

READING WOMEN
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES

SBL Press

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An Encyclopaedia of Exegesis and Cultural History

Edited by Charlotte Methuen, Irmtraud Fischer,
Mercedes Navarro Puerto, and Adriana Valerio

Volume 2.2: Reading Women
in the New Testament Epistles

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Edited by

Korinna Zamfir and Uta Poplutz

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Foreword to the English Edition

This volume emerged from the conference on Reading Women in the New Testament Epistles: The Social and Ecclesial Implications of Biblical Interpretation, hosted by the Centre for Biblical Studies of Babeş-Bolyai University (Cluj, Romania) from 21 to 23 June 2019. It is published within *The Bible and Women: An Encyclopedia of Exegesis and Cultural History*, a large international project that involved more than three hundred scholars coming from different language areas and cultural contexts. The volume focuses on the portrayal of women and of the female condition, on the rhetoric and theology of gender in epistolary literature. It follows on the volumes on women in the Torah (edited by Irmtraud Fischer and Mercedes Navarro Puerto), in the prophetic books (edited by L. Juliana Claassens and Irmtraud Fischer), and in the gospels (edited by Mercedes Navarro Puerto and Marinella Perroni).

Most of the contributions published in the present volume were presented at the conference. The completion of the project was delayed by several difficulties related to the pandemic and to other adverse circumstances but also because it required inviting further scholars to address some themes and topics not covered at the conference.

Beyond the authors, several people were engaged in the project and in the completion of the volume. Thanks are due first to the collaborators of the Centre of Biblical Studies in Cluj. Korinna Zamfir's colleagues and team were involved in organizing the conference, an event that provided opportunities for enriching scholarly and cultural exchanges in a warm atmosphere. We thus acknowledge the contribution of Lehel Lészai, director of the center; Stelian Paşca-Tuşa and the team of doctoral students from the Orthodox Theological Faculty; Tamás Réti, secretary of the vice-rector of the Babeş-Bolyai University; and foremost Hilda Marczinkó, secretary of the Centre for Biblical Studies, a dedicated colleague with careful attention to detail, ready to solve everyone's problems.

Thanks are also due to Dennis Slabaugh and Annette Bourland Hui-zenga, who carefully checked the English papers written by nonnative speakers. Daniela Praust, secretary at the chair of New Testament in Wuppertal, took care of the administration of third-party funds and other organizational work.

Special thanks are due to the Herbert Haag Foundation for Freedom in the Church, to Renovabis, and to the Porticus Foundation. Their generous financial support made possible the organization of the conference and the publication of this volume.

Uta Poplutz and Korinna Zamfir

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Abbreviations

1 Clem.	1 Clement
1 En.	1 Enoch
1 Tars.	Dio Chrysostom, <i>Tarsica Prior</i> (Or. 33)
1QS	Community Rule
11QT	Temple Scroll
2 Clem.	2 Clement
3 Macc	3 Maccabees
4 Macc	4 Maccabees
4Q502	Ritual of Marriage
4QMMT	Miqṣat Ma'asê ha-Torah
A	Codex Alexandrinus
A.J.	Josephus, <i>Antiquitates judaicae</i>
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	Freedman, David Noel, ed. <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
ABG	Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte
Abr.	Philo, <i>De Abrahamo</i>
AcBib	Academia Biblica
Acts Thecl.	Acts of Thecla
Acts Thom.	Acts of Thomas
Aen.	Servius, <i>In Vergilii Aeneidem Commentarii</i>
AIRF	Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae
AJAH	<i>American Journal of Ancient History</i>
Alex.	Plutarch, <i>Alexander</i>
Amat.	Plutarch, <i>Amatorius</i>
An seni	Plutarch, <i>An seni respublica gerenda sit</i>
Anab.	Xenophon, <i>Anabasis</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
Andr.	Euripides, <i>Andromache</i>
Ann.	Tacitus, <i>Annales</i>

ANRW	Temporini, Hildegard, and Wolfgang Haase, eds. <i>Principat</i> . Part 2 of <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> . Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972–.
AnSt	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>
Ant.	Plutarch, <i>Antonius</i> ; Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i>
Ant. rom.	Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>Antiquitates romanae</i>
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
Anth. pal.	Anthologia palatina
Apoc. Mos.	Apocalypse of Moses
Apol.	Apuleius, <i>Apologia (Pro se de magia)</i>
Apoph. Rom.	Plutarch, <i>Apophthegmata Romana</i>
Apot.	Hephaestion of Thebes, <i>Apoteleismatika</i>
ArRep	<i>Archaeological Reports</i>
ASE	<i>Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi</i>
AsTJ	<i>Asbury Theological Journal</i>
Aug.	Suetonius, <i>Divus Augustus</i>
B	Codex Vaticanus
b.	Babylonian Talmud
Bapt.	Tertullian, <i>De baptismo</i>
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BCH	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
BCT	<i>Bible & Critical Theory</i>
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BDK	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BEHER	<i>Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études: Sciences religieuses</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovanien-sium
BF	Die Bibel und die Frauen
BGU 4	Staatlich Museen zu Berlin. <i>Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden</i> . Vol. 4. Berlin, 1912.
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie

<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BibTS	Biblich-Theologische Studien
<i>Bijdr</i>	<i>Bijdragen: Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie</i>
<i>B.J.</i>	Josephus, <i>Bellum judaicum</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BK	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
BKP	Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie
BL	Berichtigungsliste der griechischen Papyrusurkunden aus Ägypten
BN	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BTS	Biblical Tools and Studies
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZABR	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZSup	Biblische Zeitschrift Supplements
C	Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus
<i>C. Ap.</i>	Josephus, <i>Contra Apionem</i>
ca.	circa
<i>Carm.</i>	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Carmina</i>
<i>Cat. Maj.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Cato Major</i>
<i>Catech.</i>	Cyril of Jerusalem, <i>Catecheses</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CCS	Cincinnati Classical Studies
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina
CCSS	Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture
CD	Damascus Document
CG	<i>Cahiers Glotz</i>
CHSRB	<i>CHS Research Bulletin</i>
CHJ	The Cambridge History of Judaism
CIG	Boeckh, August, ed. <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> . 4 vols. Berlin, 1828–1877.

<i>CIIP</i>	Cotton, Hannah M., et al. <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae</i> . Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010–.
<i>CIJ</i>	Frey, Jean-Baptiste. <i>Corpus inscriptionum Judaicarum</i> . 2 vols. Rome: Pontifical Institute of Christian Archaeology, 1936–1952.
<i>CIL</i>	Mommsen, Th., ed. <i>Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum</i> . Berlin: Reimerum, 1863–.
<i>Cist.</i>	Plautus, <i>Cistellaria</i>
<i>Civ.</i>	Augustine, <i>De civitate Dei</i>
<i>ClAnt</i>	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
<i>Clio</i>	<i>Clio: Women, Gender, History</i>
<i>ClQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>Cod. theod.</i>	Codex theodosianus
<i>Comm. Jo.</i>	Origen, <i>Commentarii in evangelium Joannis</i>
<i>Comp.</i>	Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>De compositione verborum</i>
<i>Comp. Lyc. Num.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Comparatio Lycurgi et Numae</i>
<i>Comp. med.</i>	Galen, <i>De compositione medicamentorum</i>
<i>Congr.</i>	Philo, <i>De congressu eruditionis gratia</i>
<i>Conj. praec.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Conjugalia Praecepta</i>
<i>Const. ap.</i>	Constitutiones apostolicae
<i>Contempl.</i>	Philo, <i>De vita contemplativa</i>
<i>Copt.</i>	Coptic
<i>Coron.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De corona militis</i>
<i>CPSSup</i>	Cambridge Philological Society supplement
<i>Crosby Schøyen MS</i>	193 Goehring, James E., ed. <i>The Crosby-Schøyen Codex, MS 193 in the Schøyen Collection</i> . CSCO 521. Leuven: Peeters, 1990.
<i>Cyr.</i>	Xenophon, <i>Cyropaedia</i>
<i>D</i>	Codex Claromontanus
<i>d.</i>	died
<i>DCH</i>	Clines, David J. A., ed. <i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i> . 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 1993–2014.
<i>Def. orac.</i>	Plutarch, <i>De defectu oraculorum</i>
<i>Deipn.</i>	Athenaeus, <i>Deipnosophistae</i>
<i>Descr.</i>	Pausanias, <i>Graeciae descriptio</i>
<i>Dial.</i>	Justin, <i>Dialogus cum Tryphone</i>
<i>Dial.</i>	Tacitus, <i>Dialogus de oratoribus</i>
<i>Diatr.</i>	Musonius Rufus, <i>Diatribai</i>

Did. apost.	Didascalía apostolorum
<i>Diss. phil.</i>	Maximus Tyrus, <i>Dissertationes philosophicae</i>
DMAHA	Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology
DNP	Cancik, Hubert, and Helmuth Schneider, eds. <i>Der neue Pauly: Enzyklopädie der Antike</i> . Stuttgart: Metzler, 1996.
DNTB	Evans, Craig A., and Stanley E. Porter, eds. <i>Dictionary of New Testament Background</i> . Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2000.
<i>Doctr. chr.</i>	Augustine, <i>De doctrina christiana</i>
<i>Dom. felic.</i>	Callicratidas, <i>De domus felicitatis</i>
EAPR	<i>East Asian Pastoral Review</i>
EC	<i>Early Christianity</i>
EH	Europäische Hochschulschriften
EJWS	<i>European Journal of Women's Studies</i>
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>El.</i>	Euripides, <i>Electra</i>
<i>Eleg.</i>	Propertius, <i>Elegiae</i>
<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistula(e)</i>
<i>Epigr.</i>	Martial, <i>Epigrammata</i>
<i>Epitr.</i>	Menander, <i>Epitrepontes</i>
<i>Epod.</i>	Horace, <i>Epodi</i>
EPRO	Etudes préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain
<i>Eq.</i>	Aristophanes, <i>Equites</i>
ET	English translation
<i>Eth. Nic.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Ethica Nicomachea</i>
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
EWNT	Balz, Horst, and Gerhard Schneider, eds. <i>Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> . 3 vols. 2nd ed. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1990–1993.
<i>Fact. dict.</i>	Valerius Maximus, <i>Facta et dicta memorabilia</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FB	Forschung zur Bibel
FKD	Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte
<i>Flacc.</i>	Philo, <i>In Flaccum</i>
<i>Flor.</i>	Stobaeus, <i>Florilegium</i>

frag(s).	fragment(s)
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>Fug.</i>	Philo, <i>De fuga et inventione</i>
<i>Galb.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Galba</i>
<i>Gen. an.</i>	Aristotle, <i>De generatione animalium</i>
<i>Geogr.</i>	Strabo, <i>Geographica</i>
<i>Gorg.</i>	Plato, <i>Gorgias</i>
Gos. Thom.	NHC II 2 Gospel of Thomas
GR	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
Guarducci	Guarducci, M., ed. <i>Epigrafia greca</i> . 4 vols. Rome, 1967–1978.
<i>Gyn.</i>	Soranos, <i>Gynaecology</i>
H	Codex Hierosolymitanos
HABES	Heidelberger Althistorische Beiträge und Epigraphische Studien
<i>Haer.</i>	Irenaeus, <i>Adversus haereses</i>
HBS	History of Biblical Studies
<i>Helv.</i>	Seneca, <i>Ad Helviam</i>
<i>Her.</i>	Philo, <i>Quis rerum divinarum heres sit</i>
<i>Heracl.</i>	Euripides, <i>Heraclidae</i>
Herm. Vis.	Shepherd of Hermas, Vision(s)
<i>Hipp. maj.</i>	Plato, <i>Hippias major</i>
<i>Hist</i>	<i>Historia</i>
<i>Hist.</i>	Cassius Dio, <i>Historia romana</i> ; Herodotus, <i>Historiae</i> ; Tacitus, <i>Historiae</i> ; Thucydides, <i>Historiae</i>
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>Hom. Matt.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homiliae in Matthaëum</i>
HPT	<i>History of Political Thought</i>
HSCP	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
HThKNT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
HUT	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie
<i>Hymn Dem.</i>	Homer, <i>Hymn to Demeter</i>
<i>Hypoth.</i>	Philo, <i>Hypothetica</i>
I	Codex Freerianus
IAAR	IAA Reports

- I.Aphrodisias 2007 Reynolds, J., C. Roueché, and G. Bodard, eds. *Inscriptions of Aphrodisias*. 2007. <https://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/insaph/iaph2007/>
- IApamBith Corsten, T., ed. *Die Inschriften von Apameia (Bithynien) und Pylai*. Bonn: Habelt, 1987.
- IBC Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
- ICC International Critical Commentary
- ICG Breytenbach, C., and C. Zimmermann, eds. *Inscriptiones Christianae Graecae*. <https://icg.uni-kiel.de>.
- ICS *Illinois Classical Studies*
- IEleusis Clinton, Kevin. *Eleusis: The Inscriptions on Stone; Documents of the Sanctuary of the Two Goddesses and Public Documents of the Deme*. 2 vols. Athens: The Archaeological Society at Athens, 2005–2008.
- IEph Wankel, Hermann, et al., eds. 1979–1984. *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*. 8 vols. Bonn: Habelt.
- IErythr Engelman, Helmut, and Reinhold Merkelbach. *Die Inschriften von Erythrai und Klazomenai*. 2 vols. IGSK 1–2. Bonn: Habelt, 1972–1973.
- IG Lewis, David, et al., eds. *Inscriptiones Graecae*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1873–.
- Ign. Phld. Ignatius, *To the Philadelphians*
- IGRR Cagnat, René, et al. *Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes*. 3 vols. Paris: Leroux, 1911–1927.
- IGUR Moretti, L. *Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae*. Rome: Istituto Italiano per la Storia Antica, 1968–1990.
- IJO Noy, David, and Walter Ameling. *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis*. 3 vols. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004.
- IKyme Engelman, Helmut. *Die Inschriften von Kyme*. IGSK 5. Bonn: Habelt, 1976.
- Il. Homer, *Ilias*
- ILCV Diehl, Ernst, Jacques Moreau, and Henri Irénée Marrou. *Inscriptiones Latinae christianae veteres*. Berlin: Weidmannos, 1925–1967.
- ILS Dessau, H. *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*. Berlin: Weidmannos, 1892–1916.
- IMagnMai Kern, Otto. *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander*. Berlin: Spemann, 1900.

<i>Inst.</i>	Quintilian, <i>Institutio oratoria</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
IOPSE	Latyshev, B., ed. <i>Inscriptiones Tyrae, Olbiae, Chersonesi Tauricae, aliorum locorum a Danubio usque ad regnum Bosporanum</i> . 2nd ed. Saint Petersburg, 1916.
<i>Ios.</i>	Philo, <i>De Iosepho</i>
IPerge	Şahin, Sencer. <i>Die Inschriften von Perge</i> . 2 vols. IGSK 54, 61. Bonn: Habelt, 1999–2004.
IPriene	von Gaertringen, Friedrich Hiller. <i>Inschriften von Priene</i> . Berlin: De Gruyter, 1906.
ISACR	Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Culture and Religion
ISelge	Nollé, Johannes, and Friedel Schindler. <i>Die Inschriften von Selge</i> . IGSK 37. Bonn: Habelt, 1991.
ISmyrna	Petzl, Gorg. <i>Die Inschriften von Smyrna</i> . 2 vols. IGSK 23–24. Bonn: Habelt, 1982–1990.
<i>Itin. Alex.</i>	Pseudo-Callisthenes, <i>Itinerarium Alexandri</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JdI</i>	<i>Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts</i>
<i>JECH</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian History</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>Jejun.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De jejuniis adversus psychicos</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JFSR</i>	<i>Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion</i>
<i>JGRChJ</i>	<i>Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JIGRE</i>	Horbury, William, and David Noy. <i>Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt, with an index of the Jewish Inscriptions of Cyrenaica</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
<i>JIWE</i>	Noy, David. <i>Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe</i> . 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993–1995.
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JÖAI</i>	<i>Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen Instituts</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JS</i>	<i>Journal des savants</i>

<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSNTSup</i>	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JTECL</i>	Jewish Traditions in Early Christian Literature
<i>KEK</i>	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament
<i>Ketub.</i>	Ketubbot
<i>l(l).</i>	line(s)
<i>L'Homme</i>	<i>L'Homme: Europäische Zeitschrift für Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft</i>
<i>LA</i>	<i>Liber Annuus</i>
<i>LAE</i>	Life of Adam and Eve
<i>LE</i>	<i>L'Année Epigraphique</i>
<i>LeadQ</i>	<i>The Leadership Quarterly</i>
<i>Leg.</i>	Plato, <i>Leges</i>
<i>Lesh</i>	<i>Leshonênu: A Journal for the Study of the Hebrew Language and Cognate Subjects</i>
[<i>Lib. ed.</i>]	Plutarch, <i>De liberis educandis</i>
<i>LNTS</i>	Library of New Testament Studies
<i>LSJ</i>	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
<i>LXX</i>	Septuagint
<i>Lyc.</i>	Hyperides, <i>Pro Lycophron</i>
<i>Lyc.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Lycurgus</i>
<i>m.</i>	Mishnah
<i>Marc.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Adversus Marcionem</i>
<i>MBAH</i>	<i>Münstersche Beiträge zur Antiken Handelsgeschichte</i>
<i>Meg.</i>	Megillah
<i>Merc. cond.</i>	Lucian, <i>De mercede conductis</i>
<i>Metam.</i>	Apuleius, <i>Metamorphoses</i>
<i>Mid.</i>	Middot
<i>MMAB</i>	<i>The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin</i>

MnemSup	Mnemosyne: A Journal of Classical Studies Supplements
<i>Mon.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De monogamia</i>
<i>Mor.</i>	Basil, <i>Moralia</i>
<i>Mor.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Moralia</i>
MS	manuscript
MSAW	Münchener Studien zur Alten Welt
<i>Mul. mod.</i>	Phintys, <i>De mulierum modestia</i>
<i>Mulier. virt.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Mulierum virtutes</i>
NA ²⁷	<i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , Nestle-Aland, 27th ed.
NA ²⁸	<i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , Nestle-Aland, 28th ed.
NABR	New American Bible, Revised Edition
<i>Nat. an.</i>	Aelian, <i>De natura animalium</i>
<i>Nat. d.</i>	Cicero, <i>De natura deorum</i>
NEASB	<i>Near Eastern Archaeological Society Bulletin</i>
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
<i>NewDocs</i>	<i>New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity</i>
NHC	Nag Hammadi Codex
NHMS	Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIV	New International Version
<i>Noct. att.</i>	Aulus Gellius, <i>Noctes atticae</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to <i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTL	New Testament Library
NTOA	<i>Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OCM	Oxford Classical Monographs
<i>Oct.</i>	Minucius Felix, <i>Octavius</i>
<i>Od.</i>	Homer, <i>Odyssea</i>
<i>Oec.</i>	Xenophon, <i>Oeconomicus</i>
[<i>Oec.</i>]	Aristotle, <i>Oeconomica</i>
<i>Op.</i>	Hesiod, <i>Opera et dies</i>
<i>Opif.</i>	Philo, <i>De opificio mundi</i>
<i>Or.</i>	Aelius Aristides, <i>Orationes</i> ; Tertullian, <i>De oratione</i>
<i>OT</i>	<i>Open Theology</i>
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuch-Kommentar

- OTP* Charlesworth, James H., ed. *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985.
- P¹³ Papyrus 13. British Library, London, and Egyptian Museum, Cairo
- P³⁰ Papyrus 30. Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium
- P³² Papyrus 32. John Rylands University Library, Manchester, UK
- P⁴⁶ Papyrus 46 (Papyrus Chester Beatty II). Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, and University of Michigan Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan
- P⁷² Papyrus 72 (Papyrus Bodmer VII–VIII). Bodmer Library, Cologny, Switzerland; Vatican Apostolic Library, Vatican City
- P⁹² Papyrus 92. Egyptian Museum, Cairo
- P⁸¹ Papyrus 81. Property S. Daris, Trieste, Italy
- P⁹⁹ Papyrus 99. Chester Beatty Library, Dublin
- P¹²⁵ Papyrus 125. Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library, Oxford University, Oxford, UK
- P¹³² Papyrus 132. Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library, Oxford University, Oxford, UK
- P¹³³ Papyrus 133. Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library, Oxford University, Oxford, UK
- Pan.* Epiphanius, *Panarion*; Pliny the Younger, *Panegyricus*
- P.Ant. Roberts, Colin H., John W. B. Barns, and Henrik Ziliacius, eds. *The Antinoopolis Papyri*. 3 vols. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1950–1967.
- PaR* *Panta Rhei*
- Pat.* Tertullian, *De patientia*
- P.Euphrates Feissel, D., and J. Gascoü. “Documents d’archives romains inédits du Moyen Euphrates.” *Journal des Savants* (1995): 65–119; (1997): 3–57; (2000): 157–208.
- P.Flor. Vitelli, Girolamo, and Domenico Comparetti, eds. *Papiri greco-egizii, Papiri Fiorentini*. 3 vols. Milan: Hoepli, 1906–1915.
- PG Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed. *Patrologia Graeca*. 161 vols. Paris: Migne, 1857–1866.
- PH Packard Humanities Institute Searchable Greek Inscriptions, <https://epigraphy.packhum.org>

- Phaedr.* Plato, *Phaedrus*
- P.Haun. Larsen, Tage, et al., eds. *Papyri Graecae Haunienses*. 4 vols. Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1942; Bonn: Habelt, 1981–1985; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2017.
- P.Heid. Siegmann, E., et al., eds. *Veröffentlichungen aus der Heidelberger Papyrussammlung*. 11 vols. Heidelberg: Winter, 1956–2014; Heidelberg: Institut für Papyrologie, Universität Heidelberg, 2021.
- Philops.* Lucian, *Philopseudes*
- PKNT Papyrologische Kommentare zum Neuen Testament
- PL Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed. *Patrologia Latina*. 217 vols. Paris, 1844–1855.
- P.Mich. Edgar, C. C., et al., eds. *Michigan Papyri*. 21 vols. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1931–2018.
- P.Mil.Vogl. Vogliano, Achille. *Papiri della Università degli Studi di Milano*. 8 vols. Milan: Cisalpino, 1937–2001.
- Pol.* Aristotle, *Politica*
- Pomp.* Plutarch, *Pompeius*
- P.Oxy. Grenfell, B. P., et al., eds. *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. 87 vols. London: Exploration Society, 1898–2023.
- P.Oxy.Hels. Zilliaccus, Henrik, and Suomen Tiedeseura, eds. *Fifty Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. Helsinki: Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters, 1979.
- Praem.* Philo, *De praemiis et poenis*
- Praescr.* Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum*
- Prax.* Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean*
- Presb* *Presbyterion*
- PriscPap* *Priscilla Papers*
- Procat.* Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procatechesis*
- Prov.* Seneca, *De providentia*
- P.Ryl. Hunt, Arthur S., et al., eds. *Catalogue of the Greek and Latin Papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester*. 4 vols. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1911–1952.
- Ps.-Phoc. Pseudo-Phocylides
- P.Schøyen Pintaudi, Rosario, and Diletta Minutoli, eds. *Papyri Graecae Schøyen*. 2 vols. Florence: Gonnelli, 2005, 2010.

<i>PsychR</i>	<i>Psychologische Rundschau</i>
PTMS	Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series
<i>Pud.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De pudicitia</i>
P.Yadin	Lewis, Naphtali, et al., eds. <i>The Documents from the Bar Kochba Period in the Cave of Letters</i> . 2 vols. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1989, 2002.
QD	Quaestiones Disputatae
QG	Philo, <i>Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesin</i>
Qidd.	Qiddushin
Rab.	Rabbah
RAC	Klauser, Theodor, et al., eds. <i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i> . Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1950–.
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RCM	Routledge Classical Monographs
RE	<i>Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche</i>
REG	<i>Revue des études grecques</i>
<i>RelSRev</i>	<i>Religious Studies Review</i>
<i>Res.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De resurrectione carnis</i>
<i>Resp.</i>	Plato, <i>Respublica</i>
<i>RevistB</i>	<i>Revista biblica</i>
RIDA	<i>Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité</i>
RMP	<i>Rheinisches Museum für Philologie</i>
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
RSECW	Routledge Studies in the Early Christian World
<i>Rust.</i>	Columella, <i>De re rustica</i>
RVV	Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten
RWAW	<i>Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften sub verbo</i> , under the word
s.v.	
S&K	<i>Sprache & Kognition</i>
<i>Sam.</i>	Menander, <i>Samia</i>
<i>Sat.</i>	Juvenal, <i>Satirae</i>
<i>Satyr.</i>	Patronius, <i>Satyrice</i>
SBFLA	<i>Studii Biblici Franciscani Liber Annus</i>
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SCI	<i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i>
<i>Scorp.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Scorpiace</i>
SDSH	Scientia Danica Series Humanistica

SEG	Hondius, Jacob E., et al. <i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> . 50 vols. Amsterdam 2003–.
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
Sept.	Aeschylus, <i>Septem contra Thebas</i>
SLR	<i>Stanford Law Review</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
SocRel	<i>Sociology of Religion</i>
SP	Sacra Pagina
Spec.	Philo, <i>De specialibus legibus</i>
SS	<i>Sacra Scripta</i>
StA	Studienhefte zur Altertumswissenschaft
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StL	Storia e letteratura
Strom.	Clement of Alexandria, <i>Stromateis</i>
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SWR	Studies in Women and Religion
Symp.	Plato, <i>Symposium</i>
t.	Tosefta
T. Iss.	Testament of Issachar
T. Jos.	Testament of Joseph
T. Levi	Testament of Levi
T. Naph.	Testament of Naphtali
T. Reu.	Testament of Reuben
T. Sol.	Testament of Solomon
TAM	<i>Tituli Asiae Minoris</i> . 5 vols. Vienna, 1920–1944
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
TAPS	Transactions of the American Philosophical Society
TBei	<i>Theologische Beiträge</i>
Test. Dom.	Testamentum Domini Nostri
Tetr.	Ptolemy, <i>Tetrabiblos</i>
TextMin 41	Textus Minores. Pleket, H. W., ed. <i>Texts on the Social History of the Greek World</i> . Vol. 2 of <i>Epigraphica</i> . Leiden: Brill, 1969.
Tg. Ps.-J.	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
Theaet.	Plato, <i>Theaetetus</i>
ThKNT	Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
Ti. C. Gracch.	Plutarch, <i>Tiberius et Caius Gracchus</i>
Tib.	Suetonius, <i>Tiberius</i>

<i>Tim.</i>	Plato, <i>Timaeus</i>
<i>Tit.</i>	Ulpian, <i>Tituli</i>
TK	Texte und Kommentare
TQ	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>Trad. ap.</i>	Hippolytus, <i>Traditio apostolica</i>
Tri. Trac.	NHC I 5 Tripartite Tractate
<i>Tro.</i>	Euripides, <i>Troades</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TWNT	Kittel, Gerhard, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. <i>Theologische Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> . Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1932–1979.
TWQ	Fabry, Heinz-Josef, and Ulrich Dahmen, eds. <i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zu den Qumrantexten</i> . 3 vols. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2011–2016.
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
TzF	Texte zur Forschung
UCLF	<i>The University of Chicago Legal Forum</i>
<i>Univ. nat.</i>	Ocellus, <i>De universi natura</i>
UPZ	Wilcken, U., ed. <i>Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit (ältere Funde)</i> . Berlin, 1927–1957.
<i>Urb. cond.</i>	Livy, <i>Ab urbe condita</i>
US	<i>Una Sancta</i>
<i>Usu part.</i>	Galen, <i>De usu partium corporis humani</i>
<i>Uxor.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Ad uxorem</i>
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
<i>Virg.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De virginibus velandis</i>
<i>Virt.</i>	Philo, <i>De virtutibus</i>
<i>Vit. Const.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Vita Constantini</i>
<i>Vit. phil.</i>	Diogenes Laertius, <i>Vitae philosophorum</i>
<i>Vit. Pyth.</i>	Iamblichus, <i>De Vita Pythagorica</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
WW	<i>Word and World</i>
y.	Jerusalem Talmud
YCS	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>
ZGB	Zürcher Grundrisse zur Bibel

ZNT	<i>Zeitschrift für Neues Testament</i>
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
Zutot	<i>Zutot: Perspectives on Jewish Culture</i>

SBL Press

Introducing Women in the New Testament Letters

Korinna Zamfir and Uta Poplutz

The essays in this volume propose a critical reading of a number of texts in the New Testament letters on women, their status, and gender relations in their cultural, religious, and social context. Due to their importance in the Christian tradition and their normative character, these texts have shaped the life, social condition, and religious practice of women over centuries, as well as the understanding of women's roles in the family and ecclesial community. Some of them have also contributed to the production of stereotypes that have affected the way women are viewed. Because of this, it is important to consider the rhetoric of and theology about gender that these texts espouse.

The volume comprises five sections.

1. Rhetoric and Context

Three essays introduce the topic, addressing the analytical category of gender and discussing the broader Jewish and Greco-Roman social, cultural, and religious context that shaped the life of women during the emergence of Christian communities.

In his "Observations on the Rhetoric of Gender in the Letters," Peter Lampe focuses on the ethics of language and on ancient and contemporary rhetorical standards, discussing five examples from the Corpus Paulinum. He first shows how Paul fails to apply rhetorical principles such as attentiveness to the perspective of the Other and empathy (or, in Ricoeur's words, linguistic hospitality) while imposing his own culturally biased view on dress code (1 Corinthians). Second, he discusses how generic masculine nouns, which in some cases clearly include women, are frequently misread as referring only to men. Third, he examines how the convention of referring to men before women reflects an implicit social

hierarchy. However, at least one example to the contrary (Prisca) shows that women may have also been prominent in early communities. Fourth, Lampe reflects on how women and their activities are often the object of satire and derogatory speech, reflecting misogynistic clichés, notably in the Pastoral Epistles. Such is the treatment of widows in 1 Timothy, of women learning from competing teachers in 2 Timothy, or, repeatedly, of women's speech. Satire is used instead of argument in order to entertain biased male readers and discredit female agency in learning, teaching, and speaking in the *ekklēsia*. This rhetorical silencing of women contrasts women's actual involvement in the life of the communities. This important distinction between prescriptive discourse and reality will be rehearsed in other essays as well.

In "Looking beyond the Topos of the Domestic Woman: Work, Euergetism, and Religious Roles in the Greco-Roman World," Korinna Zamfir surveys women's occupations, euergetism, officeholding, and priesthoods in Greco-Roman contexts, based on epigraphic and papyrological sources and legal provisions. Such public presence challenges traditional discourse that relegates women to the private sphere. Women of lesser means (as most early Christ followers were) engaged in labor and trade or fulfilled some legal and financial responsibilities. In the Greek East, elite women could hold certain magistracies with some informal influence and act as benefactresses. In the West, women were patronesses of cities, associations, or individuals. In both East and West, women could be members, officials, priestesses, or benefactors of private associations. Female priesthoods of public and private cults were widespread; additionally, in the East, female prophets played a significant role at certain sanctuaries. These findings may illuminate cases of women engaged in the early *ekklēsiai*—in prophetic speech, worship, teaching, filling ministry roles, and acting as benefactors—or shed light on the social context in which early Christian women lived.

In "Female Officeholders in Ancient Jewish Synagogues (Mainly Second–Seventh Centuries CE)," Bernadette J. Brooten rehearses and expands the data of her well-known research on Jewish female leaders. Jewish communities are commonly thought to have excluded women from public religious roles and decision making and to even have segregated women from men in synagogues. The sparse data on segregation indicates that such practice was not the rule in the first centuries. Older and more recent evidence shows that women acted as heads of synagogues, elders, mothers of synagogues, priestesses, and benefactors in the Mediterranean

space, from Crete to Asia Minor, from Malta to North Africa and Italy. While the examples are later than the New Testament letters (second–seventh century), they offer a valuable insight into leadership roles performed by women despite conventions regarding gender roles. The evidence challenges the assumption that the titles would have been merely honorific and confirms the agency of women. Euergetism, while embedded in family relationships, was no less important. Leadership roles also indicate that at least some of these women were literate and educated. The records of *hiereiai* leave open the possibility that these women did perform religious functions. Brooten thus shows that the Jewish diaspora was more diverse than previously assumed, women’s decision making included.

2. Women in the Household

New Testament letters commonly envisage women in domestic space, as wives and mothers, on occasion as unmarried girls, as widows or divorcées. This is why the second group of papers discusses women in the household, addressing epistolary texts regulating and on occasion indirectly reflecting their everyday life, their condition of wives and mothers. Papers also address sexuality, marriage and divorce, the condition of old age, and widowhood, as well as specific expectations such as submission, which affected women as wives but often also as slaves. The letters do not address explicitly the social status of these women: they may have been free and able to make some decisions regarding their life and even have an occupation, or perhaps they are implicitly included among the household slaves. But most letters reflect the view that women fulfill their meaningful vocation in the household. This certainly reflects the life of most ancient women. The household codes have had a decisive impact on the Christian understanding of female roles over the centuries.

In “Women and Sexuality,” William R. G. Loader contextualizes several texts from the Corpus Paulinum that deal with female sexuality by addressing their Jewish and Greco-Roman setting. The letters reflect male assumptions about women’s sexuality and reproduction as well as cultural norms related to gender and sexuality (e.g., adornment and sexual attraction). Paul sees heterosexual relations within marriage as belonging to the order of creation. Same-sex relations are shameful and contrary to nature. Sexual intercourse binds man and woman in one body. This makes intercourse with prostitutes and adultery unacceptable. In agreement with Jewish tradition and popular moral teaching, passions are reprehensible.

Paul embraces celibacy because of the proximity of the age to come, which excludes sexuality. However, he does not deny that sexuality and marriage are part of God's creation. Mutuality in marriage concerns conjugal rights and involves love and caring. Some texts express male misconceptions about women's inability to control their sexual desires and their deception and deceitfulness, underpinned by readings of the fall (LXX). Consequently, women are deemed unsuitable for leadership; they should submit to their husbands and embrace motherhood (1 Tim 2).

In "New Testament Letters on Wives, Separation, and Divorce," Christine Gerber and Tanja Forderer focus on New Testament texts that envisage women as wives in a number of normative passages that have shaped the Christian ideal of marriage and family. The authors offer a broad overview of the cultural, religious, and legal background of marriage-related issues, with an eye on the Roman and Jewish context. Whereas Paul addresses individuals who came to the Christ group by personal decision, later letters reflect a socialization in a Christ-believing family. Paul oscillates between a contractual definition of marriage, based on reciprocity, and a hierarchical understanding of marital relations. He understands marriage as competing with dedication to Christ. The household codes of the pseudonymous letters reflect a growing patriarchalization and harmonize marriage with commitment to Christ. Divorce becomes the exception. Mixed marriage may have positive effects. Indissoluble marriage based on mutual fidelity becomes the epitome of the Christian way of life. Women are addressed as subjects whose relationship with God does not depend on the religion of their husband.

In "Mothers in Contexts: Intersections of Letters and Lives," Annette Bourland Huizenga explores the topic of motherhood in the Corpus Paulinum, paying attention both to real mothers behind the texts and to the discourse of the letters. Ancient prescriptive texts on motherhood, notably the Neo-Pythagorean writings, are used to illuminate the discourse of the New Testament letters. While mothers are ubiquitous behind these texts, their lives are increasingly obscured. In the undisputed letters, Paul refers to real women who are mothers and shows awareness of the problems couples/parents faced, without instructing them on mothering/fathering. The discourse of the deutero-Pauline household codes focuses on women as wives and mothers to regulate the relationship between members of the ideal household. Real mothers tend to be effaced. The Pastorals are even more ideological. Women are deemed deficient; they can be saved through childbearing. Mothers' activities in the house-church are regarded as a

source of tension. The lives of real mothers are obliterated. Mothers become negative (Eve) and positive examples (Lois and Eunice). Such discourses obscure the fact that women were active members of various groups; their life involved intersecting paths and roles as wives, mothers, slaves, slaveholders, (wet-)nurses, widows, and members of house-churches.

In “Duties of Age: Old Women in New Testament Letters,” Angela Standhartinger discusses the ambivalent representation and the roles of old(er) women, with special attention to the Pastoral Epistles, within the broader cultural context. In the ancient mentality, women of age who lost their reproductive capacities were deemed worthless; they were often the subject of negative stereotypes. However, age was also regarded as a source of wisdom and respectability. Certain religious roles, such as priesthood, were assigned to older women. Old women had a role in educating the younger generation, a capacity also recognized in Titus 2 (older women as *kalodidaskaloi* of the younger) and 2 Tim 1:5 (Eunice and Lois). In a community based on ties of fictive kinship, the leader was supposed to treat elder women as mothers (1 Tim 5:2). A significant question is that of female presbyters. Relying on Origen’s interpretation of the footwashing in the Gospel of John and his reading of Titus 2:3, Standhartinger argues for the existence of female presbyters, whose duties were difficult to determine and certainly diverse. Their tasks could be similar to those in the list of duties of older widows (1 Tim 5:3–10). Standhartinger also includes here the evidence for female presbyters in late antiquity, assessed earlier by Ute Eisen, Kevin Madigan, and Carolyn Osiek.

In “Sharp Contrasts? 1 Timothy 5 and the Roman-Hellenistic Stereotypes of Widows,” Michael Sommer explores the condition, representation, and roles of widows, focusing notably on 1 Tim 5. Adducing a wealth of ancient legal, literary, and documentary evidence, he challenges the common view that the Christian treatment of widows was significantly superior to that of the Greco-Roman world. He argues that 1 Tim 5 voices not only specific ideals but also stereotypes and traditional expectations about the behavior and role of widows. Widows were expected to remarry, a requirement in agreement with the Augustan legislation on marriage, also attested by papyrological evidence. Young widows’ image as lustful matches ancient clichés; widows are instead required to follow traditional sexual ethical mores. Widows are expected to comply with the ideal of modesty and with conventional female virtues and to avoid the public sphere, and they are reprimanded for meddling in matters that do not concern them. Both widows’ divinely ordained duty to bear and rear

children and their offspring's obligation to provide for them involve the ideas of virtue and honor. Widows are envisaged as passive; they should be instructed and need the protection of the family or of a guardian. At the same time, 1 Timothy acknowledges the spiritual authority of widows married only once, reminiscent of the ideal of the *univirae*.

Maria José Schultz Montalbetti, in "The Submission of Women in the First Letter of Peter," reassesses the exhortation to submission that 1 Peter addresses to slaves (female slaves included) and women in particular, focusing on the overall strategy of the letter. She argues that the call to submission has a subversive and transformative role. While the requirements concerning the appropriate behavior of slaves and women match the patriarchal worldview, traditional ethical expectations, a Greco-Roman honor-based mentality, and conventional female virtues, paradoxically they are meant to transform reality. On the one hand, this attitude defends Christian faith from outsiders' criticism and hostility, avoiding both public and domestic conflicts. On the other hand, the exhortation serves the missionary aim of the letter. Slaves who submit to their masters even as they suffer unfair treatment and wives who submit to their husbands and embrace a modest, self-effacing lifestyle may be able to win over those who exert authority in the household. While submission demanded from (female) slaves does not include sexual availability, the ideal expressed by the author does not necessarily match social realities. In all social and domestic relations, appropriate behavior is a sign of believers' faith in Christ and a mark of their vocation. Submission in the name of freely embraced faith is a sign of courage. The suffering and marginalization of Christ believers, in particular of slaves, is turned into a positive value and acquires a transformative power. Identifying with the suffering Christ becomes a source of strength and hope.

3. Women in the *Ekklēsia*

The genuine letters of Paul show that in the formative period women held significant responsibilities. They had their share in spreading the gospel and filled various roles and ministries in the local communities. These roles were already challenged in second-generation texts claiming the authority of Paul. The pseudonymous Pastoral Epistles have contributed to the silencing of women and to their exclusion from ecclesial roles. The essays of the third section therefore attempt to highlight the roles and ministries of women in the earliest communities. They also explain the

cultural background of the prohibitions and highlight the ideological aspects of certain texts.

In “Toiling Together, Leading Together? Women Apostles, Coworkers, and Hosts of Domestic *Ekklesiai* as Attested in the Pauline Letters,” Dominika Kurek-Chomycz discusses women’s leadership in the earliest communities. While discussing real women named in the letters of Paul, she focuses mainly on the way discourse constructs leadership and on the tension emerging from the different definitions of leadership. Kurek-Chomycz operates with the social-scientific distinction between heroic and postheroic leadership. The latter tends to be fluid, relational, reciprocal, and collaborative, features that are often associated with women but at the same time obscure their contribution. In the earliest communities, marked by the transition from itinerant to resident leadership, patterns of leadership are diverse. The ministries of women known from the letters of Paul reflect this transitional stage. They are, rather, resident, not itinerant, properly speaking, yet in some cases there is a degree of mobility. Some women are apostolic figures. Kurek-Chomycz discusses women’s engagement in missionary activities, focusing on the collaborative pattern of leadership. This reflects the connection between authority and collaborative missionary efforts or the power-with leadership model. The construction of leadership does not focus on gender, either because Paul implicitly acknowledges women’s engagement and their ensuing authority or because he saw gender and marital status as transient. Such circumstances allowed women to work together with men and be acknowledged as fellow workers, apostles, teachers, or hosts of domestic communities.

In “Women as Learners and Teachers in the Corpus Paulinum,” Korinna Zamfir explores the issue of teaching as an expression of authority. Some texts in the Corpus Paulinum, notably 1 Cor 14 and the Pastoral Epistles, voice an ideological discourse: they prohibit women from speaking and teaching in public. Women are envisioned instead as submissive learners. However, women are also envisaged as teaching—in private or in all-female contexts—members of their family or peers. The prohibition on teaching in the *ekklēsia* expresses the widespread conviction, well documented in a wide range of ancient sources, that women were not supposed to speak in public, all the more as public speech and teaching involved an exercise of authority. Women’s speaking/teaching in the community and exercising authority were seen as transgressing the border between the private and the public sphere and appropriating roles commonly assigned to men. The norms voiced in such New Testament texts are reinforced by a

number of ancient topoi (priority, speech as an expression of authority and a male prerogative, or the man as the teacher of the woman). Awareness of this ancient cultural context raises questions about the timeless relevance of such prescriptive texts.

Based on 1 Cor 7 and the Acts of Thecla, in “Virginity and Apostolate: The Example of Paul,” Marinella Perroni and Silvia Zanconato discuss the significance of virginity as a choice available to women that may have provided them with certain authority. Although marriage was acceptable and even a gift of God, Paul asserts his preference for virginity/celebrity. The mutual belonging and lasting commitment involved in marriage diminishes spouses’ dedication to Christ. Virginity is an ideal condition because it ensures free and full belonging to Christ. Paul’s perspective on virginity is androcentric, based on his own experience and aspirations. At the same time, his advice that more believers remain like him also envisions women. Some women could break with conventional roles, think of themselves as belonging to Christ (not to a husband), and dedicate themselves freely and entirely to his service, inspired by the words of the apostle. The virgin Thecla is the most revealing example of a woman like Paul. The Acts of Thecla reflects early traditions about women’s spiritual independence and claim to authority. The countercultural choice expressed in Thecla’s rejection of marriage and sexuality, however, has led to an ambivalent reception. Her virginity is exalted as an ideal of female holiness. Thecla becomes a disciple of Christ, and her chastity enables her to teach, yet her independence coincides with her masculinization. On the other hand, such independence will be censured by male ecclesiastical authorities. Her subsequent domestication points to the same: Thecla will be praised for her chastity, not for her self-determination.

4. The Rhetoric of Gender

Three papers focus on reading strategies, on the meaning and significance assigned to certain texts that tackle women. New Testament letters are usually prescriptive texts that are supposed to have been influential from their inception. In fact, the authority of such texts may not have been so obvious. Certain readings of passages on women may seem unquestionable, but the meaning of some texts may have been different compared to that acquired over the history of their reception.

In “Obedience and Subordination or Equality and Liberation? A Contribution to the History of Transmission of the Letters of Paul,”

Silke Petersen reconsiders the normativity of the pseudonymous letters, which demand the submission and silence of women. She analyzes their weight from the perspective of the transmission of early Christian texts, regardless of their later canonical or apocryphal status, and reflects on the crystallization of the *Corpus Paulinum*. Petersen deconstructs the normativity of these problematic texts, showing that, before the fourth-century stabilization of the canon, the transmission of early Christian texts did not indicate a preference or higher regard for the letters that eventually came to be canonical. Whereas in the New Testament a single text (Gal 3:28) asserts the transcendence of the difference between male and female in Christ, second-century writings such as 2 Clement, the Gospel of the Egyptians, and the Gospel of Thomas advance the same perspective. As the number of extant manuscripts attests, these writings were widely read. Similarly, the Acts of Thecla, which may be seen as a foil to the Pastoral Epistles in what concerns women, were highly popular. Conversely, Colossians and Ephesians did not enjoy higher recognition, and the Pastoral Epistles were poorly attested. Petersen therefore pleads for the importance of reading apocryphal texts, which offer a glimpse at a more diverse early Christianity.

Going beyond the usual contrasting of speech and silence, Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, in "A Polyphony of Silence and Speech? The Ambiguous Female Voices of the *Corpus Paulinum*," proposes a more nuanced discussion about the significance of women's silence and speech. Silence did not necessarily involve powerlessness if women acquired the skills to negotiate boundaries, using modesty and paying attention to the requirements of space and timing. Conversely, female talk could also be a sign of conformity to the dominant male discourse. Kartzow uses the tools of feminist reimagining, intersectionality, and the concept of polyphony to recover a more complex picture of women's agency, of their speech and silence. She also reflects on the ancient gender stereotypes regarding female speech, on its derogatory characterization as gossip, and on the concern to control women's speech. Her case studies reimagine the potential function of the named women who held a certain authority, such as Phoebe, Chloe, or Nympha, and other named and unnamed women whose voices are nonetheless heard only indirectly. But she also pays attention to the women whose voices are muted, the female slaves, strangers, and the disabled. Readers are reminded of the way female voices can disappear in the process of manuscript transmission through the history of reception, as shown by the case of Junia.

In “Circumcised Hagar, the Slave, and Uncircumcised Sarah, the Free Woman: Feminizing the Circumcision Scenario of the Galatian Congregations,” Heidrun E. Mader revises the traditional interpretation of Hagar and Sarah in Gal 4 as allegory of the synagogue and the church, interpreting the text in the logic of the letter and reflecting on the way Hagar must have been seen by first-century readers. Paul dissuades the Galatian gentile Christians from being circumcised and becoming proselytes, since being under the law would mean giving up the freedom received in Christ. By evoking Hagar, the Egyptian slave, Paul conjures up knowledge about the practice of premarital female circumcision in Egypt, mentioned by Philo and confirmed by a second-century BCE papyrus. In light of this knowledge, Hagar, the circumcised Egyptian slave, does not represent the old covenant with Israel but stands for circumcised gentile Christians who have given up their freedom in Christ. This explains why she is contrasted to Sarah, the free, uncircumcised woman. Paul also associates Hagar with the old Jerusalem, living in slavery, and associates the free Sarah, the barren mother who inherits God’s promise and becomes the mother of many (see Isa 54), with the heavenly Jerusalem. Evoking the metaphor of the polis, Paul induces a gender metamorphosis: the feminine concept of the city is applied to male believers belonging to the two groups in the Galatian community—the unfree Christian proselytes and the free, uncircumcised, gentile Christ believers.

5. The Theology of Gender/Gendering Theology

Three essays address gender perspectives on theological issues such as the female metaphors in New Testament God-talk, the reception of decisive texts of the Hebrew Bible in the New Testament, and women as examples of faith.

In “Feminine Characterizations of God: Reading Women in the New Testament Letters,” Beate Kowalski explores the feminine metaphors that complete the predominantly male portrayal of God in the letters. She focuses on three topics: the image of God as midwife who helps deliver a baby and as a mother who gives birth to new life, the feminine features implied in the notion of the likeness of God, and a number of traits that portray the nature of God that is usually perceived as female. These references should be read in their literary and theological (soteriological and pneumatological) as well as sociohistorical context, not as expressions of an early gender-sensitive discourse. Whereas God is commonly described

as father, mother or midwife imagery is only implicit. The image surfaces in Paul's interpretation of his calling (Gal 1:15–16) and in relation to being born anew several times in 1 Peter and in the Johannine letters. The semantic field of the likeness of God (*ὁμοίωσις, εἰκόν*), a notion stemming from Gen 1:26–27 and which includes both male and female aspects, is examined in a number of texts. Female characteristics such as mercy, comfort, compassion, goodness, and lovingkindness are found all through the Corpus Paulinum and in the Catholic Epistles, notably in James.

In “The Woman—From Companion to Deceived Deceiver: The Reception of Genesis 1–3 in the New Testament Letters,” Elisa Estévez López discusses the ways in which the New Testament letters remember, reshape, and use the image of Eve for various rhetorical purposes. The reinterpretations of the story of creation and fall evoke Eve mostly in a negative manner: she is no longer envisaged as companion of the man but as second in the order of creation and thereby inferior to the man (1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy), as deceived by the serpent (1 Timothy and 2 Corinthians), or as a transgressor and a deceiver herself (1 Timothy). The synchronic reading of 1 Corinthians introduces a hierarchical distinction between the sexes; the woman is not envisaged as created in the image of God but as derived from the man. First Corinthians and 1 Timothy use this image of Eve to regulate women's behavior in the community (their appearance in praying and prophesying, their exclusion from teaching) and to subordinate them to the man. First Timothy justifies beliefs about the distinct roles of men and women in the church and society and promotes motherhood as women's way to salvation. Second Corinthians applies the example of the deceived Eve to challenge opponents and warn the community against following false apostles.

In “Woman Power in Faith: Women as Models of Faith in the Letter to the Hebrews,” Miklós Szabó discusses the female characters in Heb 11 as examples of faith, drawing on Jewish traditions of interpretation. He focuses notably on Sarah and Rahab. Szabó argues that Sarah is not envisaged in merely a passive role, subsidiary to that of Abraham, but that she herself is an example of faith. He sustains this reading with references to the Targum Neofiti and Genesis Rabbah. Hebrews styles Sarah rhetorically as a resolute, strong, and independent woman. The letter reinterprets the figure of Rahab, depicting her as an example of faith and hospitality. (Some manuscripts also attempt to exonerate her from the blame of prostitution.) The emphasis on hospitality points to the role of women as hosts and leaders in the earliest communities. Hebrews also alludes to a

number of unnamed, strong female characters: the mother of Moses, the daughter of Pharaoh, and the mother of the seven Maccabean martyrs (in light of 2 Maccabees and 4 Maccabees). Sarah, Rahab, and other unnamed women are envisaged as models of faith, notably through their constancy and endurance.

This comprehensive overview of the main issues regarding women in the New Testament letters sheds light the life of women in the early groups of Christ followers. As the letters are read in their social and cultural context, the contributions provide a better understanding of these normative texts and of the critical issues raised by their interpretation. As such, the volume addresses biblical scholars, scholars of early Christianity or gender studies, as well as a wider readership. It may be of assistance to ministers, teachers of religion, and graduate students who wish to gain a deeper insight into these often controversial texts.

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