

## The Female Body as Social Space in 1 Timothy

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By means of his reception of Paul and Genesis, the author of 1 Timothy created a social space in which the autonomy of women, including control of their own bodies, is severely limited. The purpose of such discourse was to oppose Marcion's rejection of marriage and procreation. The letter thus advocates marriage as a virtual requirement for all Christians, especially 'the younger widows', who were probably virgins. Instead of propagating teaching and practices opposed by the author, these women ought to marry, bear children, and keep silent. The author shares certain values with elite Greeks, such as Plutarch, and with the Christian teacher Valentinus. Besides Marcion, the author also criticizes early gnostic teaching of the type found in the *Secret Book according to John*.

**Keywords:** reception of Paul, marriage, leadership of women, Marcion, Apocryphon of John, Valentinus

An apparent purpose of 1 Timothy is to construct a social space in which each male and female has a proper place and a proper type of behavior.<sup>1</sup> The resulting construction has far-reaching implications for the social control of female bodies. For that reason, I propose to examine the discourse employed in defining the proper, embodied behavior of women in this letter. I take for granted that 1 Timothy is part of the history of the reception of the historical Paul and his letters.<sup>2</sup> In examining the discourse of this letter, I focus on the instructions regarding marriage and the leadership of women.

1 For the idea that space is socially and ideologically constructed, see David G. Horrell, '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. Karl Paul Donfried; Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum 18; Leuven: Peeters, 2008) 109–34 and the literature cited in nn. 20–7. See also Carol A. Newsom, *The Self as Symbolic Space: Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran* (STDJ 52; Leiden: Brill, 2004).

2 The classic study is P. N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Oxford University, 1921); see also Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972) 1–5; Raymond F. Collins, *Letters*

As is well known, Paul's teaching on marriage is nuanced. On the one hand, he valued the single state and the practice of continence, in his words, the practice of ἐκκρατεῦσθαι, of keeping one's desires under control.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, he recognized that, as long as the present age endures, as long as those 'in Christ' are also 'in the flesh', they experience strong sexual desires. These desires are likely to lead to instances of sexual immorality. So everyone who does not have the gift of sexual continence from God ought to marry.<sup>4</sup>

Paul's instructions regarding the leadership of women are also balanced. He did not question the practice of women praying and prophesying in the context of gatherings of the community.<sup>5</sup> Yet he employed readings of Genesis 1–2 in order to insist on maintaining socially constructed differences between males and females. The presentation of Christ as the head of every man, whereas the man is the head of (every) woman, suggests that the relationship of men to Christ is direct, while that of women is indirect.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, (the) man is the image and glory of God, whereas the woman is the glory of (the) man. Here the relationship of men to God is direct, but that of women to God is mediated through men.<sup>7</sup> These readings of Genesis are employed to advocate the practices of women covering their heads and men not covering their heads in community

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*that Paul did not Write: The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Pauline Pseudepigrapha* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988) 88–131. Jens Herzer argues that 1 Timothy should be understood as a school-pseudepigraphon that serves to some degree as an identity marker; 'Fiktion oder Täuschung? Zur Diskussion über die Pseudepigraphie der Pastoralbriefe', *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen* (ed. Jörg Frey et al.; WUNT 246; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009) 489–536 [533–4]; see also Annette Merz, *Die fiktive Selbstauslegung des Paulus: Intertextuelle Studien zur Intention und Rezeption der Pastoralbriefe* (NTOA/SUNT 52; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht; Fribourg: Academic, 2004); Timo Glaser, *Paulus als Briefroman erzählt: Studien zum antiken Briefroman und seiner christlichen Rezeption in den Pastoralbriefen* (NTOA/SUNT 76; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009). Manabu Tsuji argues, in contrast, that all three Pastoral Letters are forgeries; 'Persönliche Korrespondenz des Paulus: Zur Strategie der Pastoralbriefe als Pseudepigrapha', *NTS* 56 (2010) 253–72.

3 1 Cor 7.8–9; see also 1 Cor 7.1, 28–35, 37–38, 40. For a discussion of the Corinthian pneumatics who valued sexual asceticism and Paul's nuanced response, see Judith M. Gundry-Volf, 'Controlling the Bodies: A Theological Profile of the Corinthian Sexual Ascetics (1 Cor 7)', *The Corinthian Correspondence* (ed. R. Bieringer; BETL 125; Leuven: Leuven University and Peeters, 1996) 519–41.

4 1 Cor 7.2–7, 9; see also 1 Cor 7.28, 36, 38.

5 1 Cor 11.5, 13.

6 1 Cor 11.3 is a reading of Gen 1.26–27 if Hans Conzelmann is correct that Paul, in order to serve his rhetorical purpose, substitutes the word κεφαλή here for εἰκόν. See Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975; German ed. 1969) 182–4, 187–8.

7 1 Cor 11.7–9 appears to be a reading of both Gen 1.26–27 and Gen 2.18–25.

gatherings. Lest anyone make too much of these readings, however, Paul qualifies them by affirming that ‘in the Lord’ men and women are interdependent. Furthermore, the origin of woman from man in creation is balanced by the birth of men from women since then. Finally, all are dependent on God.<sup>8</sup>

Paul thus indirectly affirms the leadership of women in his discussion of praying and prophesying. In his argument, however, that in community gatherings everything should be done in a decorous and orderly manner, he either contradicts himself or restricts *other* kinds of speech by women in the assemblies: ‘Let the women be silent in the assemblies; for it is not proper for them to speak; let them rather be subordinated, just as the law says. But if they wish to learn something, let them ask their (own) husbands at home; for it is shameful for a woman to speak in an assembly.’<sup>9</sup> Some scholars have rightly argued that these verses about women dramatically disrupt the context and the flow of the argument.<sup>10</sup> The hypothesis that a later editor added this statement is also supported by textual evidence.<sup>11</sup> The author of 1 Timothy, however, most likely knew this interpolation and accepted it as the teaching of Paul.<sup>12</sup>

The instructions on marriage and the leadership of women in 1 Timothy, in contrast, lack the nuance and balance that we have seen in 1 Corinthians. The author has consistently chosen one side of Paul’s ‘both/and’ instructions and often intensified it. After showing that such is the case, I attempt to answer the question *why* it is so.

The author of 1 Timothy affirms chastity but does not emphasize the value of sexual continence. Marriage is a virtual requirement for all members of the audience. To be appointed as an overseer or bishop, a man must be the husband of one wife. The rhetorical point is that he should not be divorced and remarried.

8 1 Cor 11.11–12.

9 1 Cor 14.26–40; quotation from 1 Cor 14.34–35. All translations from the Greek New Testament (NA<sup>27</sup>) are my own.

10 E.g., Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 246. He considered v. 33b to be part of the interpolated passage but notes that others have taken it with the previous sentence (241 n. 8).

11 Even if Conzelmann is right that the transposition of vv. 34–35 to follow v. 40 in some manuscripts is a secondary simplification (*1 Corinthians*, 246 n. 54), this evidence at least confirms the perception of some modern readers that these verses disrupt the context.

12 Some scholars argue that it was the other way around: the author of the interpolation used 1 Tim 2.11–13 in formulating the material inserted into 1 Cor 14: Dennis R. MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1983) 86–9; Richard I. Pervo, *The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010) 46–8. For a critical history of scholarship, see Marlene Crüsemann, ‘Unrettbar frauenfeindlich: Der Kampf um das Wort von Frauen in 1 Kor 14, (33b) 34–5 im Spiegel antijudaistischer Elemente der Auslegung’, *Von der Wurzel getragen: christlich-feministische Exegese in Auseinandersetzung mit Antijudaismus* (ed. Luise Schottroff and Marie-Theres Wacker; Biblical Interpretation Series 17; Leiden: Brill, 1996) 199–223.

Widowers who aspire to the office should not remarry. Although many men and women in ancient Greek, Roman, and Jewish contexts remarried, lifelong marital fidelity was praised, at least on funerary monuments.<sup>13</sup> Here an understanding of chastity is advocated that emphasizes marriage rather than sexual continence. The centrality of marriage is clear in the argument that a man who governs his household well, keeping his children under control, will also be able to manage the congregation of God.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, each deacon should be the husband of one wife and manage his children and household well.<sup>15</sup>

It is clear that the terms ‘overseer’ or ‘bishop’ and ‘deacon’ refer to fixed roles in the leadership of the community. The elders are also figures who govern, are compensated, and exercise leadership notably in proclaiming the word and teaching. The context suggests that they are also ordained in a sense: Timothy, as Paul’s agent, ‘lays hands’ upon them.<sup>16</sup>

It is less clear whether the word ‘widows’ refers simply to a social status or to a fixed role in the community. Care for the physical welfare of widows in the early church is attested by Acts 6.1–6 and advocated by Jas 1.27.<sup>17</sup> At some point, this practice was combined with a value placed on sexual continence and a disvalue on marriage outside the community so that women who remained widows began to comprise a special group within the community. They were supported with money or goods and also honored for maintaining the single, continent status.<sup>18</sup>

The hypothesis that there was such a fixed group of widows in the first half of the second century is supported by texts roughly contemporary with 1 Timothy.<sup>19</sup>

13 Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and Household Churches* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997) 62; Susan Treggiari, ‘Divorce Roman Style: How Easy and How Frequent Was It?’, *Marriage, Divorce, and Children in Ancient Rome* (ed. Beryl Rawson; Canberra: Humanities Research Centre; Oxford: Clarendon, 1991) 30–46 [40–1]; Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Family* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) 32–3, 66, 76–7, 89. The same value is evident, both for men and women, in Jewish inscriptions; see Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 52, and n. 19.

14 1 Tim 3.1–5. Cf. Plutarch *Coniugalia praecepta* 43 (144c).

15 1 Tim 3.12.

16 1 Tim 5.17, 22.

17 Widows seem to constitute a fixed and well-known group also in Acts 9.36–42; Turid Karlsen Seim, *The Double Message: Patterns of Gender in Luke–Acts* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994) 242–3.

18 Seim, *Double Message*, 235, 241–2. In 1 Tim 5.3 and 17, the verb τιμῶω is used in such a way that monetary gifts or gifts in kind are implied. This usage, however, may well have included ‘honor’ of a social kind as well.

19 I agree with Jens Herzer that 1 Timothy should be dated to the first half of the second century; see his ‘Juden—Christen—Gnostiker: Zur Gegnerproblematik der Pastoralbriefe’, *Die Entstehung des Christentums aus dem Judentum = Berliner Theologische Zeitschrift* 25 (2008) 143–68 (161, 165, 167).

At the end of his letter to the Smyrneans, Ignatius greets ‘the virgins who are called widows’.<sup>20</sup> Polycarp also seems to presuppose a fixed group of widows in his letter to the Philippians:

We should teach the widows to be self-controlled with respect to faith in the Lord, to pray without ceasing for everyone, and to be distant from all libel, slander, false witness, love of money, and all evil, knowing that they are God’s altar and that each offering is inspected for a blemish and that nothing escapes his notice, whether thoughts, ideas, or any of the things hidden in the heart.<sup>21</sup>

The instructions concerning widows in 1 Timothy make more sense if the author is not establishing the order of widows for the first time but attempting to reform an existing one. The reform consists in defining ‘widow’ more narrowly and excluding those who do not fit this new definition.<sup>22</sup> The ‘real’ widows are those who have no children, grandchildren, or any other relatives who could provide for them.<sup>23</sup> One reason for this restriction may be to lessen the financial burden on the community.<sup>24</sup> The new definition, however, involves being no less than sixty years old and having been married once.<sup>25</sup> This definition excludes ‘virgins’, that is, women who choose to live in the single state rather than marrying at all. Such women apparently made a solemn promise or even took an oath to remain sexually continent.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to the economic issue, the author has two reasons for excluding the virgins, in his language ‘the younger widows’. The first echoes Paul’s Corinthian

20 Ignatius *Smyrneans* 13.1; translation from Bart D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers* (2 vols.; LCL 24–25; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2003) 1.309. Cf. Ignatius *Polycarp* 4.1.

21 Polycarp *Philippians* 4.3; trans. from Ehrman, 1.339. The date and integrity of this letter are disputed (1.326–29). Sebastian Moll seems simply to assume the viability of Harrison’s thesis that two letters underlie the received one; *The Arch-Heretic Marcion* (WUNT 250; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010) 12–14. See the perhaps too generous review of Moll’s book by Paul Foster, ‘Marcion without Harnack’, *ExpT* 121 (2010) 554–6. On the characterization of widows as the altar of God, see Carolyn Osiek, ‘The Widow as Altar: The Rise and Fall of a Symbol’, *Second Century* 3 (1983) 159–69.

22 1 Tim 5.3–16; Jouette Bassler, ‘The Widow’s Tale: A Fresh Look at 1 Tim 5.3–16’, *JBL* 103 (1984) 23–41 (33–4); Seim, *Double Message*, 237–8. See also Horrell, ‘Disciplining Performance’, 117 and the further literature cited in n. 37.

23 1 Tim 5.3–8.

24 This goal seems to be implied in 1 Tim 5.16. According to Luke Timothy Johnson, this is ‘the most obvious and central concern of the passage’; see his *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (AB 35A; New York: Doubleday, 2001) 271. See also the discussion of his views by Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, *Gossip and Gender: Othering of Speech in the Pastoral Epistles* (BZNW 164; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2009) 126–8.

25 1 Tim 5.9.

26 Implied by 1 Tim 5.12; Seim, *Double Message*, 238–9. See also BAGD, s.v. πίστις, and Horrell, ‘Disciplining Performance’, 121.

correspondence: 'For when they grow wanton, turning away from Christ, they wish to marry, incurring judgment upon themselves because they have broken their first promise'.<sup>27</sup> The second reason is, 'At the same time, they also learn to be idle, going around from house to house, and are not only idle but also nonsense-talkers and busybodies, saying what should not be said'.<sup>28</sup> Instead, these women should marry, bear children, manage their households, and thus 'give the opponent no occasion for reproach'.

Some scholars have argued that this description signifies that 'the lifestyle of the widows seems to have produced a negative reaction in the wider society, which objected to their free and apparently useless behavior (v 14b)'.<sup>29</sup> The next verse, however, reads, 'For some have already turned aside to follow Satan'. Jouette Bassler interprets this verse to mean that some of the widows have embraced the heretical movement opposed by the Pastor.<sup>30</sup> If, however, one reads these two verses together, instead of separately as expressing two different arguments, the rhetoric appears to have a different point. In this reading, 'the opponent' in 5.14 is Satan, who looks for opportunities to reproach the faithful in the heavenly court.<sup>31</sup> So, rather than a worry about what outsiders will think,<sup>32</sup> the author indicates that the lifestyle of the widows, especially the younger ones pledged to virginity, indicates a potential, and to some degree actual, link between members of the audience and a group or movement that the author opposes. In this reading the accusations of idleness, gadding about, talking nonsense, and being busybodies do not constitute a fair description of the lifestyle of the widows. It is rather a highly tendentious and pejorative depiction.<sup>33</sup> The claim that the younger 'widows' say 'what should not be said' is thus

27 1 Tim 5.11b–12; cf. 1 Cor 7.2, 5d, 9, 36; 2 Cor 11.2–3.

28 1 Tim 5.13; see the discussions of the usage of φλύαρος (and in one instance, περιεργία) in Bjelland Kartzow, *Gossip and Gender*, 50–66 (περιεργία on 55). See also the use of περιεργάζεσθαι in 2 Thess 3.11.

29 Bassler, 'Widow's Tale', 36; note also the scholars mentioned in her n. 51; Seim speaks of the fear 'that the surrounding society will react negatively to such a lack of conformity to the domesticity expected of women' (*Double Message*, 238).

30 Bassler, 'Widow's Tale', 37 and n. 52. Seim also concludes that the author opposed the ascetic behavior of the widows and maintained 'that their weakness encourages easy access by heretics who advocated an ascetic lifestyle' (*Double Message*, 238).

31 The phrase ὁ ἀντικείμενος also signifies Satan in 1 Clem 51.1 and MPol 17.1.

32 In the instruction concerning an acceptable candidate for the role of overseer or bishop, the author states that he 'must also have a good reputation among outsiders, in order that he not fall into disgrace and the trap of the Slanderer' (3.7). Here the concern with outsiders is explicit. Note the use of the plural here but the singular in 5.14. The two passages seem to construe the activity of Satan in different ways.

33 Bjelland Kartzow accepts that 1 Tim 5.13 engages in ancient gossip discourse and that 'a whole gossip scene is described' (*Gossip and Gender*, 66). She retrieves gossip as 'a useful stereotype' and construes it as 'a creative counter-discourse' (208–10).

not a rejection of gossip but a reaction to teaching with which the author disagrees.<sup>34</sup>

A clue as to the identification of this group or movement is the extraordinary statement at the beginning of ch. 4:

Now the Spirit says explicitly that in later times some will fall away from the faith, giving heed to spirits that lead (them) astray and to teachings of demons. (They will be led astray) by the pretense of liars, seared in their own consciences, forbidding marriage. They also command abstinence from foods, which God created for the faithful to share with thanksgiving, and the faithful know the truth.<sup>35</sup>

As far as I am aware, the only evidence for a Christian teacher forbidding marriage in the first half of the second century concerns Marcion.<sup>36</sup> Clement of Alexandria wrote:

Marcion's followers held natural processes as evil because they were derived from matter that was evil, and from an unrighteous creator. On this argument they have no wish to fill the cosmos the creator brought into being, and choose to abstain from marriage. They stand in opposition to their creator and make

34 So also Horrell, 'Disciplining Performance', 122.

35 1 Tim 4.1-3.

36 The Acts of Paul (and Thecla) teach that only the celibate will attain the resurrection, but this work dates to the second half of the second century; see Wilhelm Schneemelcher, 'Acts of Paul [including the Acts of Paul and Thecla]', *New Testament Apocrypha* (2 vols., ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher; Cambridge, UK: James Clarke; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, rev. ed. 1992; German ed. 1989) 2.213-70 (232). MacDonald has argued that the Pastoral Letters were written against oral stories similar to those later incorporated in the Acts of Paul (*Legend*). Willy Rordorf has agreed with him; see his 'In welchem Verhältnis stehen die apokryphen Paulusakten zur kanonischen Apostelgeschichte und zu den Pastoralbriefen?', *Text and Testimony: Essays on New Testament and Apocryphal Literature in Honour of A. F. J. Klijn* (ed. T. Baarda et al.; Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J. H. Kok, 1988) 225-41 (238 n. 42); 'Nochmals: Paulusakten und Pastoralbriefe', *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament* (ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Otto Betz; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987) 319-27. But the differences combined with similarities can also be explained as free adaptation on the part of the author of the Acts of Paul or as due to a process of re-oralization of the written Pastorals. Thus I am more inclined to agree with Joachim Rohde (although he dates the Pastorals unnecessarily early, i.e., 80-100 CE) that the author of the Acts of Paul knew and used the Pastoral Letters in composing his work and deliberately portrayed as the legitimate teaching of Paul those views criticized by the Pastorals as false teaching; see his 'Pastoralbriefe und Acta Pauli', *Studia Evangelica vol. V Part II* (ed. F. L. Cross; TU 103; Berlin: Akademie, 1968) 303-10 (303, 306, 309). Richard Bauckham concludes that the author of the Acts of Paul knew the Pastorals; see his 'The Acts of Paul as a Sequel to Acts', *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*. Vol. 1, *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting* (ed. Bruce W. Winter and A. D. Clarke; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) 105-52 (116-30).

haste towards the one they call god, who is not (they say) god in another sense. As a result, they have no desire to leave anything of theirs behind them here on earth. So they are abstinent not by an act of will but through hatred of the creator and the refusal to use any of his productions.<sup>37</sup>

Clement and Tertullian described the teachings and practices of the Marcionites and attempted to refute them in detail. The author of 1 Timothy, writing earlier, instead summarized the teaching in a pejorative way and did not name the teacher or group who advocated it. This procedure is typical of the Pastoral Letters as a whole.<sup>38</sup>

There is also evidence that Marcion advocated strict self-control with regard to food and drink. Theodore of Mopsuestia, in commenting on this passage, said of the Marcionites, among others, 'they condemn the use of food as almost shameful'.<sup>39</sup> The Marcionites advocated abstinence from meat and wine, citing Rom 14.21 and 1 Cor 8.13.<sup>40</sup> They also encouraged the practice of fasting, even on the Sabbath.<sup>41</sup>

The hypothesis that the Pastoral Letters were written against Marcion has been repeatedly advanced and rejected.<sup>42</sup> No doubt other Christians and perhaps other

37 Clement *Stromateis* 3.12.1-2; translation from John Ferguson, *Clement of Alexandria: Stromateis—Books One to Three* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1991) 263-4. See also Tertullian *adv. Marc.* 1.29 and the text and translation in Ernest Evans, *Tertullian Adversus Marcionem: Books 1-3* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972) 80-1. For further references see Adolf von Harnack, *Marcion. Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott: Neue Studien zu Marcion* (Berlin: Akademie, 1960; repr. of 2d rev. ed. 1924) 277\*-8\*.

38 Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 2-3.

39 'Escarum usum quasi inhonestum criminant' (Harnack, *Marcion*, 369\*; see also 149, 278\*). Cf. Tertullian *adv. Marc.* 1.14 and *Ieiun.* 15.1.

40 Harnack, *Marcion*, 149-50, citing the fifth-century Armenian writer, Yesnik of Koghb or Eznik of Kolb, *Against the Sects*, who says that the Marcionites taught that it was better not to eat meat and not to drink wine; quoted by Harnack (378\*-9\*) from p. 197 of the translation of J. M. Schmidt, *Das Wardapet Eznik von Kolb wider die Sekten* (Vienna: Mechitharisten, 1900). For a critical assessment of Eznik as a source, see Wolfgang Hage, 'Marcion bei Eznik von Kolb', *Marcion und seine kirchengeschichtliche Wirkung/Marcion and His Impact on Church History* (ed. Gerhard May, Katharina Greschat, and Martin Meiser; TU 150; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002) 29-37. In Harnack, *Marcion*, 384\*, a tenth-century Arabic writer is quoted to similar effect. On such sources see Marco Frenschkowski, 'Marcion in arabischen Quellen', *Marcion* (ed. May) 39-63. Note that Paul, the fictive author, instructs Timothy no longer to drink water (alone or by preference), but to make use of a little wine on account of his stomach and his numerous ailments (1 Tim 5.23).

41 Harnack, *Marcion*, 150, citing Epiphanius *Haer.*, 42.3 and Yesnik (Harnack, *Marcion*, 379\*; Schmidt, 198).

42 Advocated by Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Die sogenannten Pastoralbriefe des Apostels Paulus aufs neue kritisch untersucht* (Stuttgart/Tübingen: Cotta, 1835) 15-18; rejected by Harnack, *Marcion*, 3\*-4\*. Harnack held that 1 Tim 6.20-21 could be anti-Marcionite and contain a play on the title of Marcion's work, the *Antitheses*. He believed, however, that 1 Tim 6.17-21 was probably a later addition to the letter (Harnack, *Marcion*, 3\*-4\*). Advocated by



groups in the early second century practiced sexual continence and abstinence from certain kinds of food and drink.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, it is worth reviving the hypothesis that 1 Timothy was written, at least in part, to oppose the teaching of Marcion. That Christian teacher and his followers constituted a very prominent movement already in the first half of the second century. In his first *Apology*, written around 150 CE, Justin Martyr declared that Marcion had many followers of every nation.<sup>44</sup> The hypothesis that 1 Timothy is, in large part, a response to Marcion helps to explain why the author has received Paul's instructions about marriage and the leadership of women in the way that he has. He rejected practices linked to Christian teaching that he viewed as unacceptable.<sup>45</sup> He thus attempted to construct distinct identities for the Marcionites and those he urged to hold to 'sound teaching'.<sup>46</sup>

We have already seen that the author wants to exclude younger women vowed to sexual continence from the order of widows. He prefers that they marry and

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Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (ed. Robert A. Kraft and Gerhard Krodel; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971) 226 (228–9 in the 2d German ed. 1964; 1st ed. 1934), John Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1942) 73–6, and Hans von Campenhausen, *Polycarp von Smyrna und die Pastoralbriefe* (SHAW 1951/2; Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1951) 5–51 (10–13); repr. 'Polycarp von Smyrna und die Pastoralbriefe', *Aus der Frühzeit des Christentums* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1963) 197–252 (203–6); rejected by Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 2; they conclude, nevertheless, that the Pastoral Letters and Marcion emerge from a common milieu.

- 43 Some may have been inspired by Luke 20.34–36 to be sexually continent or may have used this text to justify that practice (see also 18.29). One could argue similarly for 1 Cor 7. According to David G. Hunter, 'The clearest exponent of the "encratite" reading of 1 Cor 7 in the second century was Tatian, the enigmatic apologist and former disciple of Justin'. See his 'The Reception and Interpretation of Paul in Late Antiquity: 1 Corinthians 7 and the Ascetic Debates', *The Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity* (ed. Lorenzo DiTommaso and Lucian Turcescu; Bible in Ancient Christianity 6; Leiden: Brill, 2008) 163–91 (167). It is not clear, however, that Tatian's advocacy of ascetic practices was early enough to have been known by the author of 1 Timothy.
- 44 Justin 1 *Apol.* 26. For a relatively early dating of Marcion, see R. Joseph Hoffman, *Marcion: On the Restitution of Christianity* (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1984). For a brief summary and critique of Hoffman's book, see Gerhard May, 'Marcion in Contemporary Views: Results and Open Questions', *Second Century* 6 (1987–88) 129–51 [131]; see also May's review in 'Ein neues Marcionbild?', *Theologische Rundschau* 51 (1986) 404–13. Hoffman defends his views in 'How Then Know this Troublous Teacher? Further Reflections on Marcion and his Church', *Second Century* 6 (1987–88) 173–91. For a relatively late dating, see Moll, *Arch-Heretic*, 31–41.
- 45 Cf. Tertullian's remark that 'discipline is the measure of doctrine' (*Praescr. haer.* 43.2), discussed by Judith M. Lieu, ' "As much my apostle as Christ is mine": The Dispute over Paul between Tertullian and Marcion', *Early Christianity* 1 (2010) 41–59 (51).
- 46 1 Tim 1.10; 6.3. For a study of the way in which Justin used circumcision to create separate identities for Jews and Christians, see Nina E. Livesey, 'Theological Identity Making: Justin's Use of Circumcision to Create Jews and Christians', *J ECS* 18 (2010) 51–79.

cease the activity of teaching that he has masked under the pejorative terms of talking nonsense and gadding about as busybodies. This instruction has the double intention of advocating marriage and childbearing and opposing the teaching and practice of sexual continence.

This view of the environment in which 1 Timothy was composed also helps explain the explicit rejection of any kind of female leadership in ch. 2:

Let a woman learn in silence in complete subordination;<sup>47</sup> I do not permit a woman to teach or to have power over a man, but to be silent.<sup>48</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve.<sup>49</sup> And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.<sup>50</sup> She will be saved through child-bearing, if they remain in faithfulness and love and holiness with self-control.<sup>51</sup>

Not only did Marcion forbid marriage and the begetting and bearing of children, he and his followers also permitted the leadership of women in their congregations. Tertullian wrote:

The very women of these heretics, how wanton they are! For they are bold enough to teach, to dispute, to enact exorcisms, to undertake cures—it may be even to baptize. [The Marcionites'] ordinations are carelessly administered, capricious, changeable.... And so it comes to pass that to-day one man is their bishop, to-morrow another; to-day he is a deacon who to-morrow is a reader; to-day he is a priest (or elder) who tomorrow is a layman. For even on laymen do they impose the functions of priesthood.<sup>52</sup>

Apparently, Marcion founded congregations that had the same roles or offices as the older local churches. In his churches these roles were not fixed but were

47 Cf. 1 Cor 14.34–35. Abraham J. Malherbe translates 'A woman is to learn in quietness', linking the phrase ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ in 1 Tim 2.11 with ἡσύχιος in 2.2. See his 'The *Virtus Feminarum* in 1 Timothy 2.9–15', *Renewing Tradition: Studies in Texts and Contexts in Honor of James W. Thompson* (ed. Mark W. Hamilton et al.; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007) 45–65 (47).

48 Malherbe translates 'she is to remain quiet' ('*Virtus*', 48).

49 Cf. 1 Cor 11.8–9.

50 Cf. 2 Cor 11.1–2.

51 1 Tim 2.11–15. Malherbe translates 'with moderation' ('*Virtus*', 48). See his discussion of σωφροσύνη (53–59).

52 Tertullian *Prescr. haer.* 41; translation by Peter Holmes from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (10 vols.; ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) 3.263. See also the text and translation of 41.5–8 in R. F. Refoulé and P. de Labriolle, eds., *Tertullien. Traité de la prescription contre les hérétiques* (SC 46; Paris: Cerf, 1957) 147–8. Epiphanius says that Marcion 'unhesitatingly allows even women to administer supposed baptism' (*Panarion* 1.42.3); translation from Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis Book I (Sects 1–46)* (Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 63; Leiden: Brill, 2d ed. 2009) 228. See also Philip R. Amidon, SJ, *The Panarion of St. Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis* (New York: Oxford University, 1990) 16, Abstract 42.1.

handled in a free manner.<sup>53</sup> The functions of the various offices were not sharply distinguished, and there was no strict separation of lay and clerical roles. Since sexuality was supposed to be abolished among the redeemed, it is not surprising that Marcion made at least some offices and functions open to women as well as men.<sup>54</sup> The inscription found in Deir-Ali (ancient Lebaba), Syria, mentions the congregation or building (συναγωγή not ἐκκλησία) of the Marcionists in that village. It also indicates that the community or the place of gathering is under the care of a presbyter by the name of Paul.<sup>55</sup>

The author of 1 Timothy, in teaching that women should be silent and subordinate, presents this instruction as part of the legacy of Paul.<sup>56</sup> He also offers an interpretation of Genesis 2–3 to support the practice of female subordination and to provide a transition to the theme of childbearing. ‘For Adam was formed first, then Eve’, echoes and may be a summary of part of Paul’s argument about head covering. Paul wrote, ‘For man is not from woman, but woman from man; furthermore, man was not created on account of woman, but woman on account of man’.<sup>57</sup> The emphasis in 1 Timothy on the *order* of creation rather than the *process* avoids evoking the thought that, in the present time, men are born ‘from women’ rather than vice versa. It also allows the author to avoid mentioning Paul’s qualification, ‘But neither is woman apart from man nor man apart from woman in the Lord; for just as the woman (came into being) through the man, so also the man (comes into being) through the woman, and all things (come into being) from God’.<sup>58</sup>

53 Perhaps such roles and offices were equally fluid in the older churches at the time Marcion founded his. Moll asserts that Marcion was not innovative with regard to either church offices or the leadership of women (*Arch-Heretic*, 124–5).

54 See the discussion in Harnack, *Marcion*, 147, with reference to the passages from Tertullian and Epiphanius cited above in n. 52. Moll argues that Marcion adopted the practice of female leadership from ‘the Church’ and that female office holders were the exception rather than the rule ‘both within the orthodox communities and in Marcion’s church’ (*Arch-Heretic*, 124–5).

55 The inscription dates to 318 or 319 CE. See W. H. Waddington, *Inscriptions Grecques et Latines de la Syrie* (Paris: F. Didot, 1870) 583–4 no. 2558; transcription on p. 582 in second section of the volume (numbering begins again with p. 465 following p. 631). See also Harnack, *Marcion*, 341\*–4\*; Moll, *Arch-Heretic*, 124 and n. 17. L. Michael White argues that συναγωγή is a reference to a building and the presbyter Paul had it built; *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture*. Vol. 2, *Texts and Monuments for the Christian Domus Ecclesiae in Its Environment* (HTS 42; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997) 140 #39. Waddington, Harnack, and Moll all assume that a building is meant.

56 He does so by writing in Paul’s name and by echoing 1 Cor 14.34–35. For another view of the relation between 1 Tim 2.11–12 and 1 Cor 14.34–35, see n. 12 above.

57 Cf. 1 Tim 2.13 with 1 Cor 11.8–9.

58 1 Cor 11.11–12.

The interpretation of Genesis 3 in 1 Timothy states, 'And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor'.<sup>59</sup> This remark seems strange in light of Paul's association of Adam with sin and death.<sup>60</sup> The only time Paul mentions Eve in the undisputed letters is in 2 Corinthians 11, where he remarks, 'I am jealous regarding you with a jealousy of God, for I betrothed you to one man to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear that somehow your thoughts may be corrupted from the simplicity and chastity that lead to Christ, as the serpent deceived Eve with his trickery'.<sup>61</sup> Both passages seem to presuppose a legendary expansion of Genesis 3–4, according to which Eve was seduced by Satan and bore Cain, who was therefore a child of Satan.<sup>62</sup> The use of this legend with its sexual connotation of 'deceived' explains how the author can say, 'Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived'. This legend then provides a transition to the final statement of this instruction about women, 'But [woman] will be saved through the act of childbearing, if [women] remain in faithfulness and love and holiness with self-control'.<sup>63</sup>

This application of the legend about Eve and Satan to the situation of women in the church seems to imply a principle that could be formulated as follows: by the means with which someone sins, by that is one saved.<sup>64</sup> As Eve sinned by having illicit sexual relations and bearing a child, so the women of the church will be saved from the sinful heritage of Eve by having proper sexual relations within marriage, bearing children, and living a faithful, chaste life. This principle is related to the logic of punishment found in some extra-canonical Jewish and Christian works. In these works, there is a mirror-like relation between the sin committed on earth and the punishment in hell. In the *Apocalypse of Peter*, for example, the visionary sees in the place of punishment those who have blasphemed the way of righteousness. They are 'hanging by their tongues', and 'under them was laid fire, blazing and tormenting them'.<sup>65</sup>

59 1 Tim 2.14.

60 Rom 5.14; 1 Cor 15.22.

61 2 Cor 11.2–3.

62 Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 47–8. For later forms of this legend, see Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (7 vols.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1909, 1937, 1998) 1.105–6; the sources for Ginzberg's narrative are given in nn. 3–7 (5.133–35). For an apparently related form of the legend, see the *Secret Book according to John* (NHC II, 1) 24.8–25; for an English translation, see Bentley Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1987) 47; Frederik Wisse, 'The Apocryphon of John', *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (ed. James M. Robinson; San Francisco: Harper, 3d ed. 1988) 104–23 (118–19); or Karen L. King, *The Secret Revelation of John* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2006) 67.

63 1 Tim 2.15.

64 Dibelius and Conzelmann formulate it as 'quo quis peccat, eo salvatur' (*Pastoral Epistles*, 48).

65 *Apoc. Pet.* 22 (Akhmim); translation from C. Detlef G. Müller, 'Apocalypse of Peter', *New Testament Apocrypha* (ed. Schneemelcher) 2.628. On mirror punishments, see Callie

As we have seen, the instruction about marriage and the leadership of women in the church in 1 Timothy can be illuminated by comparison with the teaching of Marcion. Elsewhere, however, the fictional Paul seems to respond to specific rival teachers in addition to Marcion. Near the beginning of the letter, the author gives an example of the kind of teaching about which he wishes to warn the audience:

Just as I exhorted you to remain in Ephesus while I went to Macedonia, (so I now appeal to you) to forbid some people to give divergent teaching, to forbid them to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies that lead to speculations rather than to the plan of God, which (one finds) in faith.<sup>66</sup>

Later in the letter, the fictional Paul similarly instructs Timothy, 'Reject worthless myths such as old women tell'.<sup>67</sup> Like the charge of 'talking nonsense' in the section on widows, the notion of 'old wives' tales' here is used to denigrate the stories told by rival teachers. This feminizing of their teaching was probably intended as an act of shaming. Finally, at the end of the letter, the author appeals to the fictional Timothy:

Timothy, guard the deposit, turning away from the worthless, empty chatter and contradictions of knowledge, falsely so-called. Some have missed the mark with regard to the faith by professing such knowledge.<sup>68</sup>

Plato and Plutarch composed 'myths' or 'stories' as supplements to their philosophical arguments.<sup>69</sup> These stories made a philosophical or ethical point in a way that grasped the imagination and moved the emotions of their audiences. Most later Platonic philosophers did not compose their own myths but focused on the interpretation of Plato's, for example Plotinus and Porphyry. The last named philosophers attacked some gnostic writings as containing, not helpful stories, but lying myths or fabrications.<sup>70</sup>

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Callon, 'Sorcery, Wheels, and Mirror Punishments', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 18 (2010) 29–49.

66 1 Tim 1.3–4.

67 1 Tim 4.7.

68 1 Tim 6.20–21.

69 E.g., Plato *Resp.* 10.13–16 (614a–621d); cf. Plato *Phaedo* 61e; Plutarch *De genio Socratis*; *De facie quae in orbe lunae apparet*; *De sera numinis vindicta*; cf. Plutarch *De Iside et Osiride* 20 (358e–359a).

70 Plotinus *Ennead* 2.19; Porphyry *Vita Plotini* 16. I avoid the term 'Gnosticism' as problematic; see Michael A. Williams, *Rethinking 'Gnosticism': An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1996); Karen L. King, *What Is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap of Harvard University, 2003). I continue to use the terms 'gnostic' and 'Gnosis' for convenience.

It appears that the author of 1 Timothy already refers to early gnostic teachings.<sup>71</sup> One of the earliest gnostic works known to us is the *Secret Book according to John*.<sup>72</sup> Like Marcion's teaching,<sup>73</sup> this work distinguishes between the highest God and a lower, ignorant creator God. Before the creation of the material world, the highest, unknowable God emitted 'a hypostasis, or second being, and through successive phases of emission produce[d] a carefully structured series of other beings. These many emanations are called' aeons, a term that refers simultaneously to places and periods of time. In gnostic texts, the aeons are also abstractions, signified by their particular names, for example, Forethought. The last of the aeons to be produced is called Wisdom.<sup>74</sup> All of these emanations constitute 'the structure of the divine world in its glorious complexity'.<sup>75</sup>

If the author of 1 Timothy had heard an account of divine emanations even only somewhat similar to the text of the *Secret Book according to John*, it is easy to see how he could construe it in the pejorative phrase, 'endless genealogies'. This type of gnostic text can also explain the polemic against 'myths'. The *Secret Book according to John* includes a myth or story about how the creation of the material world came about. The last aeon, Wisdom, 'wanted to show forth within herself an image, without the spirit's [will]; and her consort did not consent'. 'And out of her was shown forth an imperfect product, that was different from her manner of appearance, for she had made it without her consort'.<sup>76</sup> This imperfect product is the maker of the universe and of Adam and Eve. He is called 'Ialtabaoth' but is, at the same time, an interpretation of Plato's Demiurge and of the creator God of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>77</sup>

This story, or set of stories, could well be called 'myths'. The gnostics evaluated such stories positively, whereas others, perhaps including the author of 1

71 Layton allows that 'the characteristic gnostic myth of creation turns out to resemble philosophical mythic speculation already current in the time of Jesus' (*Gnostic Scriptures*, 5). Michael Wolter and Jens Herzer have rightly argued that 1 Timothy reflects knowledge of Gnosis or a gnostic milieu; Wolter, *Die Pastoralbriefe als Paulustradition* (FRLANT 146; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988) 256–7; Herzer, 'Juden—Christen—Gnostiker', 143–68 (157–67).

72 Also known as the *Apocryphon of John* and the *Secret Revelation of John*. Ismo Dunderberg concludes that Valentinus 'was familiar with the *Apocryphon of John* or other Sethian traditions'; see Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism: Myth, Lifestyle, and Society in the School of Valentinus* (New York: Columbia University, 2008) 73. See the discussion of Valentinus below.

73 Barbara Aland, 'Marcion (ca. 85–160)/Marcioniten', *TRE* 22 (1992) 89–101 [section 4]. Reprinted in her *Was Ist Gnosis? Studien zum frühen Christentum, zu Marcion und zur kaiserzeitlichen Philosophie* (WUNT 239; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009) 318–40.

74 Layton, *Gnostic Scriptures*, 14.

75 Layton, *Gnostic Scriptures*, 23; see also 24–5. See also King, *Secret Revelation of John*, 85–8.

76 *Secret Book according to John* (NHC II, 1) 9.28–30; 10.2–5; translation from Layton, *Gnostic Scriptures*, 35. Four ancient copies of this work have come down to us; for discussion see King, *Secret Revelation of John*, 18–19, 318 n. 43.

77 *Secret Book according to John*, 10.19; cf. 10.19–25.15 with Plato *Timaeus* and Gen 1–4.

Timothy, saw them as fabrications in a negative sense. The fictional Paul urged teachers to avoid such inquiries or searches for knowledge and to focus instead on the divine order found in the faith.

After the warning against ‘myths and endless genealogies’ in ch. 1, the author goes on to say that some have deviated from this divine order and its aims ‘and turned aside to foolish talk, wishing to be teachers of the Law,<sup>78</sup> understanding neither what they are saying nor the things about which they speak so confidently’.<sup>79</sup> The context suggests that this statement is a polemic against those who teach ‘myths’ and ‘endless genealogies’. It may well be that the author is challenging an interpretation of Genesis, the first book of the Law, offered by some gnostics.<sup>80</sup> In addition to the supplementary ‘myths’ about the highest God, the aeon called Wisdom, and Ialtabaoth, the *Secret Book according to John* reads the story of Genesis 2 against the grain. The creator and his assistants allowed Adam to eat of all the trees in the garden except one. Eating the fruit of all the other trees produced desire, deception, wickedness, and death. They prevented Adam even from seeing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because it is actually light from the heavenly world. It was the Savior, not the serpent, who caused Adam and Eve to eat of that tree.<sup>81</sup> The fictional Paul exercised his creativity in reading Genesis in quite a different way.

The author then continues to talk about the Law but shifts perspectives, so to speak. In the passage just discussed, the issue seems to be the interpretation of the narrative in the first chapters of Genesis. The second passage focuses primarily on the commandments and related ethical issues. In the latter passage he affirms, ‘Now we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully. This means knowing that the Law is not given to the just person but to the unjust and rebellious, the impious and sinners, the unholy and worldly, those who kill their fathers or mothers, murderers, sexually immoral people’, and so forth, ‘and anything else opposed to the sound teaching in accordance with the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted’.<sup>82</sup>

This argument makes little sense if we interpret it as a response to gnostics, but it does fit the context of polemic against Marcion. That early Christian teacher wrote a work called the Contradictions or Antitheses. It was composed as a guide to or defense of Marcion’s interpretation of the Bible. The title refers to the opposing statements representing the Jewish scriptures and the teaching of

78 I agree with Baur’s argument that ‘teachers of the Law’ here does not mean those who interpret the Law as a guide for living life but rather those who study the Law in order to determine the correct understanding of it in a wider sense (*Pastoralbriefe*, 16–17).

79 1 Tim 1.6–7.

80 According to King, the *Secret Book according to John* is an interpretation of the opening chapters of Genesis (*Secret Revelation of John*, 215–21).

81 *Secret Book according to John*, 21.16–22.20.

82 1 Tim 1.8–11.

Jesus respectively. These oppositions supported his teaching that there were two Gods and all that follows from that claim. Thus it may also have contained inferences from the opposing statements and exegetical discussions.<sup>83</sup>

The first antithesis in Adolf von Harnack's reconstruction reads, 'The Demiurge was known to Adam and to the following generations; the Father of Christ, however, is unknown, as Christ himself said of him in the following words, "No one knows the Father except the Son".'<sup>84</sup> Marcion considered the God of the Jewish scriptures, which Christians eventually called the Old Testament, the creator God, to be inferior to the God who is the Father of Christ. He portrayed the God of the Old Testament as ignorant, violent, and concerned about justice and judgment.<sup>85</sup> The God of Christ is an unknown, alien God who is far beyond, and thus has nothing to do with, this world. Nevertheless, out of love and compassion, this God sent Christ to bring all who belong to him to a heavenly and eternal place of rest.<sup>86</sup>

Marcion 'rejected the Old Testament, not as untrue but as non-Christian'.<sup>87</sup> The prophecies that other Christians interpreted as referring to Jesus, Marcion explained as predicting a Jewish messiah who would come at some point in the future.<sup>88</sup> The Jewish messiah will gather the Jewish people together from their diaspora, whereas Christ was sent by the good God to free the entire human race.<sup>89</sup>

The fictional Paul of 1 Timothy tried to justify the Jewish scriptures as Christian Scripture by reprising Paul's argument that the Law was given to convey knowledge of sin.<sup>90</sup> It is striking that the fictional Paul's defense of the Law in ch. 1 implies that the Law and the gospel are in harmony with one another. All the things that are contrary to the Law are also opposed to the sound teaching of the gospel. The teaching and widespread influence of Marcion made the issue of the relation of Law and gospel a hot topic, and the author of 1 Timothy seems to address it here.<sup>91</sup>

83 Aland, 'Marcion/Marcioniten', section 3.2. Lieu thinks it unlikely that Marcion's work included extensive commentary ('Dispute', 44). She also takes it as 'a strong possibility' that the antitheses, especially 'Law against Gospel', 'are as much the projection of Tertullian's own mentalité' as Marcion's (46; cf. 50).

84 Harnack, *Marcion*, 89 (Antithesis I).

85 Harnack, *Marcion*, 89–91 (Antitheses II, III, VIII, XIX).

86 Harnack, *Marcion*, 92 (Antithesis XXX).

87 Evans, *Tertullian*, xiv. See also E. C. Blackman, *Marcion and His Influence* (London: SPCK, 1948) 113–14, 118–19, 122–3; Blackman also notes that Marcion rejected allegorical interpretation (114–15).

88 Harnack, *Marcion*, 92 (Antithesis XXIX), 117; Blackman, *Marcion*, 118. Irenaeus attempted to refute this argument in *Haer.* 4.34.

89 Harnack, *Marcion*, 91 (Antithesis XVIII).

90 Gal 3.19; Rom 5.13.

91 As Baur rightly noted (*Pastoralbriefe*, 18).



As argued above, there is evidence for polemic against both gnostics and Marcion at the beginning of the letter. It has also been noted that attention returns to the gnostics at the end of the letter: 'Timothy, guard the deposit, turning away from the worthless, empty chatter and contradictions of knowledge, falsely so-called'. There may be a subtle allusion here also to Marcion in the phrase 'contradictions of knowledge, falsely so-called'. Ferdinand Christian Baur argued that Marcion was the only gnostic who could be accused of teaching 'contradictions' or 'contrary oppositions'.<sup>92</sup> Harnack, however, emphasized the differences between Marcion and the gnostics.<sup>93</sup> Barbara Aland has articulated a reasonable compromise in her view that Marcion cannot be understood apart from Gnosis.<sup>94</sup> In any case, if we take the final exhortation to the fictional Timothy as a kind of rhetorical peroration, it would make sense to conclude that the author would try to refer in this final statement to both of the most important rival Christian teachings of his environment. He refers to the gnostics clearly with the phrase 'knowledge, falsely so-called', alluding at the same time to Marcion's famous work with the word *ἀντιθέσεις*.

No doubt a variety of factors in the author's environment contributed to the views expressed in 1 Timothy about women, marriage, and female leadership. In 3.7 the fictional Paul is explicitly concerned with what outsiders will think about the overseers or bishops. It is less clear that he is so concerned with regard to the 'younger widows' or virgins. Nevertheless, the views of elite Greeks of his time may have had an effect on his discourse about the practices involving women and thus the female body.<sup>95</sup>

Paul advocated female modesty in his arguments in favor of women covering their heads in gatherings of the community.<sup>96</sup> The author of 1 Timothy follows suit in the following instructions:

I want...the women to adorn themselves with appropriate clothing, with modesty and self-control, not with stylish braids and gold ornaments or pearls or expensive apparel but with that which is fitting for women who profess reverence for God, namely, good works.<sup>97</sup>

92 Baur, *Pastoralbriefe*, 26–7, citing Tertullian *adv. Marc.* 1.19; 4.1. 'Contrary oppositions' is Evans's translation of Tertullian's '*Antitheses Marcionis*' (*Tertullian*, 48–9).

93 Harnack, *Marcion*, 440\*. As noted above, he argued that 1 Tim 6.20–21 may allude to Marcion but took it as a later addition to the letter (3\*–4\* n. 1).

94 Barbara Aland, 'Marcion: Versuch einer neuen Interpretation', *ZThK* 70 (1973) 420–47 (423). Reprinted in Aland, *Gnosis*, 291–317 (294).

95 For a discussion of Roman mores regarding marriage, see Kate (Catherine Fales) Cooper, *The Fall of the Roman Household* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2007).

96 1 Cor 11.5–6, 13.

97 1 Tim 2.8, 9–10. Korinna Zamfir and Joseph Verheyden argue that not only *βούλομαι* but the phrase *βούλομαι προσεύχασθαι* should be supplied to fill the ellipsis in v. 9; 'Text-Critical and Intertextual Remarks on 1 Tim 2.8–10', *NovT* 50 (2008) 376–406. They also argue that 1

Plutarch's work, *Advice to the Bride and Groom*, may serve here as representative of contemporary values of elite Greek culture on this point:

'Adornment', said Crates, 'is what adorns'; and what adorns a woman is what makes her better ordered—not gold nor emerald nor scarlet, but whatever gives an impression of dignity, discipline, and modesty.<sup>98</sup>

Paul, or a later editor of 1 Corinthians, declared, 'It is shameful for a woman to speak in an assembly'.<sup>99</sup> The Pastoral Paul taught, 'Let a woman learn in silence and in full subordination; I do not permit a woman to teach or to have power over a man, but to be in silence'.<sup>100</sup> Plutarch wrote:

Theano [the wife of Pythagoras] once exposed her hand as she was arranging her cloak. 'What a beautiful arm', said someone. 'But not public property', she replied. Not only the arms but the words of a modest woman must never be public property. She should be shy with her speech as with her body, and guard it against strangers. Feelings, character, and disposition can all be seen in a woman's talk. Phidias's statue of Aphrodite at Elis has her foot resting on a turtle, to symbolize homekeeping and silence. A wife should speak only to her husband or through her husband, and should not feel aggrieved if, like a piper, she makes nobler music through another's tongue.... If [wives] submit to their husbands, they are praised. If they try to rule them, they cut a worse figure than their subjects. But the husband should rule his wife, not as a master rules his slave, but as the soul rules the body, sharing her feelings and growing together with her in affection. That is the just way. One can care for one's body without being a slave to its pleasures and desires; and one can rule a wife while giving her enjoyment and kindness.<sup>101</sup>

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Cor 11.3–15 is an important pre-text for 1 Tim 2.8–10. For an interpretation of this passage from the point of view of ancient Mediterranean women, see Alicia J. Batten, 'Neither Gold nor Braided Hair (1 Timothy 2.9; 1 Peter 3.3): Adornment, Gender and Honour in Antiquity', *NTS* 55 (2009) 484–501.

<sup>98</sup> Plutarch *Coniug. praec.* 26 (141e); translation by Donald Russell in Sarah B. Pomeroy, ed., *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and A Consolation to His Wife: English Translations, Commentary, Interpretive Essays, and Bibliography* (New York: Oxford, 1999) 9.

<sup>99</sup> 1 Cor 14.35b.

<sup>100</sup> 1 Tim 2.11–12.

<sup>101</sup> Plutarch *Coniug. praec.* 31–33 (142c–e) (trans. Russell) 9–10. For a discussion of the two passages cited here in literary and historical context, see Sarah B. Pomeroy, 'Reflections on Plutarch, *Advice to the Bride and Groom*: Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed', *Plutarch's Advice* (ed. Pomeroy) 33–42; Simon Swain, 'Plutarch's Moral Program', *Plutarch's Advice* (ed. Pomeroy) 85–96 and the other essays in the volume. See especially the one by Jo Ann McNamara, who contrasts Plutarch's age with that of Plato and compares Christian values with those of Plutarch ('Gendering Virtue', *Plutarch's Advice* [ed. Pomeroy] 151–61).

Plutarch, however, unlike the main rival teaching addressed in 1 Timothy, did not oppose marriage. On the contrary, his concern was to instruct a bride and groom on how to cultivate a good marriage.<sup>102</sup> He and the fictional Paul shared the positive evaluation of marriage and some of the same values concerning the regulation of the female body and female behavior.

The *Secret Book according to John* uses language and images of procreation in order to describe the harmonious heavenly world. These images characterize reproduction in the divine realm as taking place through acts of mental will. Reproduction in the lower world is sharply contrasted with that of the upper. The lower rulers procreate through ignorance, arrogance, and lust, through violence and deception. In the lower world, however, there can also be imitation of the divine ideal, represented by Adam and Eve's procreation of Seth.<sup>103</sup>

The situation seems to be similar in the thinking and practices of the Valentinians. The Valentinians apparently practiced marriage and sexual intercourse. These were appropriate acts in their view, if the purpose was procreation rather than the satisfaction of desire.<sup>104</sup> According to the *Gospel of Philip*, a Valentinian text, there are human marriages of impurity and marriages of purity. The pure marriages are those that belong, not to desire, but to will, those that involve pure thoughts rather than merely carnal activity.<sup>105</sup>

The Christian philosopher and teacher, Valentinus, and perhaps others whose teaching contributed to the rise of the varied gnostic groups, was well known in the first half of the second century.<sup>106</sup> Valentinus recommended 'detachment

102 Lisette Goessler has argued that Plutarch's *Dialogue on Love (Erotikos/Amatorius)* stands in the tradition of the topos 'concerning marriage' (περὶ γάμου), in particular in the tradition of the rhetorical discussion of the question whether it is necessary to marry (εἰ γαμητέον), and that Plutarch's answer is affirmative; *Plutarchs Gedanken über die Ehe* (Zürich: Buchdruckerei Berichthaus, 1962) 31–2. See also the translation of selected sections of her book in Pomeroy, ed., *Plutarch's Advice*, 97–115. On the *Amatorius* and similar works, see Frederick E. Brenk, 'Most Beautiful and Divine: Graeco-Romans (especially Plutarch) and Paul on Love and Marriage', *Biblical and New Testament Genres and Themes in the Context of Greco-Roman Literature* (ed. David E. Aune and Frederick E. Brenk; NovTSup; Leiden: Brill, forthcoming). I am grateful to him for making this essay available to me.

103 *Secret Book according to John* 2.26–9.24; 24.8–32; 24.34–25.5; 29.14–30.9. In a forthcoming article, 'Reading Sex and Gender in the *Secret Revelation of John*', *J ECS* 19 (2011), Karen L. King has articulated both the contrast in the gendered representations between the upper and lower world and the mimetic relationship between those of the upper world and those of Seth and his descendants; I am grateful to her for making it available to me.

104 April D. DeConick, 'The Great Mystery of Marriage: Sex and Conception in Ancient Valentinian Traditions', *VC* 57 (2003) 307–42. For a brief discussion of Valentinus, the Valentinians, and their interpretation of Paul, see Pervo, *Making of Paul*, 210–19.

105 DeConick, 'Mystery of Marriage', 335.

106 On Valentinus as a Christian theologian, see Christoph Marksches, *Valentinus Gnosticus? Untersuchungen zur valentinianischen Gnosis mit einem Kommentar zu den Fragmenten*

from the world...but how radical a change in lifestyle he expected is unclear'.<sup>107</sup> He recommended self-control, especially over 'improper desires', and taught that the right mental disposition would lead to a lifestyle 'characterized by stability, inner freedom', and peace of mind.<sup>108</sup> There is no evidence I know of to indicate that he forbade or even discouraged marriage. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that he evaluated it positively. The concluding lines of his work *Summer Harvest* read as follows: 'Crops rushing forth from the deep/A babe rushing forth from the womb'.<sup>109</sup> Christoph Marksches and Ismo Dunderberg agree that these lines may be understood literally: 'the divine order can be seen in the fruits of matter and equally in pregnancy of mothers and in fertility of the earth'.<sup>110</sup> Clement of Alexandria supports this conclusion, stating, 'The sect of Valentinus justify physical union from heaven from divine emanations, and approve of marriage'.<sup>111</sup>

The author of 1 Timothy justifies marriage on different grounds: his reading of the early chapters of Genesis and his selective appropriation of the teaching of Paul. He justifies the marriage of the 'younger widows' or virgins on practical grounds as a means of limiting the spread of teaching with which he disagrees. An effect of all this is his construction of an identity for his audience. This identity involves a positive evaluation of the practice of marriage. He thus shares a value with Plutarch and probably with Valentinus as well.

Like Plutarch, the Pastoral Paul also advocates female modesty, the silence of women in public, and their subordination to men. They differ in their justifications, but agree in practice. Plutarch appeals to Theano, the wife of a famous philosopher, and to the sculpture of Pheidias. The author of 1 Timothy explicitly claims the authority of Paul for this teaching by writing in his name and implicitly by allusion to the letters of Paul and to 'the Law', that is, Genesis. The reference, however, to those who 'forbid marriage' and the strong emphasis on marriage in 1

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*Valentins* (WUNT 65; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992). See also Layton, *Gnostic Scriptures*, 217–22.

<sup>107</sup> Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism*, 45.

<sup>108</sup> Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism*, 45.

<sup>109</sup> Translation from Layton, *Gnostic Scriptures*, 248.

<sup>110</sup> Marksches, *Valentinus*, 246–7; Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism*, 72. The quotation is Dunderberg's translation of a statement by Marksches (247).

<sup>111</sup> Clement *Stromateis* 3.1.1.1; translation from Ferguson, *Stromateis Books One to Three*, 256. See also Ptolemy's *Letter to Flora* 33.5.13–14, where it is implied that at least some Valentinians practice physical fasts, as a reminder of the true fast, which consists of abstinence from evil deeds. The *Treatise on the Resurrection (Epistle to Rheginus)* states that practicing many kinds of continence leads to release from this element (the body) and possibly from reincarnation (Layton, *Gnostic Scriptures*, 324 n. h). It is not clear exactly what kinds of practices are meant (49, lines 26–36). I am grateful to Ismo Dunderberg for bringing the last two references to my attention.

Timothy make most sense if the letter was written, at least in part, in conscious opposition to Marcion.

The rhetoric in 1 Timothy advocating practices for women involving dress and adornment, silence and subordination rather than leadership, and marriage rather than sexual continence implies a social space in which the autonomy of women, including control of their own bodies, is severely limited. This social space that limits options for women is also a polemical space aimed at curtailing the spread of Marcion's movement. The Pastoral Paul focused on practices opposed to those associated with the definition of the Jewish scriptures as non-Christian and a theology involving a God other than the creator.