secular meaning of the term); J. D. G. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem: Christianity in the Making*, vol. II (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009) 600; P. Trebilco, 'Why Did the Early Christians Call Themselves ἡ ἐκκλησία?', *NTS* 57 (2011) 440–60, at 444, 446.

9 See below, nn. 14–15.

10 W. Schrage, '"Ekklesia" und "Synagoge": Zum Ursprung des urchristlichen Kirchenbegriffs', *ZThK* 60 (1963) 178–202, at 202 (although his argument that Hellenists chose it over *synagogē* because of their criticism of the Law is not convincing). Even Trebilco, who excludes any political connotation in Paul's ecclesiology and in the understanding of Jerusalem Hellenists, admits the political background of the term ('ἐκκλησία', 445).

11 H.-J. Klauck, *Gemeinde zwischen Haus und Stadt: Kirche bei Paulus* (Freiburg: Herder, 1992) 35–6.

12 E. Peterson, 'Ekklesia: Studien zum altkirchlichen Kirchenbegriff', *Ausgewählte Schriften: Sonderband* (ed. B. Nichtweiß and H.-U. Weidemann; Würzburg: Echter, 2010) 9–83, at 15–26; also Schrage, 'Ekklesia', 179–88.

13 K. Berger, 'Volksversammlung und Gemeinde Gottes: Zu den Anfängen der christlichen Verwendung von "ekklesia"', *Tradition und Offenbarung: Studien zum frühen Christentum*

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the *ekklēsia* as the assembly of the (human and angelic) citizens of the heavenly *polis* ('Himmelsstadt').[14] Just as the profane *ekklēsia* denotes the assembly of the citizens (of the *demos*), the Christian *ekklēsia* is the assembled community, coming together to accomplish legal and liturgical acts. As such, it has a dynamic character, and a decidedly public, institutional and legal dimension.[15] *Polis* and *ekklēsia* are intimately connected; they are correlative entities: the *ekklēsia* cannot exist without a *polis*.[16] The assembled Christian *ekklēsia* is a manifestation of the heavenly city. Further, the Christian assembly has its governing authorities, just as the profane *ekklēsia*. The council of the heavenly *polis* is made up of angels, prophets and saints (the baptised), but this *ekklēsia* has earthly officials as well.[17] The *ekklēsia*, both profane and Christian, takes legal decisions, adopted by the people through acclamations. The liturgical formulae attested in the NT and in the early church are in Peterson's view acclamations, with a performative and enthusiastic character, not dogmatic confessions of faith.[18] Further, the profane-political *ekklēsia* has a religious character.[19] This is all the more true for the Christian assembly, gathered and realised in the *leitourgia* (another religious term borrowed from public-legal language).[20]

Klaus Berger expanded the discussion on the essential manifestations of the *ekklēsia*, addressing the functions of the Jewish and Christian *ekklēsia*. Just as the profane *ekklēsia*, these too embodied the place where God was honoured,

(ed. M. Klinghardt and G. Röhser; Tübingen: Francke, 2006) 173–206, at 173–87; H.-U. Weidemann, 'Ekklesia, Polis und Synagoge: Überlegungen im Anschluss an Erik Peterson', in E. Peterson, *Ekklesia: Studien zum altchristlichen Kirchenbegriff, Ausgewählte Schriften: Sonderband* (ed. B. Nichtweiß and H.-U. Weidemann; Würzburg: Echter, 2010) 152–95, at 171–3; id., '"Paulus an die Ekklesia Gottes, die in Korinth ist": Der Kirchenbegriff in Petersons Auslegung des ersten Korintherbriefs', *Erik Peterson: Die theologische Präsenz eines Outsiders* (ed. G. Caronello; Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2012) 259–96; M. Klinghardt, 'Hellenistisch-römische Staatsidee', *Neues Testament und antike Kultur*, vol. III: *Weltauffassung – Kult – Ethos* (ed. J. Zangenberg; Neurkirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2011) 143–50, at 148–50. Berger ('Volksversammlung', 176–87) and Weidemann ('Ekklesia', 179–85) argue that early Christ-believers adopted *ekklēsia* through the mediation of Hellenistic Judaism.

14 Peterson, 'Ekklesia', 17–52 (cf. Heb 11.8–12; 12.22–4; 13.14; Gal 4.26; Phil 3.20; Rev 21.9–22.5); Weidemann, 'Paulus', 276 (cf. also 1 Thess 4.17; Rom 11.26; the Johannine corpus, in particular John 14.2–3, 18–20; 2 John 1.5).

15 Peterson, 'Ekklesia', 20. On the public dimension, also Weidemann, 'Paulus', 269–70, 272, 281.

16 Peterson, 'Ekklesia', 20–1; Weidemann, 'Ekklesia', 153; id., 'Paulus', 267.

17 Peterson, 'Ekklesia', 23–4, 40; also Berger, 'Volksversammlung', 180–1, 185; Klinghardt, 'Staatsidee', 149.

18 Peterson, 'Ekklesia', 24–6. On acclamations in the NT: Weidemann, 'Paulus', 277–86.

19 Peterson, 'Ekklesia', 18–20.

20 Peterson, 'Ekklesia', 47, 51.

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where members were praised or shamed; it was the place of speaking and listening.[21]

Some of Peterson's ideas may be problematic,[22] but his insights concerning the public character of the *ekklēsia* and the relationship between the heavenly *polis* and the *ekklēsia* deserve attention. Interestingly, however, while largely drawing from the Greco-Roman sociocultural context, Peterson did not discuss the Stoic view of the cosmic *polis* joining gods and humans, the closest parallel of his 'Himmelsstadt'.[23] (I shall return to this notion in a while).

The Pauline passages which reflect the idea of a heavenly *polis* (Gal 4.26, Phil 3.20 and 1 Thess 4.17) show that this imagery was used as a reference to the Christian community. Gal 4.24–6 contrasts the heavenly city (the ἄνω Ἰερουσαλήμ), those living under the covenant of Christ, with the earthly city, i.e. those living under the Law of Sinai. Jerusalem above is thus both the heavenly (*metro*)*polis* (4.26) and the *ekklēsia* of the Christ-believers. The connection between the heavenly *polis* and the *ekklēsia* is clear in Phil 3.20, where Paul describes the believers as citizens of the πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς. The view is implicit already in 1 Thess 4.17, which presupposes a heavenly abode to which Christians will be transferred. The political language used to describe the Christian community will be taken up later in Eph 2.19–22 (to which I return shortly).

Karl Olav Sandnes has shown that Paul understood the *ekklēsia* not simply as a brotherhood or a fellowship of equals creating familial bonds (i.e. a private space), but as a public *and* a sacred space.[24] Sandnes rightly maintains that even when assembled in private houses, the church was not identical with the household. Further, whereas Jorunn Økland has argued that in 1 Corinthians the *ekklēsia* was conceived as a sanctuary space,[25] Sandnes modifies Økland's position and points to the one-sidedness of the sanctuary model.[26] The *ekklēsia* is not only a religious-ritual entity, but also a social group whose description requires the

21 Berger, 'Volksversammlung', 179–87; Klinghardt, 'Staatsidee', 150.

22 E.g. the early parting of the ways between Jews and Christians (against it: Weidemann, 'Ekklesia', 158–64), the too strict application of the features of the profane *ekklēsia* to the Christian one; the overemphasis of the role of the officials; the view that *ekklēsia* denoted the assembly, not the group (against it: Berger, 'Volksversammlung', 190–1, 198–9; Weidemann, 'Paulus', 274–5.)

23 Although he speaks of the baptised and the angels as members of the 'Bürgerschaft der Himmelsstadt' ('Ekklesia', 47).

24 K. O. Sandnes, 'Ekklēsia at Corinth: Between Private and Public', *Tidsskrift for Teologi og Kirke* 3–4 (2007) 248–63; id., 'Equality within Patriarchal Structures: Some New Testament Perspectives on the Christian Fellowship as a Brother- or Sisterhood and a Family', *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (ed. H. Moxnes; London: Routledge, 1997) 150–65.

25 *Women in their Place,* 132–7, 152–67.

26 Sandnes, 'Ekklēsia', 259–60.

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category of public space. Moreover, as a public space defined by patriarchal structures, the *ekklēsia* is an essentially male space.[27]

In the PE the influence of the *oikos* model is indeed fundamental. Yet, based on the findings discussed here, the public character of the Christian *ekklēsia* cannot be overlooked. As it will be shown in a while, the *oikos* is not only the fundamental building block of the *polis*, but political theories commonly describe the *polis* metaphorically as an enlarged *oikos*, without impairment to its public character, and understand the *oikos* as a small *polis*. In a similar manner the metaphorical description of the church as οἶκος θεοῦ does not cancel its public character, since the term obviously refers to a larger social entity.

1.2 *A Biblical or Pauline Background for the οἶκος θεοῦ Paradigm?*

It is not easy to identify the background of the metaphorical use of *oikos* in the PE for the Christian *ekklēsia*. It would seem necessary to look for a biblical (OT) background,[28] all the more so as the LXX has many references to οἶκος θεοῦ, οἶκος κυρίου or similar. The problem, however, is that these combinations never refer to the community (Israel).[29] In the LXX the *oikos* of God denotes the heavenly abode (Deut 26.15) and very frequently the temple (οἶκος θεοῦ, Ps 41.5; Ezra 6.12, 16–17, 22 and *passim*; Dan 5.22–3; Jdt 9.1; οἶκος κυρίου [τοῦ θεοῦ], Deut 23.19; Pss 115.10; 121.1, 9).[30] Sometimes the house of the Lord (the temple) and the house of the king are paralleled, probably because both are envisaged as abodes and palaces (3 Kgdms 7.31, 37; 8.1). A metaphorical use is perhaps attested in Qumran and in rabbinic literature,[31] but these vague (and, for rabbinic sources, late) references cannot explain the use of the term for the *ekklēsia*.

Closer parallels may be found in the NT. In 1 Cor 3.9–10a Paul imagines the community as θεοῦ οἰκοδομή, the edifice of God, whose foundation is laid

27 Sandnes, 'Ekklēsia', 255–7. This argument is perhaps less compelling if one considers the involvement of women in ecclesial life in the lifetime of Paul, but the consideration certainly applies to the PE.

28 Wagner, *Anfänge*, 178 (בית יהוה in Hos 8.1; 9.8, 15; Jer 12.7; Zech 9.8). One should note that the LXX has οἶκος κυρίου in Hosea, 'my house' in Jeremiah and Zechariah. Wagner refers to Oberlinner, *1 Tim*, 155, yet Oberlinner does not really derive the concept from the OT. He only mentions the community as temple of God in the NT and, additionally, that of the house of JHWH in the OT, emphasising that this image allows the author to connect his ecclesiology with the expectation that the *episkopos* and *diakonos* would be good managers of both household and community.

29 The latter can be referred to as *oikos*, but not as *oikos* of God. This remains true even when Raymond Collins brings together temple and community, noting that the house of God is the place where the people come together (*1–2 Tim Tit*, 103, 102).

30 BibleWorks search; O. Michel, οἶκος κτλ, *TDNT* v.119–31 (he omits the Stoic use of *oikos* from the discussion of the Greek/Hellenistic usage).

31 Michel, οἶκος, 121, 125, 128–9.

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down by the apostle and ultimately by God who works in the apostle.[32] The other Pauline ecclesiological metaphor, that of 'temple of God' (ναὸς θεοῦ, in which the Spirit dwells, οἰκεῖ, 1 Cor 3.16–17; cf. 2 Cor 6.16), has also been associated with that of οἶκος θεοῦ.[33] Paul thereby applies the 'temple of God' metaphor, rooted in the OT, to the community. Yet, in spite of these similarities, Paul never uses οἶκος θεοῦ for the *ekklēsia*. Moreover, commentators of 1 Tim 3.15 agree that οἶκος θεοῦ is first of all the house*hold* of God,[34] but there is no such connotation in Paul's use of οἰκοδομή and ναὸς θεοῦ.

These Pauline metaphors are taken further and merged by Eph 2.19–22. Members of the community are συμπολίται (τῶν ἁγίων) and οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, fellow citizens (of the holy ones) and members of the household of God. The community is *built* on the foundation of apostles and prophets, it is a *building* (οἰκοδομή) where members are built together on the foundation (ἐποικοδομέω, συνοικοδομέω), it is a *temple* (ναός) and a *dwelling place* of God (κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ). What is striking here, beyond the merger of the two metaphors (building and temple of God), is the combination of terms taken from the political *and* the household spheres. Believers are on the one hand fellow citizens of the holy ones (Israel, the Christ-believers, or the citizens of the heavenly or cosmic *ekklēsia*).[35] Συμπολίτης is taken from the political language of citizenship

32 The imagery is probably implied in Rom 15.20 as well. On οἰκοδομή as ecclesiological metaphor in Paul: I. Kitzberger, *Bau der Gemeinde: Das paulinische Wortfeld οἰκοδομή / (ἐπ) οικοδομεῖν* (Forschung zur Bibel 53; Würzburg: Echter, 1986); C. Spicq, *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, vol. 1 (Paris: Gabalda, 1969) 104; Collins, *1–2 Tim and Tit*, 103.

33 Spicq, *Épîtres*, 104; Collins, *1–2 Tim Tit*, 103; Oberlinner, *1 Tim*, 155; B. Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy and 1–3 John* (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity, 2006) 245.

34 Roloff, *1 Tim*, 198–9; Oberlinner, *1 Tim*, 155, 157; Verner, *Household*, 109–10; J. D. Quinn and W. C. Wacker, *The First and Second Letter to Timothy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 262; W. Thiessen, *Christen in Ephesus: Die historische und theologische Situation in vorpaulinischer und paulinischer Zeit und zur Zeit der Apostelgeschichte und der Pastoralbriefe* (Tübingen: Francke, 1995) 267–8.

35 Joachim Gnilka takes the holy ones to be the Christians or the angels (*Der Epheserbrief* (HTKNT 10.2, Freiburg: Herder, 1971) 153–4); similarly Rudolf Schnackenburg (*Der Brief an die Epheser* (EKKNT 10; Zürich/Einsiedeln/Cologne: Benzinger/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1982) 121–2). Both too easily dismiss a reference to Israel (although Gnilka speaks of the 'politeia Israels'). To be sure, the emphasis is not on Christians joining Israel as ethnic community, yet Israel remains the community of the elect people of God. Tet-Lim N. Yee takes more seriously into account the Jewish background of Ephesians and its consequences for understanding the Jewish 'self' as the chosen people, the people of the covenant ('covenantal ethnocentrism'), and the description of the Gentiles as the 'other' (*Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul's Jewish Identity and Ephesians* (SNST MS 130; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)). On this reading, the church does not replace Israel, but the peace in Christ overcomes the limits of an ethnocentric understanding, and the new 'body' comes to incorporate the Gentiles as well. Thus the 'holy ones' with which the Gentiles share citizenship denotes Israel

shared between two *poleis*.[36] These could be Israel and the Gentiles (in view of 2.11–12), the Jewish and Gentile church, or the earthly and the heavenly church (in view of the cosmic ecclesiology of Ephesians). (The same political language is used in the negative reference to strangers and (resident) aliens, ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι, in v. 19). Normally the *sympoliteia* involved the creation of a common citizenship, but did not necessarily lead to the merger of the two cities and the disappearance of one of the partners (as in the case of the *isopoliteia*), though it is also true that in some cases the predominant city could absorb the minor partner.[37] Therefore it is not easy to know whether the author uses *sympoliteia* in a strict sense (the addressees and the holy ones share citizenship in each other's *poleis* or perhaps in a higher, federative *koinon*) or in a broader manner (the addressees lose their previous identity in exchange for their new citizenship). Within the rhetoric of the epistle, it seems more likely that the *sympoliteia* language presupposes their integration into a newly defined, non-ethnocentric Israel (without necessarily losing their identity). What matters more, however, is that in addition to explicit political language the passage also uses household imagery. Christians are οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, a designation that clearly implies the concept of household (of God).[38] Thus the more traditional ecclesiological images, of building and temple, overlap with a political imagery – fellow citizens and members of the household of God. A further, cosmic, dimension emerges from the ecclesiology of Ephesians.[39]

Whereas Paul may have inspired the author of the PE, 1 Tim 3.15 comes closer to Ephesians when it describes the ecclesial community with images taken from the domain of the *oikos* and the *polis*. The only other instance in the NT when οἶκος θεοῦ is explicitly used for the community is 1 Pet 4.17, in an epistle that shares a number of other similarities with the PE. However, the *oikos* becomes

(ibid., esp. 197–8). This understanding does more justice to the rhetoric of Ephesians, and avoids an anachronistic replacement-theory.

36 On the Hellenistic *sympoliteia* as an 'agreement establishing a common citizenship' between two *poleis* without their full merger: F. Chamoux, *Hellenistic Civilization* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003) 203; P. J. Rhodes, 'Sympoliteia', *Der Neue Pauly* (ed. Hubert Cancik et al.; Leiden: Brill, 2011; Brill Online, University of Stellenbosch, available at: http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=dnp_e1126880, accessed 1.10.2011). On citizenship language in the passage: Gnilka, *Epheserbrief*, 153; L. R. Donelson, *Colossians, Ephesians, First and Second Timothy, and Titus* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1996) 73–4; Yee, *Jews*, 191–9.

37 G. Reger, '*Sympoliteiai* in Hellenistic Asia Minor', *The Greco-Roman East: Politics, Culture, Society*, (ed. S. Colvin; Yale Classical Studies 31; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 145–80, at 148.

38 For comparable associations: Yee, *Jews*, 199.

39 Ulrich Luz, *Der Brief an die Epheser* (NTD 8/1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998) 112, 146.

the main metaphor of the church only in the PE, and this ecclesiology may not be derived from earlier texts.[40] Because the household imagery is so rarely used for ecclesiological purposes in the NT prior to the PE, we need to look for other contexts where *oikos* is used metaphorically for a larger community.

2. The *oikos* as Metaphor for Public and Sacred Spaces in Ancient Contexts

The metaphorical use of *oikos* in 1 Timothy reflects the ancient custom of describing a larger, social or even cosmic community, the *polis*, the empire or the cosmos, as a large *oikos*. (In the same line, it is also common to refer to the *oikos* as a small *polis*, and to the cosmos as a large *polis*.) The *oikos* language denotes private associations as well. Certain, notably cultic, associations are designated as *oikoi* of gods, whereas others, though not explicitly called *oikoi*, are imagined as such if we consider the fictive kinship language.

2.1 Polis *and* oikos

Political theories frequently parallel the constitution and government of *polis* and *oikos*, even when authors diverge with respect to the relationship between these institutions and the corresponding forms of rule. Plato seems to suggest that the various types of constitution and government are essentially the same.[41] Aristotle challenges this understanding, insisting that the difference between a *polis* and an *oikos* is one in kind, and not merely in numbers of subjects.[42] The Pseudo-Aristotelian *Oeconomica*, however, gives up the distinction between political rule and household management.[43] Arius Didymus also departs from the Aristotelian position, claiming that the household may be approximated to a small city (μικρὰ γὰρ τις ἔοικεν εἶναι πόλις ὁ οἶκος).[44]

40 Rightly so Wagener, *Ordnung*, 64–5, 236, 240.

41 *Amat.* 138c. The main point seems to be that σωφροσύνη and δικαιοσύνη are essential and are both provided by the study of philosophy. The authenticity of the dialogue is debated.

42 *Pol.* 1.1.2, 1252a. The *polis* has priority over the *oikos*, in view of its complete self-sufficiency and because the whole is prior to the parts. The *polis* is therefore the *telos* of the *oikos* (1.1.8–12, 1253a; 2.1.7, 1261b). The exceeding unification of the *polis* would lead to its disintegration and to the reduction of the *polis* to a household (2.1.2–4, 1261a).

43 *Oec.* 1.1.1–4, 15–19, 1343a (assigning priority to the art of governing the household).

44 The *oikos* is the source (ἀρχή) of the *polis*, Stob. 2.26, p. 148.5–7 Wachsmuth; see B. Nagle, 'Aristotle and Arius Didymus on Household and πολις', *RhM* 145 (2002) 198–223, at 201. On Arius' understanding of the *oikos*, dropping the Aristotelian criterion of economic autarchy: Nagle, ibid., 207–10, 222; J. Annas, 'Aristotelian Political Theory in the Hellenistic Period', *Justice and Generosity: Studies in Hellenistic Social and Political Philosophy. Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium Hellenisticum* (ed. A. Laks and M. Schofield; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 74–94, at 89–91.

Stoics and Neopythagoreans view the *oikos* and the *polis* in the larger context of cosmic order.[45] Under Stoic influence, Cicero discusses marriage and kinship relations within a broader perspective, that of belonging to the human race (*immensa societate humani generis*), and then describes the family as the source of the state and of public affairs (*principium urbis et quasi seminarium rei publicae*; *origo … rerum publicarum*).[46] The Neopythagorean treatise attributed to Okkelos considers humans in their relation with the *oikos*, the *polis* and the cosmos, in whose fulfilment they have to play a part.[47] Marriage contributes to the happy or unfortunate fate of *oikos* and *polis*.[48] An unwise marriage harms the domestic, political and divine (Vestal) hearth.[49] This reasoning involves an overlap between *oikos*, *polis* and cosmos, organised around the hearth of Hestia. The underlying logic is that 'families (οἶκοι) are parts of cities, while the composition of the whole and the universe derives its subsistence from its parts … [T]he concordant condition of households (οἶκοι) greatly contributes to the well or ill establishment of a polity (πολιτεία).' [50]

In spite of the political-theoretical differences, the *polis* is frequently compared to a household.[51] The analogy between *polis* and *oikos* is a recurrent theme of the *homonoia*-speeches, which plead for concord in the polity drawing from the theme of household management.[52]

The system of euergetism implies the construal of the *polis* as an extended *oikos*, where benefactors are referred to as fathers or sons, as mothers or daughters of the city or of its civic bodies.[53]

45 For Stoics: D. Obbink, 'The Stoic Sage in the Cosmic City', *Topics in Stoic Philosophy* (ed. K. Ierodiakonou; Oxford: Clarendon, 1999) 178–95. On the connection between the government of *oikos* and *polis* among Neopythagoreans: D. Balch, 'Neopythagorean Morality and the New Testament Household Codes', *ANRW* 26.1, (ed. W. Haase; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992) 380–411, at 393–4; also E. Brown, 'Hellenistic Cosmopolitanism', *A Companion to Ancient Philosophy* (ed. M. L. Gill and P. Pellegrin; Oxford: Blackwell, 2006) 549–58.

46 *Off.* 1.17.54.

47 *De univ. nat.* 45 (H. Thesleff, *The Pythagorean Texts of the Hellenistic Period* (Acta Academiae Aboensis, A. 30. I; Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1965) 135.20–4; K. S. Guthrie and D. Fideler, *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library: An Anthology of Ancient Writings which Relate to Pythagoras and Pythagorean Philosophy* (Grand Rapids: Phanes, 1987) 209).

48 Thesleff, *Pythagorean Texts*, 136.26–8; Guthrie, *Pythagorean Sourcebook*, 210.

49 Thesleff, *Pythagorean Texts*, 135.23–4; Guthrie, *Pythagorean Sourcebook*, 209.

50 Okkelos, *De univ. nat.* 50–1 (Thesleff, *Pythagorean Texts*, 136.26–137.5; Guthrie, *Pythagorean Sourcebook*, 210).

51 Spicq, *Épîtres*, 104; B. Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles* (SP 12; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007) 78.

52 M. M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (HUT 28; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991) 101 n. 219: Xenophon, *Mem.* 4.4.16; Dio Chrysostomus, *Or.* 38.15; Aelius Aristides, *Or.* 24.32–3; 26.102.

53 P. Veyne, *Le pain et le cirque: sociologie historique d'un pluralisme politique* (Paris: Seuil, 1976) 245, 274; R. van Bremen, 'Women and Wealth', *Images of Women in Antiquity* (ed. Averil

Starting with Augustus, imperial political ideology will describe the state as an enlarged household. Rome/the Empire is the *familia* of the emperor, the *pater patriae*, and his political authority is assimilated to that of the *pater familias*. The theme shows up in epigraphy,[54] in propagandistic accounts by Roman historians,[55] as well as in art.[56] Suetonius' narrative about the conferral of the title of *pater patriae* to Augustus conceives of the state and its political bodies on the analogy of the household.[57] The 'fatherly' political authority of the emperor is used to impose paternalistic laws that regulate the life of the citizens in their most personal aspects, such as procreation.[58] Augustus' discourse imagined by Dio Cassius shows the intermingling of political and family imagery.[59] Political rule is thus represented by means of paternal authority, and *familia* becomes a metaphor for a political body.

It is in this cultural context that Philo uses *oikos* metaphorically for the *polis*:

> The future statesman needed first to be trained and practised in household management (οἰκονομία); for *a household* (οἰκία) *is a city* (πόλις) compressed into small dimensions and household management may be called a kind of state management (πολιτεία); just as a *city too is a great household* (οἶκος μέγας) and the government of a city (πολιτεία) a general household management. All this shows clearly that the manager of a household is identical with the statesman, even though what is under the purview of the two may differ in number and size.[60]

Cameron and A. Kuhrt; Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993), 223–42, at 235–7; *eadem*, *The Limits of Participation: Women and the Civic Life in the Greek East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology 15; Amsterdam: Gieben, 1996) 101, 164, 168–9.

54 B. H. McLean, *An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Alexander the Great down to the Reign of Constantine (323 BC–AD 337)* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002) 137–41: Caligula (*SIG*^{3} 801C), Vespasian (*SEG* XXVIII.1218), Domitian (*SIG*^{3} 821C), Antoninus Pius (*SIG*^{3} 849). On Antoninus Pius, see also *CIL* VI.10234 (the *collegium* of Aesculapius and Hygeia).

55 Suetonius, *Aug.* 58. On Augustus' paternal role: Dio Cassius, *Hist.* 56.9.3; 56.6.1–5 (rebuke as expression of paternal love) (LCL 175, trans. Cary). On Augustus as *pater familias* and on Rome as his household, see also B. Severy, *Augustus and the Family at the Birth of the Roman Empire* (New York/London: Routledge, 2003) 153–7.

56 T. R. Ramsby and B. Severy-Hoven, 'Gender, Sex, and the Domestication of the Empire in Art of the Augustan Age', *Arethusa* 40 (2007) 43–71.

57 *Aug.* 58.1–2 (LCL 31, trans. Rolfe). The senators too are 'fathers' of the Senate.

58 With his laws on marriage and procreation Augustus regulated matters pertaining up to that point to the jurisdiction of the *pater familias* and thereby limited the *patria potestas*. F. Vittinghoff, 'Gesellschaft', *Europäische Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (ed. F. Vittinghoff et al.; Stuttgart: Klett–Cotta, 1990) 161–369, at 177.

59 Augustus' speech to Roman men is based on the overlap between paternal and civic roles. Dio Cassius, *Hist.* 56.9.1–3.

60 *Ios.* 8.38–39 (LCL 289, trans. Colson, modified, emphases added); also *SVF* III.323; Nagle, 'Aristotle', 204 n. 14. On the Stoic idea of coherence (sympathy) between the parts of the

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This interconnection between *oikos*, *polis* and (in some sources) the cosmos explains why the ability to run one's household is seen as a precondition for one's successful involvement in public life.[61] Such conviction may have been the object of proverbial wisdom.[62] In Xenophon's *Memorabilia* Socrates advises the young Glaucon against participating in politics until he has proved his ability in household management.[63] The theme returns time and again in numerous authors. Aeschines draws attention to the connection between the mismanagement of an official's own household and that of public affairs.[64] Isocrates argues that a king has to rule the *polis* just as his own *oikos*.[65] Polybius highlights this connection with the example of Philopoemen.[66] Making the same point, Plutarch explains to Pollianus that a man should have his own household (οἶκος) harmonised, if he wants to harmonise the city, the agora and his friends.[67] The same interrelation between the governance of household and state appears in Roman authors. According to Tacitus, Agricola's success in governing Britain was partly due to his effort to put his own house (*domus*) in order, 'a task not less difficult for most governors than the government of the province'.[68] Seneca makes the same point in his *De clementia*.[69] Pliny the Younger notes in the *Panegyric* that many illustrious men have fallen into disrepute in their public career because of their failure to keep order in their marital life, a trap that Trajan avoided.[70]

2.2 *The Divine* oikos

In religious language *oikos* may be associated with the deity. Originally, in archaic Greek poetry the *oikos* of Zeus denotes both his abode on Mount Olympus and his household of gods, upon whom he rules as their father and king. The

universe, and its unity: Nagle, 'Aristotle', 214 n. 42; M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa: Geschichte einer geistigen Bewegung* (2 vols.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978–80[5]) I.217–18, and references in II.108.

61 As Fiore notes, 'in secular society the household was the image of the state and public officials first had to be trained and become practiced in household management' (*Pastoral Epistles*, 78).

62 Sophocles, *Ant.* 661–2 (LCL 21, trans. Lloyd-Jones).

63 *Mem.* 3.6 (LCL 168, trans. Marchant and Todd).

64 *Tim.* 30: 'the man who has mismanaged his own household will handle the affairs of the city in like manner' (LCL 106, trans. Adams).

65 2.19; 3.41 (LCL 209, trans. Norlin).

66 10.22.5 (LCL 138, trans. Paton).

67 *Conj. praec.* 43, *Mor.* 144C (*Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom, and a Consolation to his Wife* (ed. S. B. Pomeroy, New York: Oxford University Press) 1999); S. Swain, 'Plutarch's Moral Program', *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom*, 85–96, at 88–9.

68 *Agr.* 19.1–2 (LCL 35, trans. Hutton).

69 *Clem.* 1.9.10 (LCL 214, trans. Basore).

70 *Paneg.* 83.4 (LCL 59, trans. Radice); P. A. Roche, 'The Public Image of Trajan's Family', *CPh* 97 (2002) 41–60, at 49, 60.

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depiction of the assembly of the gods under the rule of Zeus combines images from the household and the political domain.[71] To be sure, the OT also envisages God as king, ruling in the midst of his heavenly court, but with the suppression of polytheism the fatherly character of the divinity wanes together with his household, being at best alluded to in passages that refer to the 'sons of Elohim'. That is why, as noted above (1.2), 'house' may refer only to his heavenly or earthly abode.

Oikos is also used for associations, cultic ones included. The term, initially applied to the meeting place, comes to be used for the association itself.[72] Furthermore, the language of fictive kinship shows that associations commonly understood themselves as extended households.[73] The term may explicitly refer to private religious associations, like the *oikos* of the *Theoi Megaloi*.[74]

The image of the sacred community as household appears very clearly in the conception of the universe as *oikos* and *polis* of God.

2.3 *The Cosmos as* oikos *and* polis *(of God)*

In Stoic thought the cosmos, the widest society to which humans belong, is typically described as a comprehensive and well-ordered, monarchically governed

71 M. L. West, 'Towards Monotheism', *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (ed. P. Athanassiadi and M. Frede; Oxford: Clarendon, 1999) 20–40, at 22; Berger, 'Volksversammlung', 175. Lucian speaks of the assembly of the gods (largely Zeus' family) with political terms such as *ekklēsia*, *boulē*, *agora* and similar: *J.Tr.* 5–6 (Zeus summons the gods in the *ekklēsia*; Hermes proclaims their assembly in the council of Zeus); *Deor. Conc.* 1 with 14–15 (the *ekklēsia* of the gods is convened and ends with a proclamation styled after the decrees of the *polis*) (LCL 54, 162, trans. Harmon).

72 F. Poland, *Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesens* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1909) 459–63; F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure* (Paris: Boccard, 1955) 55; Michel (οἶκος, 128) also notes that the term may refer to religious societies, yet thinks that 1 Tim 3.15 'suggests primarily the spiritual structure'. See also M. Dibelius and H. Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972) 49.

73 P. A. Harland, 'Familial Dimensions of Group Identity': '(I): "Brothers" (ἀδελφοί) in Associations of the Greek East', *JBL* 124 (2005) 491–513; '(II): "Mothers" and "Fathers" in Associations and Synagogues of the Greek World', *JSJ* 38 (2007) 57–79. See also the statute of the collegium of Aesculapius and Hygeia (*CIL* VI.10234: Salvia Marcellina as *mater collegii*, Aelius Zeno as *pater collegii*); the Philadelphian association in the *oikos* of Dionysios (*SIG*^{3} 985; S. C. Barton and G. H. R. Horsley, 'A Hellenistic Cult Group and the New Testament Churches', *JAC* 24 (1981) 7–41).

74 In two inscriptions from Athens (112–110 BCE), J. Vélissaropoulos, *Les nauclères grecs: recherches sur les institutions maritimes en Grèce et et dans l'Orient hellénisé* (Hautes Études du Monde Gréco-Romain 9; Genève: Droz, 1980) 105–6, quoting L. Robert, 'Deux decrets d'une association à Athènes', *ArchEph* (1969) 7–14. See also *IG* 12.8, 230 (Samothrace) = PH [The Packard Humanities Institute, Searchable Greek Inscriptions, available at: http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions] 79417 (οἶκος θεοῖς μεγάλοις); *Inschr. v. Magnesia* 94, ll. 3, 6; and the οἶκος θεῖος in an inscription dedicated to the Olympian gods, *IGBulg* 4, 2214 = PH 170315 (Pautalia (Kyustendil)-Shatrovo, Bulgaria).

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polis, a community of humans and gods.[75] As a consequence, man becomes a *kosmopolitēs*, a citizen of the cosmos. On the other hand, some authors also refer to the cosmos as both a dwelling or home and a *polis* or state, which joins mortals and immortals under the kingly and fatherly rule of Zeus.

Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus* praises God as king of the cosmos and father of humans,[76] and implicitly understands the universe as both *polis* and *oikos*. This Stoic view emerges in Cicero's *De natura deorum*: 'the world is as it were the common house of gods and men (*communis deorum atque hominum domus*), or the city (*urbs*) that belongs to both'.[77] Cicero also combines the political and house(hold) metaphor in his *Republic*, which describes the universe as a house (*domus*) and home (*domicilium*), as well as a state or country (*patria*), shared by gods and humans.[78]

In a somewhat similar manner, Arius Didymus writes:

> the name world means the dwelling-place of gods and men (οἰκητήριον Θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων), and of all things made for their sake. For in the same way as the name city (πόλις) has two meanings, the dwelling-place (οἰκητήριον), and the system resulting from the combination of residents and citizens, so also the world is, as it were, a city (πόλις) composed of gods and men, in which the gods hold the rule, and the men are subject.[79]

It is under Stoic influence that Philo refers to the cosmos as the *oikos* and *polis* of the first human being or the house of God:

> we call the original forefather of our race not only the first man but also the first citizen of the world … For the world (κόσμος) was his home (οἶκος) and his city (πόλις) … The world was his country where he dwelt (ἐν πατρίδι) far removed from fear.[80]

75 Chrysippus, referred to by Philodemus, *PHerc.* 1428, col. 7.12–8.13 (Obbink, 'Stoic Sage', 184–5); also *SVF* II.527 (σύστημα); Philodemus, *De pietate* 4, cf. *SVF* II.636 (συνπολειτευόμενον θεοῖς καὶ ἀνθρώποις, ruled by Zeus); Cicero, *Leg.* 1.7.22 (cf. *SVF* III.339); *Fin.* 3.19.64 ('the universe is governed by divine will; it is a city [*urbs*] or state [*civitas*] of which both men and gods are members'; LCL 40, trans. Rackham); Seneca, *Cons. Marc.* 18.2 ('a city … shared by gods and men – a city that embraces the universe'; LCL 254, trans. Basore).

76 Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 1.1.12 p. 25.3 Wachsmuth (cf. *SVF* I.537); trans. A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers,* vol. I: *Translations of the Principal Sources, with Philosophical Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 326–7.

77 *Nat. D.* 2.154 (LCL 268, trans. Rackham, modified). See the discussion in M. Schofield, *The Stoic Idea of the City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) 65–6.

78 *Rep.* 1.19 (1.13 in the English translation, J. E. G. Zetzel, ed., *On the Commonwealth. On the Laws* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)); cf. *SVF* III.338: *domus*.

79 Arius Didymus in Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 15.15 (*PG* 21.1344; trans. E. H. Gifford, *Preparation for the Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1903)).

80 *Opif.* 1.142 (LCL 226, trans. Colson and Whitaker, modified).

More interesting are the passages where Philo speaks of the cosmos as the perceptible οἶκος θεοῦ:

> What house of God can exist perceptible by the outward senses (θεοῦ δὲ οἶκος αἰσθητός) except this world which it is impossible and impracticable to quit?[81]

> … this thing which is demonstrated and visible, this world perceptible by the outward senses, is nothing else but the house of God (οἶκος θεοῦ), the abode of one of the powers of the true God.[82]

Philo uses οἶκος θεοῦ in a metaphorical sense, to refer to the universe, an entity far larger than the household. The idea that the cosmos is the *polis* and habitation of gods and humans returns in Epictetus.[83] Another very significant passage comes from Dio Chrysostomus, known to have been influenced by Stoicism. He asserts that the cosmos is not identical with, yet it is comparable to, a *polis* governed by Zeus as king and father, and it can also be called the *oikos* of Zeus:

> Men erect altars to Zeus the King and, what is more, some do not hesitate even to call him Father in their prayers, believing that there exists some such government and organization of the universe as that. Therefore, from that standpoint at least, it seems to me, they would not hesitate to apply the term '*oikos* of Zeus' to the entire universe – if indeed *he is father of all who live in it* – yes, by Zeus, and *his 'city' (polis) too*, our similitude, to suggest the greater office of the god.[84]

Humans are thereby citizens of the cosmos[85] that is both an *oikos* and a *polis* of Zeus, joining humans and gods.

3. Reading 1 Tim 3.15 in the Light of the *oikos*-Metaphor

From the examples discussed above it is obvious that a community described metaphorically as *oikos* or *domus* or even an *oikos* of god(s) is not

81 *Pos.* 5 (LCL 227, trans. Colson and Whitaker).

82 *Som.* 1.185 (LCL 275, trans. Colson and Whitaker).

83 '… this universe is but a single state (πόλις) … all things are full of friends, first gods, and then also men, who by nature have been made of one household (πρὸς ἀλλήλους) with one another' (Philo, *Diss.* 3.24.10–11; Epictetus (LCL 218, trans. Oldfather)). Zeus is the father of humans and king of the citizens of the cosmic *polis*: *Diss.* 3.24.16.18.

84 *Or.* 36.30–6, here 36 (LCL 358, trans. Cohoon, modified). The rule of Zeus corresponds to the ideal, monarchic government of the *polis*. Much earlier Plato refers to the abode (οἴκησις) of Zeus on Mount Olympus as the ἀκρόπολις (*Prt.* 321d), bringing together the concept of the private and public sphere (LCL 165, trans. Lamb).

85 Pohlenz, *Stoa* 1, 137. Seneca, *Ep.* 120.12: the virtuous men as *cives universi*; cf. also *Ep.* 28.4 (LCL 75, 77, trans. Gummere).

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conceived as a household. The *oikos*-metaphor refers to human and divine societies – the city, the state (the Empire), the sacred sphere (the divine household and the cultic association), and even the cosmos. The latter is a society ruled by the supreme deity, inhabited by human and divine beings, explicitly designated as household and *polis* of God.

If we return to 1 Tim 3.15, the public dimension of the community is signalled already by its designation by a political term (the *ekklēsia*). In its cultural context, the paradigm *ekklēsia* – οἶκος θεου defines the community of Christ-believers as a public, sacred and cosmic space. The *ekklēsia*, which in the NT is a manifestation of the divine-heavenly (and earthly) *polis*, is the assembly and the community of the citizens of God's *polis*, joining humans and heavenly beings. This understanding resembles the Stoic perception of the cosmos as the *polis* of gods and humans, ruled by the supreme deity.

The *ekklēsia* as *oikos* of God is a public space,[86] an institution with offices and officials, where laws and structures receive a divine legitimation. It is an *oikos* and a *polis* of God. This definition shapes the rules that regulate the behaviour of members and officials, men and women, free and slaves.

The public character of the *ekklēsia* explains the norms concerning the admission to or the exclusion from ministries. Just as in contemporary society, the PE assign men to the public, women to the private sphere.[87] Only men may hold responsible offices involving authority and public speech. Teaching in the *ekklēsia* implies an exercise of authority incompatible with traditional norms of female behaviour,[88] and it breaches conventions that bar women from public speech.[89] That is why 1 Tim 2.11–15 excludes women from teaching in the *ekklēsia*.

Although men are not excluded from public teaching, not all men are allowed to teach. Due to an increasing institutionalisation, teaching becomes the prerogative of the officials (the *episkopoi/presbyteroi*). The plurality of ministries (prophets, apostles, teachers), the charismatic dimension of ministry, the role of personal engagement and commitment in teaching the gospel, known

86 On the terminology used for the public/private opposition and their meanings: J. H. Neyrey, 'Teaching You in Public and from House to House' (Acts 20.20): Unpacking a Cultural Stereotype', *JSNT* 26 (2003) 69–102, at 75–85. I consider here meanings 2 (δημόσιος / ἴδιος, i.e. political sphere vs household) and 3 (ξυνός/ ἴδιος; civic affairs, political or not, vs male, non-political intercourse).

87 B. Fiore, 'Household Rules at Ephesus: Good News, Bad News, No News', *Early Christianity and Classical Culture: Comparative Studies in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (ed. J. T. Fitzgerald, T. H. Olbricht, L. M. White; NovTSup 110; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005) 589–607, at 601–2.

88 Wagener, *Ordnung*, 75–76; Merz, *Selbstauslegung*, 294.

89 Modest women keep silent. With very few exceptions, women speaking in public are depicted in derogatory terms (Valerius Maximus 8.3.praef. (LCL 493, trans. Shackleton Bailey); Plutarch, *Comp. Lyc. Num.* 3.6 (LCL 46, trans. B. Perrin)).

from earlier sources,[90] disappear or are rejected. Teaching and leadership are concentrated in one and the same office.[91] Officials acquire an unquestionable authority, similar to that of the officials of the *polis* and of (religious) associations.[92] The interrelation between the household and the *polis* explains why those performing public roles are expected to be able to manage their own household. This very widespread conviction illuminates the expectations concerning the *episkopos-presbyteros* and *diakonos*: these have to prove their ability to rule their own household as a precondition of their office-holding and of the successful government of the community (1 Tim 3.4–5,12; Titus 1.6).

The qualification lists suggest that the officials come from free, better situated heads of household. Slaves, through their complete subordination to masters (1 Tim 6.1–2; Titus 2.9), are as a matter of principle deprived of authority. Therefore it is difficult to imagine that the author would envisage slaves as officials and teachers in the community. This approach corresponds to the ancient practice according to which offices and public speech, inherent to offices, pertain to male elites, not to just any man.[93]

The rules of the household of God receive divine legitimation. The universal saving will of God, fulfilled in Christ, becomes manifest in the church through the teaching of 'Paul', his delegates and the lawful leaders designated by these men (1 Tim 2.5–7; 2 Tim 2.2).[94] The division of spaces and roles is sustained by references to the order of creation (1 Tim 2.13–15). To conclude, the perspective on the οἶκος θεοῦ is far broader than that of the household.

90 M. Tiwald, 'Die vielfältigen Entwicklungslinien kirchlichen Amtes im Corpus Paulinum und ihre Relevanz für heutige Theologie', *Neutestamentliche Ämtermodelle im Kontext* (ed. T. Schmeller, M. Ebner, R. Hoppe; QD 239, Freiburg: Herder, 2010) 101–28, at 121 ('Leitung durch Engagement').

91 Roloff, *1 Tim*, 170, 177–9.

92 Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 50–1, 158–60; Oberlinner, 'Gemeindeordnung', 306.

93 L. McClure, *Spoken Like a Woman: Speech and Gender in Athenian Drama* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) 19–22; K. A. Raaflaub, 'Aristocracy and Freedom of Speech in the Greco-Roman World', in *Free Speech in Classical Antiquity* (ed. I. Sluiter and R. M. Rosen; Mnemosyne Supplement 254; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004) 41–61, at 41–59.

94 An issue extensively discussed by Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy*, 133–54.