

Female God-Fearers in 1 Timothy

Matthias Adrian

Universität Augsburg

matthias.adrian@uni-a.de

Abstract: In this paper, the role of the women addressed in the New Testament's First Letter to Timothy is viewed in the context of ancient reciprocity, using the example of 1 Tim 2:8–15. By adopting the expression θεοσέβεια (piety) female assembly members are asked for their donations which were to be used for the community's benefit while at the same time they are forbidden to teach there publicly. While θεοσέβεια is only mentioned here, an attitude of piety is characteristically rendered by εὐσέβεια in 1 Timothy as well as in the related letters (2 Timothy; Titus). According to Greco-Roman thought piety is accompanied by certain social duties such as giving benefactions to a community. While εὐσέβεια can designate an honorable attitude within the reference field of communal beneficence, the cognate expression θεοσέβεια is often used by Jewish communities to honor Gentile God-fearers for benefactions received. By employing θεοσέβεια in 1 Tim 2:10 with regard to women's duties in the church, the author of the letter addresses women who match the profile of such wealthy female God-fearers. His double goal is to secure their benefactions to support the new male elite materially and at the same time contain the influence they exert through their teaching activities in the community.

1 Reciprocity dynamics in 1 Timothy

The New Testament writings originate in an urban cultural environment that was imbued with the dynamics of civic benefaction. It was not only the euergetism of great patrons and benefactresses on a *polis*-wide scale that shaped what inhabitants of Greco-Roman cities internalized as the rules of social exchange.¹ On every level of their social life they were integrated into structures of patronage and benefaction, e.g., through a multitude of cultic, professional, or neighborhood associations.² In their own dialect, Hellenistic diaspora Jews also communicated in the language of urban reciprocity. Among scholars of Early Christianity, it has been noted for some time that major concepts of “faith” (πίστις) or “grace” (χάρις) are deeply rooted in the cultural framework of beneficence encompassing relations between humans of equal or unequal status and, only gradually different, humans and deities.³

The present paper explores how the author of the First Letter to Timothy invokes cultural scripts from the sphere of ancient reciprocity to communicate his concerns about

¹ On euergetism, see Veyne, *Le Pain et le Cirque*.

² Cf. Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 231–239; 278–290.

³ See the seminal works of Morgan, *Roman Faith on πίστις/fides*, and Barclay, *Paul and the Gift on χάρις*.

certain female community members. It will be argued that these women are pagan God-fearers who support Jewish itinerant teachers both economically and by spreading their views in the congregation. The author of 1 Timothy is at pains to contain the influence of these women while at the same time trying to redirect their resources to support matters of the *ekklēsia*, among others to destitute widows and male resident officials.

Some preliminary remarks on 1 Timothy: It is assumed that the author is addressing a (concrete or typified) Christian assembly living as a minority in a Greco-Roman urban environment. Unfortunately, there is no consensus among scholars even on the fundamental questions concerning the date, place and authorship of this text. For quite a long time the view prevailed that 1 Timothy, along with 2 Timothy and Titus, belonged to the so-called Pastoral Epistles (subsequently PE), written pseudepigraphically in the name of the apostle Paul around 100 CE by an unknown author at an unknown place, probably somewhere in Asia Minor or Greece.⁴ However, this consensus has been challenged from different sides. While the voices that want to attribute the pastoral letters to the “real” Paul, on the basis of his self-introduction in the respective *salutationes*, have become louder again, others date the texts well into the first half of the 2nd century CE. Recently, Jens Herzer suggested that 2 Timothy and the Epistle to Titus should be attributed to the historical Paul, while 1 Timothy should be classified as pseudepigraphical.⁵ If Herzer’s view is accepted, the idea of a coherent Corpus Pastorale would have to be abandoned.

Although it is necessary to address these fundamental issues when presenting a paper on 1 Timothy, we cannot enter in a detailed discussion here. For this reason, the main argument will be layed out on the basis of this letter alone. Nevertheless, the other two texts traditionally included in the PE, 2 Timothy and Titus, are occasionally considered with a sideways glance. References to the PE or even the *Corpus Pastorale* are made while bearing in mind the provisos mentioned above. The same applies for the author who may be called “Paul” here and there for the sake of variety, acknowledging the uncertainty regarding his actual authorship by putting the name in quotation marks.

Turning to the topic of this paper, outlined above, a central concept in ancient reciprocity is *εὐσέβεια* (“godliness”), a term the *Corpus Pastorale* makes ample use of: 13 of the New Testament’s 22 uses of *εὐσεβ-*vocabulary occur in these three letters. According to Angela Standhartinger, the use of *εὐσέβεια* expresses the willingness to adapt to a conservative *zeitgeist*.⁶ She argues that the PE take up a revived ideal of imperial

⁴ Cf. Oberlinner, *1 Tim*, XXI–L.

⁵ Cf. Herzer, “Mythos und Wahrheit”. He summarizes his argument as follows: “Dabei ist vor allem bei spezifischen Begriffen wie *παραθήκη*, *ἐπιφάνεια*, *σωτήρ*, *μύθος* oder auch der *οἰκονομία/οἶκος*-Terminologie usw. festzustellen, dass deren Prägung im 1. Timotheusbrief nicht nur die anderen Briefe voraussetzt, sondern vor dem Hintergrund der weiteren Paulustradition spezifische Transformationen erkennen lässt” (Herzer, 448). Regarding the question of unity see also Veit-Engelmann, *Unzertrennliche Drillinge?*

⁶ See Standhartinger, “Eusebeia”. Regarding the time of origin of the corpus, there are no compelling reasons for a late dating as advocated by Michael Theobald or Angela Standhartinger for different reasons. Theobald, *Israel-Vergessenheit*, 357, argues for a dating to the second quarter of the 2nd century, based on the assumption “dass ein mit Jerusalem verbundenes ‘Judenchristentum’ im Bewusstsein der [...] ‘heidenchristlichen’ Kirche in Kleinasien keine Rolle mehr spielt.” This claim, insofar as it goes along with the assertion of a general

pietas along with this concept, widespread at the beginning of the 2nd century CE. Chris Hoklotubbe offers a neat definition of εὐσέβεια which includes Roman *pietas* and highlights the aspect of reciprocity:

Whereas in the Roman period εὐσέβεια tended to signify both a reverent attitude toward and proper ritual conduct before the gods, the Latin *pietas* encompassed an affectionate dutifulness directed also to one's parents, homeland, and emperor. *Pietas* was the fulfillment of one's filial, religious, civic, and imperial obligations that sustained reciprocal relationships between kin, neighbors, allies, and contracting parties as well as demonstrated reverent loyalty toward country, divinity, and ruler. [...] Benefactors sought to show themselves as more honorable than other elites in the public square, and so made elaborate donations to cities and temples, with the result that their piety was publicly immortalized in inscribed stone and sponsored festivities.⁷

The concept of εὐσέβεια includes instructions for how women and slaves are to behave according to their social roles in the patriarchal household, which becomes the dominating image for the church and its hierarchical structure in 1 Timothy (1 Tim 1:4, 3:15). It also affects the sphere of social exchange. A key verse in this regard is 1 Tim 2:10, located within the passage about restricting women's rights in the congregation:

(8) I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument, (9) also that the women should dress themselves in moderate clothing with reverence and self-control, not with their hair braided or with gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, (10) *but with good works, as is proper for women who profess [or: promise] reverence for God* (ἀλλ' ὁ πρέπει γυναιξὶν ἐπαγγελλομέναις θεοσεβειαν, δι' ἔργων ἀγαθῶν). (11) Let a woman learn in silence with full submission. (12) I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent. (1 Tim 2:8–12; my emphasis)⁸

The passage is preceded by a condensed creed about Jesus Christ, his incarnation and salvific work for all (1 Tim 2:5–6), leading to a first-person claim of “Paul’s” role as an “apostle” and “teacher of the gentiles” (1 Tim 2:7). It is followed by a creation-theological

insignificance of Jewish tradition in the PE, is challenged in this paper. Standhartinger, “Eusebeia,” 80, ties her proposal to a certain understanding of εὐσέβεια in the context of a restorative *pietas* conception: “Ihre [the PE’s] Entstehung ist in einem Kontext zu vermuten, in dem εὐσέβεια zum zentralen gesellschaftlichen und politischen Programm geworden war. Vieles spricht für eine Abfassung der Pastoralbriefe in der Mitte des 2. Jhs.”. As I would like to show in this paper, to situate the concept of εὐσέβεια in the field of ancient reciprocity semantics has high explanatory value for interpreting the power dynamics underlying 1 Timothy. This lexical field has long since extended to great latitudes even in the first century. Judging only from this aspect, a dating around 100 CE would seem equally acceptable.

⁷ Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*, 6; emphasis in original.

⁸ Unless otherwise indicated, translations of biblical texts here and elsewhere are rendered according to the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVUE).

justification of the submission of women to men (the bottom line: it was all Eve's fault). Only by childbearing she can be saved (1 Tim 2:13–15). This variation of the Adam–Christ typology in Rom 5:12–21 is followed by a description of virtues for prospective (male) episcopos⁹ in 1 Tim 3.

The quoted section contains some information about the social profile of the women it refers to: They are described as having houses and means to dress up, it is also mentioned that they would “profess (or promise) reverence for God (θεοσέβεια),” namely through “good works” (1 Tim 2:10). The collocation ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι θεοσέβειαν has its primary *Sitz im Leben* in the civic *ekklēsia* of a Polis when a wealthy citizen makes a commitment to fund a public project out of his own pocket.¹⁰ This matter will be discussed in further detail below (see under 5), but at this point it suffices to note that the language of promising benefactions is taken up here to express what “Paul” is expecting from these females. Apparently, they act as teachers in the community or communities “Paul” writes to (see 2:12). This depiction suggests a specific milieu, namely that of independent females of some means with a certain authority within the community, presumably not only in doctrinal matters. But is it permissible to draw conclusions about their financial means from comments about a woman's appearance? Korinna Zamfir reminds her readers that discussing female adornment is a *topos* in Greco–Roman literature.¹¹ According to Hoklotubbe “contemporary philosophers reminded women that their modesty and moderation was tied to their dress.”¹² The ideal image of female σωφροσύνη/*pudicitia* was “contrasted with wearing elaborate hair-styles and expressive clothing, including gold and pearls – luxurious styles often associated with ostentatious elites, courtesans (ἑταῖραι), and prostitutes”¹³. Yet, despite the presence of a literary *topos*, conclusions can be drawn about the type of woman addressed. Zamfir rightly holds that “the exhortation only makes sense when the addressees are women of some means. The argument would otherwise be pointless.”¹⁴

In a similar vein, the letter writer talks about a related type of unmarried women (χῆραι) in 5:3–16 who can either pursue an extravagant lifestyle (σπαταλώσα ζωσα: v. 6) or perform various sorts of good works (παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ: v. 10). This presupposes that they are economically in a position to choose one of these options, which aligns their profile with that of the women depicted in 2:9–12. The rare verb σπαταλάω means “live softly or in excessive comfort or indulgence” (LSJ) and, according to John Barclay, “reflects the common Christian hostility to those who kept their wealth to themselves (cf. 1 Tim

⁹ The word “episcopos,” borrowed from the source language, should be preferred over “bishop” to avoid anachronistic notions.

¹⁰ For an understanding within the reference field of reciprocity it is not decisive whether the “good works” refer to “reverence for God (θεοσέβεια)” or, metaphorically, to the women's jewelry, as argued by Wagener, *Ordnung des “Houses Gottes,”* 69 fn. 13, 86–87.

¹¹ Cf. Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 364.

¹² Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*, 85 fn. 89.

¹³ Hoklotubbe, 86.

¹⁴ Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 365.

6.9–10).¹⁵ Consequently, “Paul” does not criticize wealth *per se*, but only insofar as the wealthy keep it to themselves instead of using it to support the assembly.

The term *θεοσέβεια*, to be rendered as “reverence” or “fear of God”, often refers to a benevolent inclination of a Gentile person towards Judaism, as will be outlined subsequently. As a hapax legomenon in the New Testament most interpreters see it in line with *εὐσέβεια*. Yet, read in the context of other passages in the PE denigrating Jewish heritage and way of life,¹⁶ this remark about the fear of God might have a mocking undertone: If these women absolutely want to sympathize with Judaism, let them do so by performing “good works,” obviously to benefit Timothy’s church, and “in silence.” To see how such a reading inscribes itself in a community struggle over influence and resources, we will examine the instructions for women’s behavior in 1 Tim 2:8–15 against the backdrop of ancient reciprocity more closely. In what follows, literary and epigraphic evidence of female benefactions associated with *θεοσέβεια* is offered (see under 2). The profile that becomes visible there is then related to women serving in leadership roles from earliest formations of the Jesus movement and Christ-communities (see under 3). Returning to 1 Timothy, the *εὐσέβεια* concept is used to show how the *auctor ad Timotheum* thinks the various intra-congregational groups should behave (see under 4). On the basis of the evidence gathered, a conclusion is drawn as to what 1 Timothy expects of the women rebuked in 2:8–13 with regard to their *θεοσέβεια* (see 5).

2 *θεοσέβεια* in the context of honoring God-fearers

The term *θεοσέβεια* denotes inter alia the attitude of God-fearers (*οἱ θεοσεβεῖς*) or, as the Acts of the Apostles call them, *φοβούμενοι/σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν*. Gentile women and men are in view, who were in some way inclined to the way of life of Jewish diaspora synagogues or simply displaying a benevolent attitude towards them. This group or category, well documented in epigraphic and literary sources, comprises a significant number of socially high-ranking women.¹⁷ Some of them shall be recalled here, focusing on the material aspect of their piety:

Josephus portrays Poppaea, Nero’s wife, as a sympathizer from the highest circles. According to his description in *Ant.* 20.189–96, she supported the interests of a Jewish legation that had come from Jerusalem to prevent the demolition of a temple wall. When Nero was presented with the matter, he “consented to leave the building as it was. In this he showed favour to his wife Poppaea, who was a worshipper of God and who pleaded on behalf of the Jews (*θεοσεβῆς γὰρ ἦν, ὑπὲρ τῶν Ἰουδαίων δεηθείση*

¹⁵ Barclay, “Household Networks,” 274.

¹⁶ See under 4.

¹⁷ Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 289, shows “that the exclusion of women from public religious roles in the *ekklēsia* goes to a certain extent against a more permissive contemporary practice. In the Hellenistic and Roman period (especially elite) women acquire important positions in the religious and even in the social sphere, acting as priestesses of various cults, as respected benefactors and even holding certain magistracies.” For females in religious offices in Ephesus see Witherington III, *Tit, 1–2 Tim, 1–3 John*, 218–21.

χαριζόμενος).¹⁸ As the semantic connection of θεοσεβής with χαρίζομαι indicates, for Josephus Poppaea’s fear of God is expressed by intervening politically in favor of the Jews or, more precisely, the temple priests Josephus obviously sympathizes with.¹⁹ Any conjecture about the empress’s moral status seems misleading, especially if it is to justify statements about whether Poppaea’s sympathy for certain Jewish groups is genuine.²⁰ For example, to brand Nero’s wife as a “happy eclectic”²¹ or to flatly deny her a more serious devotion to Judaism misses the point.²² Indeed, such attributions misjudge the character of ancient religion *tout court*, being a mirror of and mirrored in dynamics of social exchange of a hierarchical nature: To fulfill one’s obligations conscientiously and benevolently to one’s protégés, i.e. downwards and vice versa lies at the core of the Greco-Roman ethics of χάρις/*charis* as a basic principle ideally governing interpersonal as well as human–divine relationships.²³ Women from the higher or highest echelons like Fulvia, whom Josephus introduces as “a woman of high rank who had become a Jewish proselyte”²⁴ or Helena of Adiabene (*Ant.* 20.17–69) fit this profile, whereas drawing a line between God-fearers and proselytes seems neither always possible nor necessary. By ending a famine in Jerusalem queen Helena, according to Josephus, “left a very great name that will be famous forever among our whole people for her benefaction” (*Ant.* 20.52).

Recognizing the piety of pagan benefactresses is a practice of diaspora synagogues that is well documented epigraphically. I limit myself to the three following examples:

¹⁸ Josephus, *Ant.* 20.195 (Feldman, LCL).

¹⁹ Besides granting their request, she held two emissaries of the legation hostage: the temple treasurer Helcias and the high priest Ishmael, whereupon Agrippa had to appoint another high priest (cf. 195–6). About Ishmael Josephus reports that he was responsible for the starvation of several priests, because he withheld the tithes and robbed the threshing floors (whereby the temple treasurer Helcias was also responsible, cf. *Ant.* 20.181). Among other things, it is this removal of the cruel duo in favor of the temple priesthood that earns Poppaea being designated a θεοσεβής.

²⁰ Josephus, at any rate, leaves no doubt about Poppaea’s reliability when he credits her with the deliverance of certain priests “of [his] acquaintance” (*Vita* 13 [Thackeray, LCL]), again using the language of beneficence: “Having, besides this favour, received large gifts from Poppaea (μεγάλων δὲ δωρεῶν πρὸς τῇ εὐεργεσίᾳ ταύτη τυχὼν παρὰ τῆς Ποππαίας), I returned to my own country” (*Vita* 16).

²¹ Williams, *Jews in a Graeco-Roman Environment*, 87.

²² Wilker, “Teil der ihren,” in *Athen, Rom, Jerusalem*, 67 fn 46, is certain that „eine ernsthaftere Zuwendung zum Judentum bei ihr kaum vorstellbar erscheint.“

²³ Harrison, *Paul’s Language*, 349–50, puts it this way: “Overall, the conferral of divine grace was mediated to individuals and communities via a scrupulous performance of the sacrificial cult. The return of gratitude to the gods operated in the same way. Of the philosophers I examined, only the Epicureans and Lucian – who was also much influenced by Epicurean theology – attacked this belief–system. Moreover, the gods could be placed under counter–obligation by the ritual piety of benefactors or by the faithfulness of individuals to the ancestral traditions. As a matter of honour, the gods would reciprocate with gratitude. Unilateral and unsolicited acts of grace were, therefore, especially rare in the case of the Graeco-Roman deities”. The latter statement about the obligation of the gods should certainly be qualified. The benefits of the gods could by no means be forced, but at best be elicited by charm: smells, aromas, and the euphony of hymns, for example, play a role here that is opposed to reducing the matter to a mechanical *do ut des*.

²⁴ Φουλβίαν τῶν ἐν ἀξιώματι γυναικῶν καὶ νομίμοις προσεληλυθῆσαν τοῖς Ἰουδαίκοις: *Ant.* 18.82 (Feldman, LCL).

First, there is Capitolina, a God-fearer (θεοσεβής) from the 3rd century CE, who paid for substantial parts of the synagogue building in Tralles. Her public inscription announces that she has fulfilled her vow, which was to finance a staircase or platform for reading and/or stowing the Torah:²⁵

Καπετωλίνα
 ἡ ἀξιολογ(ωτάτη) καὶ
 Ἰθ᾽θεοσεβ(ής) Ἰπ᾽οιήσα-
 σα τὸ πᾶμ Ἰβ᾽άθρο[ν]
 (ς) ἐσκούτλωσα τ[ὸν]
 Ἰἀ᾽ναβασμὸν ὑπ[έρ]
 εὐχῆς ἑαυτῆς [καὶ]
 πεδίων τε Ἰκα᾽ἰ ἐγ-
 (το) γόνων. εὐλογία.

Capitolina, the highly respected and God-fearing, had the whole foundation built and then covered the staircase (with marble) because of her own, her children's and grandchildren's vows. Blessing.²⁶

To deduce from the designation of Capitolina as θεοσεβής that she was a proselyte, as Walter Ameling and others hold, does not seem compelling: Since her father had been “proconsul of Asia”²⁷, her husband and grandfather both served as priests of Zeus Larasios, Capitolina should be considered as a classic example of substantial interest in Judaism among the pagan upper class.²⁸

Second, another person who is not explicitly labeled as θεοσεβής, yet fits the profile well, is a woman named Tation (possibly also 3rd century). Probably a Gentile, she donated a synagogue building to the Jewish community in Cyme or Phokaia. According to the honorary inscription commissioned by the Jewish party, she was awarded a gold wreath and a place of honor, probably in the synagogue service.²⁹

Third, Julia Severa, priestess of the imperial cult in the 1st century CE, is mentioned as donor of a synagogue building (σῆκος) in Acmonia, Phrygia (CIJ II 766=IJO II 168). As a member of the imperial upper class, she expressed her “religious affiliation”³⁰ through

²⁵ Cf. Ameling, *IJO II*, 142.

²⁶ IJO II 27=CIG 2429 (further editions listed in Ameling, 140). Translated by myself after W. Ameling: “Capitolina, die hoch angesehene und gottesfürchtige, ließ das ganze Fundament bauen und dann die Treppe (mit Marmor) verkleiden wegen ihres eigenen, ihrer Kinder und Enkel Gelübde. Segen.” Trebilco, *Jewish Communities*, 157, reads ἀξιόλογ(ος) instead of ἀξιολογ(ωτάτη) (l. 2) and renders the text as a self-statement in the first-person singular. Thus, he translates differently: “I, Capitolina, worthy and θεοσεβ(ής), have made all the platform and the inlaying of the stairs in fulfillment of a vow for myself and my children and my grandchildren. Blessings.”

²⁷ Trebilco, 157.

²⁸ Cf. Ameling, *IJO II*, 141.

²⁹ Cf. Ameling, 164.

³⁰ Paget, “Period,” in *The Rise and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries of the Common Era*, 27.

benevolence towards the Jews of Acmonia. For that she is remembered in the inscription by the time of the renovation of the building.³¹

In sum: For their beneficence toward diaspora-synagogues wealthy women from the pagan upper classes were held in high esteem. Just like their male contemporaries, they received honorary inscriptions to commemorate what from a Jewish perspective appeared to be a pious attitude. That *θεοσεβής* was used epigraphically in this way has long been noted.³² Concerning the famous Aphrodisias inscriptions,³³ Dietrich-Alex Koch rightly states that the councilors and other donors listed on side B “were pious, because they gave some money to a religious institution.”³⁴ In line with this, *θεοσεβής* frequently appears as a Jewish honorary epithet for benevolent non-Jews and thereby represents the *Jewish dialect* of *εὐσεβής*, the term Greco-Roman benefactors are being honored with by their civic communities.³⁵

3 Social profile of leading women in the earliest church³⁶

Among the many women of influence in the earliest communities that refer to Jesus as their leader or form around him as Christ,³⁷ there are some who correspond to the socio-religious type of a female God-fearer as sketched above. Respected and wealthy women in the vicinity of the synagogue play an important role in the context of the Pauline mission: In Philippi, women are addressed from the outset; the purple trader Lydia, a pagan sympathizer of the synagogue (*σεβομένη τὸν θεόν*: Acts 16:14) is baptized and takes the missionaries into her home. The fact that she works in the purple business and heads a household speaks for a relatively wealthy and independent woman whose house becomes the base of the mission in Philippi.³⁸ Lydia is the first in a series of well-to-do female companions of Paul. In the synagogue of Thessalonica, too, “a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women” (*τῶν τε σεβομένων Ἑλλήνων πλῆθος*

³¹ Ameling, *IJO II*, 353, explains the ties between the synagogue and the local elite: “Die Erinnerung an ihre Stiftung wird von der Gemeinde wachgehalten, weil sie an die Großzügigkeit der Iulia Severa erinnern und die früheren Beziehungen zu einem Mitglied der lokalen Oberschicht dokumentieren will.”

³² Cf. Robert, *Inscriptions de Sardes*, 45.

³³ Cf. Reynolds and Tannenbaum, *Jews and God-Fearers*=SEG 36.970=IJO II 14.

³⁴ Koch, “God-Fearers,” 69, who then concludes: “They did not give a donation because they were members of a fixed group called *θεοσεβεῖς* / God-worshippers, but they were called *θεοσεβεῖς* / God-worshippers because they gave a donation.”

³⁵ Cf. Rajak, “Benefactors,” 389. See also Levinskaya, *Book of Acts*, 66. This does not contradict the observation made by Standhartinger, “Eusebeia,” 75, that *εὐσεβεία* is widespread as a self-designation of Hellenistic-Jewish religion. According to the evidence presented here, *θεοσεβεία* is used by Jews to honor the piety of Gentiles rather than one’s own.

³⁶ This terminology is used being aware of the problems involved in naming what much later looms as Christianity in world history. For a detailed discussion of the various designations for the earliest forms of Jesus-following and Christ-based churches, see Dunn, *Beginning*, 4–17. In demarcation to Early Judaism see Tiwald, *Das Frühjudentum und die Anfänge*, 25–51.

³⁷ Cf. Bieberstein, “Gemeinde”; Gielen, “Wahrnehmung”. See also Klauck, “Reden”.

³⁸ Cf. Pesch, *App II*, 105.

πολύ, γυναικῶν τε τῶν πρώτων οὐκ ὀλίγοι: Acts 17:4) join Paul and Silas. To the Roman church, Paul himself praises Phoebe, presumably a Gentile,³⁹ as a powerful benefactress:

(1) I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon (διάκονον) of the church at Cenchreae, (2) so that you may welcome her in the Lord, as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor (προστάτις) of many and of myself as well. (Rom 16:1–2)

The long-running debate over whether *προστάτις* denotes a superior or inferior position to Paul has been steered in the right direction by nuanced contributions from Carolin Osiek and Erlend MacGillivray.⁴⁰ The expression *προστάτις* is surely one to signify high status and to convey a considerable measure of deference on the side of the recommender.⁴¹ Yet, when it comes to Greco-Roman reciprocity, two things must be treated separately: first, the language or semantics used by the parties involved, and second, what kind of exchange takes place between them materially. Concerning the latter, what happens between Paul and Phoebe is some kind of mutual brokerage: Phoebe obviously took the apostle under her wing when he needed “hospitality, protection, and access to social networks”⁴² in Corinth. As “a lady of some stature”⁴³ she was able to help Paul gain a foothold in the city, i.e. in the synagogue or among the God-fearers. For that, Paul owes her and is happy “to bestow a prestigious and flattering appellation upon her.”⁴⁴ This is entirely in the spirit of exuberant language, i.e., the former aspect, which goes hand in hand with reciprocal exchange relationships – be they hierarchical or among peers: Paul does Phoebe the favor of praising her before the Roman community as the patroness of many and of himself, thereby returning the favor to her. How so? James Dunn is probably on the right track when he postulates that she was drawn to Rome on business where “people like Prisca and Aquila, themselves of some means and influence, and others, [...] could provide a variety of help – hospitality, advice on the current state of Roman politics and law, friendship, and Christian company.”⁴⁵

Referring to “Chloe’s people” mentioned in 1 Cor 1:11, Margaret Y. MacDonald considers it possible that these could be her clients, and that “she sponsored their religious activities in much the same way as non-Jewish women like Julia Severa sometimes offered

³⁹ Cf. Dunn, *Rom II*, 886.

⁴⁰ Cf. Osiek, “Politics of Patronage”; MacGillivray, “*προστάτις*”. An equally branching debate surrounds the expression *διάκονος*. Referring to Phoebe being called a *προστάτις*, MacDonald, “Women,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Paul*, 274, states that “such connotations of mediation and connection might also fit with Paul’s label of Phoebe as a deacon, a leadership term [...] which may point to a role in representing one church to another [...]. Certainly, the way that Phoebe is praised suggests that she was influential as a local church leader, but her leadership extended to the broader Pauline mission.”

⁴¹ In this respect, Dunn, *Rom II*, 888, is right to insist “[t]hat the word should be given full weight = ‘patron, protector’ (or alternatively ‘leader, ruler’ [...]).”

⁴² Osiek, “Politics of Patronage,” 150.

⁴³ Dunn, *Rom II*, 889.

⁴⁴ MacGillivray, “*προστάτις*,” 198.

⁴⁵ Dunn, *Rom II*, 889.

patronage to synagogues.”⁴⁶ This might seem like a stretch, considering that Chloe and her people are mentioned only this once in the whole New Testament. In any case, there are a number of other influential women like Mary or Persis, Tryphaena and Tryphosa whose hard work for the Roman *ekklesia* Paul highlights in the greeting list at the end of his letter to the Romans (Rom 16:6, 12). In addition to the aforementioned, Nympha as head of a household (Col 4:15), Euodia and Syntyche (Phil 4:2–3),⁴⁷ and other women, Jewish and Gentile, surely played a major role in determining the course of events from the beginning. The Jewish women Prisca, the wife of Aquila, and Junia (see 1 Cor 16:19, Rom 16:3, 5), probably the wife of Andronicus, should also be named in passing. Junia and Andronicus are singled out as “prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was” (Rom 16:7). Along with their husbands, Prisca and Junia hosted a church in their respective homes and provided no small amount of support to Paul.⁴⁸ The gospel of Luke depicts the woman who was deemed a sinner in the city (Luke 7:37) as financially independent and attending a Pharisee’s banquet. Subsequent to the pericope, female supporters of the Jesus movement are mentioned “who provided for them out of their resources” (αἴτινες διηκόνουν αὐτοῖς ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐταῖς: Luke 8:1–3).

Towards the end of the 1st century Luke reminds his or her readers that women secured the existence and mission of the wandering charismatics from the beginning. For this purpose, the text uses the phrase ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐταῖς, current in honorary inscriptions: There it is amply used to appreciate that a public benefactress or benefactor has made a donation out of their own pocket.⁴⁹ Explicitly called a “disciple” (μαθήτρια: Acts 9:36), Tabitha stands out in performing “good works and acts of charity” (ἔργων ἀγαθῶν καὶ ἐλεημοσυῶν), mainly for the benefit of widows.

In sum, various New Testament writings know about wealthy women, (a) some of whom are explicitly described as God-fearing and/or fit that beneficent profile, (b) who supported the emerging Jesus movement and Christ communities in the manner

⁴⁶ MacDonald, “Women,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Paul*, 273. For Julia Severa, see above under 2.

⁴⁷ Concluding from their being named “together with Clement and the rest of my coworkers” (Phil 4:3), Gielen, “Wahrnehmung,” in *Neutestamentliche Ämtermodelle im Kontext*, 136, states: “Damit also erkennt Paulus Euodia und Syntyche unterschiedslos zu Klemens und weiteren namentlich nicht genannten Personen den Mitarbeiterstatus zu, der durch den Kontext inhaltlich wiederum (wie schon Röm 16,3) deutlich als Dienst am Evangelium ausgewiesen ist.”

⁴⁸ MacDonald, “Women,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Paul*, 276, explains: “Both women are leaders who took significant risks: the greetings that Paul extended to them in Romans 16 are replete with verbs that speak of labor and precarious activities for the sake of the gospel.”

⁴⁹ The phrase ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτοῦ is found in Luke 12:15 as an appendage to an already awkward formulation. On the expression ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτοῦ κτλ. and its Latin equivalent *d[e] s[ua] p[ecunia] s[ecit]*, placed within the context of civic benefaction, cf. Adrian, *Mutuum date*, 229–32. The phrase is introducing the parable of the rich fool who tries to evade his reciprocity obligations to the civic community, which would be to share some of his rich harvest with it. God’s announcement that “they” will take his “soul,” (Luke 12:20) that is, his life, that very night reflects distribution struggles in the cities that could reach the brink of violence (see Adrian, 251–70).

of benefactresses and (c) who, precisely for this reason, took on leadership roles in the dynamic course of events from the beginning.⁵⁰

4 Εὐσέβεια and a possible power struggle in 1 Timothy

Given the embeddedness of εὐσέβεια in the ethos of Greco-Roman reciprocity, piety manifests itself in material beneficence. Correspondingly, it would be a major misunderstanding of ancient piety to distinguish between an inward act of faith and merely outward manifestations. This also applies to the term θεοσεβής when bestowed on a pagan donor by a Jewish community (see under 2). The reasoning of 1 Timothy cannot be separated from this cultural context, neither can the attempts to shift power from wealthy females to male community leaders which are made in this letter.⁵¹ The first thing to note in this context is that the *auctor ad Timotheum* strongly advocates an image of Christian communities as united under one doctrine and led by male bishops and deacons. Women, children, and slaves are to obey and submit themselves to their authority, while divergent views are to be rejected and talked down. Yet, in order to implement the new order in the economy of God (οἰκονομία θεοῦ: 1:4 et al.), the letter writer must offer incentives to the various groups to go along with the change. This involves the (re)distribution of communal resources which are obviously limited.⁵² Therefore, 1 Timothy seems to disclose a power struggle over the proper channeling of money, goods, and services, leaving to be determined, *first*, who are the donors and who the recipients, *second*, what the letter writer expects from them, and *third*, what he offers in return. These questions will be clarified in relation to some important groupings which can be recognized in the letter, namely (A) wealthy community members, (B) the new officials, and (C) rival teachers. Finally (see under 5), the female God-fearers' position is being placed within this dynamic.

4.1 Wealthy community members

In order to understand how the *auctor ad Timotheum* treats the wealthy, it is informative to examine what he tells the slaves in the congregation: “Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor” (πάσης τιμῆς ἀξίους ἡγείσθωσαν:

⁵⁰ In this regard it seems slightly misleading of Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*, 135, to speak of “benefactresses, who have carried over into the *ekklesia* their habituated expectations about the authoritative influence that patronage furnishes within the domain of benefaction.” That these females had committed themselves beneficently to the thriving of the earliest communities even before Paul, as well as on his behalf, is described as an irreplaceable contribution to their emergence and growth. This is emphasized by Paul and the synoptic tradition themselves.

⁵¹ Hoklotubbe, 8, draws the right consequence for reading the PE: “If modern interpreters are to appreciate the rhetorical significance of piety in the Pastoral Epistles, then these letters must be recontextualized among the discourses of piety that pervaded the political, civic, and philosophical domains of the Roman Empire.”

⁵² Barclay, “Household Networks”, focuses on the aspect of limited resources to explain why claims to support for “women without a man” (χῆραι) are being restricted in 5:3-16.

1 Tim 6:1).⁵³ This means that subordinates should not simply obey their superiors, but also venerate them like benefactors. The phrase is familiar to the reader from the “double honor” of which elders of the *ekklēsia* are deemed worthy (5:17). By contrast to that passage, no sizeable gratification is in view here (see under 4.2). If the one who puts the yoke on their shoulders is a believer, it is declared that the slaves should work even harder,

...ὅτι πιστοὶ εἰσιν καὶ ἀγαπητοὶ οἱ τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἀντιλαμβανόμενοι.

...since those who benefit by their service are believers and beloved. (1 Tim 6:2)

Like *τιμή* and *ἄξιον ἡγέομαι* (or more often: *κρίνω*), the expressions *εὐεργεσία* and *ἀντιλαμβάνομαι* are part of the language of Greco-Roman reciprocity. Regarding the epigraphic record, Korinna Zamfir notes: “*Τιμή/τιμάω*, frequently connected with *ἄξιος*, is very common in inscriptions bestowing honours on officials and benefactors for their services on behalf of the community. [...] For the beneficence bestowed by the superior upon the socially inferior, *τιμή* means honouring the official and/or benefactor by giving a return on his/her benefactions.”⁵⁴ In its generalized form, denoting social exchange between socially unequal people, masters may label the reverence of their subordinates as a benefaction (*εὐεργεσία*). Therefore, a translation that emphasizes the aspect of beneficence would be preferred, such as:

...since they are faithful and beloved, and partake of it [sc. the slave’s hard work] as a benefaction. (My translation)

What the author describes as a benefaction here is the previously mentioned slave labor to be performed with special zeal (*μᾶλλον δουλευέτωσαν*: 1 Tim 6:2). By using terminology typically used in the field of ancient reciprocity, he takes up a topos of inner freedom stabilizing outward inequalities. A brief look at contemporary philosophical literature may suffice to illustrate the point: In the stoicist literary tradition represented by intellectuals from the upper class like Seneca, Plutarch, Epictetus, or Pliny the Younger, subordinates are advised to accept their social status by taking refuge in an inner freedom. This inner freedom (*libertas*) is described as enabling the subordinate to direct an ideal generosity (*liberalitas*) towards their superior. E.g., Seneca writes in his treatise *de beneficiis*:

⁵³ According to Lendon, *Empire of Honour*, 41, honor (*τιμή*) is a defining factor of a “shame culture.” Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 109, states: “*Τιμάω/τιμή* implies high regard for someone’s status or value, respect for superiors and recognition of their authority, reverence toward the gods, toward parents, the elderly, officials, and benefactors. It also entails external expressions of recognition, such as honorary inscriptions, bestowal of titles or offering of gifts.”

⁵⁴ Zamfir, 109–10. For *ἄξιωθεὶς* in this context see Quaß, *Die Honoratiorenschicht*, 301. Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 118, argues that the PE’s “perception of offices comes close to that of contemporary society. Among Greek and Roman elites, aspiration to office is a praiseworthy enterprise, a moral and financial obligation of citizens, especially of the well-to-do, accompanied by moral excellence.”

Praeterea servum qui negat dare aliquando domino beneficium, ignarus est iuris humani; refert enim, cuius animi sit, qui praestat, non cuius status. Nulli praeclusa virtus est; omnibus patet, omnes admittit, omnes invitat, et ingenuos et libertinos et servos et reges et exules [...]

Moreover, he who denies that a slave can sometimes give a benefit to his master is ignorant of the rights of man; for, not the status, but the intention, of the one who bestows is what counts. Virtue closes the door to no man; it is open to all, admits all, invites all, the freeborn and the freedman, the slave and the king, and the exile. (Sen. Ben 3.18.2; [Basore, LCL])

By taking this angle on *animus* instead of *status*, slaves do not merely accept but internalize their position of social inferiority. Consequently, emphasizing inner independence relativizes and stabilizes social boundaries at the same time. The alleged equality between slave and master – to be proclaimed by the latter only – does not imply that the former has legal rights. On the level of real power relations, nobody of socially lower class is supposed or even deemed able to bestow any kind of benefaction upon their superior that would oblige them to reciprocate.⁵⁵ An exchange of goods or services of the same kind and/or value would be reserved for the sphere of social equals. The currency in which to pay back a social superior is “honour, gratitude, and loyalty.”⁵⁶

To dress up the de facto relationship based on command and obedience with the language of the exchange of benefits is part of the good tone of the masters’ communication with their subordinates. These, in turn, are expected to emphasize the social distance between the parties through a nuanced expression of submissiveness and deference.⁵⁷ The *auctor ad Timotheum* makes use of these cultural scripts of social exchange in a rather conservative way: By glossing over slavery with the vocabulary of friendly exchange, he assures the people of lower social position, in the spirit of love-patriarchalism, it is worthwhile for them to subordinate themselves.

At the other end of the social spectrum, in the household of God, the language of promising exchange also prevails:

(17) Τοῖς πλουσίοις ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι παράγγελλε μὴ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν μηδὲ ἡλπικένοι ἐπὶ πλούτου ἀδηλόγητι ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ θεῷ τῷ παρέχοντι ἡμῖν πάντα πλουσίως εἰς ἀπόλαυσιν, (18)

⁵⁵ The hardships of a slave existence may be softened by glossing them over with the language of beneficence, inner freedom and basic equality, yet the relationship of inequality is by no means relativized or even called into question, but rather stabilized by making it bearable.

⁵⁶ Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion*, 58. On the different subdivisions of reciprocity cf. Stegemann and Stegemann, *Urchristliche Sozialgeschichte*, 41–43.

⁵⁷ Cf. Saller, *Personal Patronage*, II. Griffin, “De Beneficiis,” 110, points to the different roles in which the givers and receivers of benefactions placed themselves within the upper class: “The reverse of this assumed equality is the courtesy of exaggerated deference, which also characterized relationships within the elite. Seneca, discussing the right manner in which to accept benefits, lays down that we should not display indifference and reluctance in taking the gift, nor, at the other extreme, be submissive and humble (Ben. 2.24.2), and later on in Book 3, Seneca shows why it is so important to find just the right level.”

ἀγαθοεργεῖν, πλουτεῖν ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς, εὐμεταδότους εἶναι, κοινωνικούς, (19) ἀποθησαυρίζοντας ἑαυτοῖς θεμέλιον καλὸν εἰς τὸ μέλλον, ἵνα ἐπιλάβωνται τῆς ὄντως ζωῆς.

(17) As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on *God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment*. (18) They are *to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share*, (19) thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life. (1 Tim 6:17–9; my italics)

What is described here are benefits raining down from the deity upon the rich, firstly for their enjoyment (εἰς ἀπόλαυσιν), and secondly for partially bestowing them upon their fellow men (ἀγαθοεργεῖν/benefacere/doing good). Both aspects are “much at home in the moral discourse of the day”⁵⁸; and not just since the 2nd century CE. Just like any inferior party in a conferral of benefits, the rich are neither deemed able to repay the deity nor supposed to try and establish an exchange relationship at eye level. Rather, they are required to realize their piety through good works for their less wealthy neighbors or subordinates (εὐμετάδοτος εἶναι).⁵⁹ This conforms to the concept of εὐσέβεια or *pietas* understood as the cascading down of benefits from the god(s) over the rulers to the Roman citizens, their families and subjects.⁶⁰ This basic scheme is at work in many Greco-Roman and Jewish-Hellenistic texts including the New Testament, prominently so in Luke-Acts as well as in Paul’s concept of the χάρις of God through Christ:⁶¹ The multitude of sinners who have unworthily received the incongruous Christ-gift from God,⁶² cannot repay him equally but are obliged to answer in the two ways just mentioned. Firstly, they loyally commit themselves to Christ’s protection, thus inaugurating a relationship of πίστις.⁶³ Secondly, they pass on the gift by conferring benefits (ἀγαθά) on to one another, that is, by ἀγαθῶ ἔργῳ (Rom 13:3) or ἀγαθοεργεῖν (1 Tim 6:18).⁶⁴ Paul tries to establish this kind of distribution ethics in his Letter to the

⁵⁸ Malherbe, “Godliness II,” 76.

⁵⁹ Cf. Witherington III, *Tit, 1–2 Tim, 1–3 John*, 296–97; Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 121. According to Standhartinger, “Eusebeia,” 76, the concept also encompasses the reverse movement back from the bottom to the top: “Dem Kaiser, der sich somit *pius* gegenüber seinen Untertanen verhält, schulden diese die entsprechende Anerkennung und Loyalität, also *pietas*.” Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*, 21–22, explains this trickle down of benefits using the example of the imperial household of Hadrian.

⁶⁰ In comparison with the vertically aligned Roman patronage system the Greek version of municipal reciprocity has a more horizontally nuanced touch: As a distant echo of the polis as a community of social equals, the euergetism of the imperial era is still conceived as a compulsory contribution of a citizen to his fellow citizens.

⁶¹ Cf. Zeller, *Charis bei Philon*.

⁶² Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 72, lists “incongruity” as one of the six perfections of the gift.

⁶³ Like the Roman emperor, Christ can be addressed as Lord (κύριος) or mediator of God’s gifts. Referring back to the Letter to the Romans, according to Standhartinger, “Eusebeia,” 54, “die Mehrzahl der Belege von πίστις in den Pastoralbriefen nimmt das römische Konzept der *fides*, der Bundestreue und Loyalität der Untertanen und Kinder gegenüber Imperium und Vätern, auf.”

⁶⁴ On the concept of ἀγαθά as benefactions cf. Adrian, *Mutuum date*, 233–51.

Romans which is an essential reference point for 1 Timothy.⁶⁵ In everyday municipal life this meant spending money and giving food freely to the public on the occasion of festivals, construction projects or other funding activities, and it earned the donor the honorary epithet *εὐσεβής*. The same applies to benefactors at the level of municipal *collegia*, i.e. associations of craftsmen or traders, which are comparable in size to early Christian communities.⁶⁶ It is, first and foremost, a certain social attitude of being just and generous that makes a person appear pious. As stated by Zamfir, the term *εὐσεβής* “characterises the reliable and respectable person who shows reverence toward the gods, the authorities, toward parents and country. An honourable man is necessarily pious.”⁶⁷

According to 1 Tim 6, the reward for pious behavior in this sense is that the prosperous store up treasure in heaven for the future life (see 1 Tim 6:19). A similar phrase is used in Luke 12:33, referring to the itinerant disciples who make themselves a “treasure in heaven” by selling their possessions. There is no mention of such a renouncement in the letter though: wealth is granted primarily for enjoyment (*εἰς ἀπόλαυσιν*: 1 Tim 6:17). Moreover, in the sphere of the private household existing power relations like slavery are not called into question. Still, it is difficult to keep the wealthy in line, as Hoklotubbe points out:

Thus the author of 1 Timothy attempts to navigate a precarious relationship with the wealthy. The tension lies within the author’s encouragement of the wealthy to give generously while also denying these benefactors the influence over the *ekklēsia* that they would expect in exchange for their munificence, given the pervasive cultural assumptions about benefaction.⁶⁸

This applies especially to the female teachers mentioned in 2:9–12, whose munificence needs to be acknowledged to secure it for the future.

4.2 The new officials

Ideally, the trickling-down of benefits is at work also in the household of God (*οἰκονομία*: 1 Tim 1:4/*οἶκος θεοῦ*: 1 Tim 3:15), the key metaphor for the Christian congregation.

⁶⁵ Schumacher, “Römern,” in *Glaube*, 336, is right to point out: “Im Hintergrund der paulinischen *πίστις Ἰησοῦ* (Χριστοῦ)-Aussagen lässt sich also die römische *fides*-Vorstellung ausmachen, die sich einerseits durch ihre hierarchische Struktur und andererseits durch ihre Wechselseitigkeit auszeichnet. Jedenfalls geht die *πίστις/fides*-Zuwendung von Jesus Christus, also von der höherstehenden Seite aus und ist zugleich auf ein reaktives *πίστις/fides*-Verhalten des niederstehenden *πίστις/fides*-Empfängers hingeeordnet” (emphasis in original).

⁶⁶ According to Schüssler Fiorenza, *Memory of Her*, 287, the social “analogy between the early Christian community and private associations or clubs is [...], for the most part, accepted.” On the complex see most recently Kloppenborg, *Christ’s Associations*.

⁶⁷ Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 120.

⁶⁸ Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*, 144.

This household is to be organized in a conservative version of a familial “Liebespatriarchalismus”⁶⁹ (love patriarchalism), the typical social form of the Pauline churches. In 1 Timothy, however, it is extended by gradually solidifying office designations like deacons, elders, and bishops. While the charisma-based order of the Pauline community is conceived as the body of Christ (Rom 12:4–8; 1 Cor 12), in which “to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Cor 12:7), the imagery and claims of the PE are very different. Alongside the replacement of the body metaphor with that of the household of God, the many different gifts (*χαρίσματα*) assigned to each individual by the Holy Spirit are reduced to one gift of grace alone: that which a church official receives upon ordination (see 1 Tim 4:14).⁷⁰ Yet, this gift or honor should be accompanied by others, as is explicitly required in the opening verses about the elders:

(17) Let the elders (*πρεσβύτεροι*) who rule well be considered worthy of double honor (*διπλῆς τιμῆς ἀξιούσθωσαν*), especially those who labor in preaching and teaching, (18) for the scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain” and “The laborer deserves to be paid.” (1 Tim 5:17–18)

The term *πρεσβύτεροι* designates an official position rather than a group of elderly persons (see 4:14).⁷¹ This congregational body of elders is expected to rule, preach, and teach. If they are doing their job well, they are entitled to a double gratification of some sort, although the nature of the “double honor” (*διπλῆ τιμή*) is not spelled out.⁷² In addition to the meaning of “honor,” “esteem,” or “reverence,” *τιμή* can also denote “payment” or “compensation” (see LSJ), in other words, the manifestation of esteem. In this latter sense “Paul” is most likely thinking here of some kind of remuneration. The quotes from scripture and a saying of Jesus in the following verse which also deals with payment seem to suggest this interpretation (see under 4.3).⁷³ Moreover, a double payment is easier to grasp than a double honor, although one may wonder whom the author imagines will receive a single remuneration. We will return to that question shortly.

Τιμή, then, probably designates a material good, but not a regular salary. As Georg Schöllgen pointed out some time ago, *τιμή* is not attested in reference to a regular income. In addition, argued from a historical standpoint, it is only from the end of the 2nd century that the clergy gradually start to request some form of financial maintenance.⁷⁴ Even if 1 Timothy is dated as late as the middle of the 2nd century, we cannot assume that

⁶⁹ Theißen, “Wanderradikalismus,” 268. Regarding the dynamics between itinerant charismatics and community organizers or itinerant radicalism and love patriarchalism, cf. Theißen, “Legitimation” Theißen, *Jesusbewegung*, 55–90. Recently summarized in Theißen, “Setting”. Cf. also Horrell, “Leadership Patterns”.

⁷⁰ Cf. Roloff, *1 Tim*, 32. See also 2 Tim 1:6.

⁷¹ Cf. Oberlinner, *1 Tim*, 248.

⁷² The veneration of masters by their slaves, who “should regard their masters as worthy of all honor” (*πάσης τιμῆς ἀξίους ἡγείσθωσαν*: 1 Tim 6:1) combines *τιμή* and *ἀξιώω* as in 5:17, in that instance drawing on the relational aspect of the expression (see also under 4A).

⁷³ Cf. Schöllgen, “*διπλῆ τιμή*,” 232.

⁷⁴ Cf. Schöllgen, 235.

it attests the oldest Christian “Besoldungsordnung”⁷⁵ in 5:17. This would presuppose a level of organization only attested in other places from a much later date. Finally, following Schöllgen again, it seems most unlikely that the congregation of 1 Timothy was sufficiently large and financially powerful to provide not only for the aforementioned widows but also to pay the elders a double salary.⁷⁶ Instead he suggests considering regulations for communal meals of Greco-Roman associations. As an example, he cites the bylaws of the *collegium* of the *cultores Dianae et Antinoi* from Lanuvium near Rome, dated to 136 CE. It is stated there that a member who becomes president (*quinquennalis*) “shall be exempt from contributions for the time when he is *quinquennalis* and that to him a double share from all the distributions be given (*ex omnibus divisionibus partes dupla[s] / dari*)”⁷⁷. That means the president is entitled to twice the portions allotted to the other members. The bylaws precisely define both what is on the menu and the size of the portions, and how many banquets should take place per year, namely six. Kloppenborg adds that the banquets were not financed by the patron but the members themselves by means of peer benefaction, while the patron of the *collegium* distributed money to the association, “likely about 8 sesterces (i.e., 2 denarii), twice yearly”⁷⁸ per member. As the bylaws state a “double share from all the distributions,” we can assume that this applies to the distributed money as well. Schöllgen and Kloppenborg give further examples of the staggered allocation of money and food portions in associations,⁷⁹ which leads Schöllgen to conclude that διπλή τιμή in 1 Tim 5:17 is best explained as “Ehrenportionen bei den Gemeindemählern”.⁸⁰ In light of the distributions of money just mentioned, it seems equally plausible to assume that διπλή τιμή could mean double payment as well.⁸¹ As in Greco-Roman associations, this kind of remuneration is not intended to secure a living for the elders “who rule well”. Here, as there, the aim is to honorably recognize the merits of the office holder.⁸² As a result, the “honor” for the elders is defined as an honorary food portion at a congregational banquet (like the *agapē* or the Eucharist) or a payment distributed from a congregational fund on a specific, maybe also convivial occasion.

If this interpretation is correct, then it also gives a clearer picture of what “double” means, i.e. who receives the *single* portion or payment. Many interpreters have linked διπλή τιμή in 1 Tim 5:17 to the instruction which opens the preceding section: “Honor widows who are really widows” (Χήρας τίμα τὰς ὄντως χήρας: 5:3). If both mentions of the τιμ*-root refer to the same matter, then honor/honoring refers to the allotment of food

⁷⁵ Roloff, *1 Tim.*, 309.

⁷⁶ Cf. Schöllgen, “διπλή τιμή,” 235.

⁷⁷ CIL XIV 2112 = ILS 7212. Translation by Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 211.

⁷⁸ Kloppenborg, 211.

⁷⁹ Cf. Schöllgen, “διπλή τιμή,” 237–38; Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 212–13.

⁸⁰ Schöllgen, “διπλή τιμή,” 238.

⁸¹ According to Schöllgen, 239, τιμή is not attested to for double portions, but on the other hand there is no fixed terminology for the corresponding matter. He claims, “da jedoch die Bedeutung ‘Ehrengabe’ durchaus bezeugt ist [...] und sich keine technische Terminologie ausgebildet hat, erheben sich von lexikalischer Seite gegen die vorgetragene Deutung keine Einwände.”

⁸² Cf. Schöllgen, 238.

portions or money from a congregational fund in both instances: once for “real” widows, once for elders.⁸³ As Barclay has recently argued, according to the passage 1 Tim 5:3–16 the “honoring” applies to elderly widows who are cut off from support by household networks. Women who fall under this category and only they are eligible for support from central church funds.⁸⁴ They do not join an office or form a congregational body of widows but seem to be entitled to be “put on the list” (*καταλεγέσθω*: 5:9) that entitles them to the same “honor” the elders also receive, however in double quantity.

We have already seen that there is a second type of women addressed in this passage, i.e. well-to-do females similar to those addressed in 2:9–12 (see under 1).⁸⁵ They are fiercely admonished “to provide for their own,⁸⁶ and especially for family members” (*τῶν ἰδίων καὶ μάλιστα οἰκείων*: 5:8) instead of spending their wealth on personal amenities. Since a distinction is made between “their own” and those who live in the same household, it can be assumed that those women who could live luxuriously are asked to extend their beneficence to other members of the assembly, regarding them as “their own”. Insofar as they are among the wealthier members of the community, they are probably also expected to contribute in particular to the provision of the aforementioned allocations. This might apply to the “honors” for the widows as well as the “double honors” for the elders.

Unlike associations that are organized by “rotating hierarchies”⁸⁷, which means that each member is president once and then receives more than the others, in 1 Timothy the roles are apparently to be made permanent. In other words, the elders should constantly get double portions or money allocations. But does this also imply that the others should permanently provide the funds for the joint banquets and other benefits? A “fundamental equality of all members”⁸⁸ does not seem to be what the *auctor ad Timotheum* aims at with his regulations, in any case there is no mention of rotating hierarchies. Moreover, it is notable that the elders are primarily to be given the task of teaching publicly (5:17), the very thing that the women in question are no longer to perform according to 2:12. In view of this, it seems that “Paul” is expecting two things from well-to-do women in his congregation: first, to withdraw from public teaching, and second, to contribute generously to the provision of resources that fund charitable care for widows in need

⁸³ Oberlinner, *1 Tim*, 253, draws the opposite conclusion: Because in 5:3 a material remuneration is *not* in view the double honor in 5:17 cannot be interpreted as a food portion or payment either.

⁸⁴ Cf. Barclay, “Household Networks,” 284. He, too, thinks of “material support” which he defines in the sense of the fifth commandment: *τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα* (Ex 20:12); cf. Barclay, 270. Those who are integrated in a household network are obliged to supply their offspring as well as their parents, expressed rather bluntly as to “make some repayment” (*εὐσεβεῖν καὶ ἀμοιβὰς ἀποδιδόναι τοῖς προγόνοις*: 1 Tim 5:4).

⁸⁵ In addition to the young women who want to be celibate and should also not qualify for widowhood support. According to Barclay, 286, “Paul” argues from a concern for stable Christian households managed by married women. “[I]f such celibate women are promoted as *exemplars* by being given financial support, the household network will be in danger of collapse.”

⁸⁶ My translation; the NRSVUE renders “relatives” for *οἱ ἴδιοι*.

⁸⁷ Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 214.

⁸⁸ Kloppenborg, 214.

as well as preferential treatment for those who are to exercise the teaching ministry in their place.

By contrast, bishops and elders are not strongly encouraged to act benevolently. Apart from being “hospitable” (1 Tim 3:2) in general, the bishops, and the deacons even less so, are not expected to practice beneficence towards members of the *ekklēsia*.⁸⁹ Rather, they are admonished to faithfully manage the money entrusted to them by others.⁹⁰ The donation of benefactions to the community, by contrast to the women previously mentioned, is not among the official duties of male church leaders here. Moreover, although arguments from silence are not strong, it seems at least noteworthy in this regard that the εὐσεβ- word stem is missing in the respective passages.

4.3 Rival teachers

Those accused of being false teachers⁹¹ receive funds from certain members of the congregation. It does not seem clear what the content of their false doctrine is supposed to be. Considering the massive attacks against those who spread heterodoxy, it is notable that the author hardly ever specifies its substance.⁹² Abraham Malherbe concludes: “At issue is, in the first place, not doctrine, but moral living.”⁹³ It is in terms of εὐσέβεια or *pietas* that the issue of moral living is defined more precisely. Subsequent to the passage about slaves and their masters (1 Tim 6:1–2a) the letter writer moves on to dismiss any doctrine differing from his own (1 Tim 6:3b–5), bridging the two sections with the exhortation to “teach and urge these duties” (Ταῦτα δίδασκε καὶ παρακάλει: 1 Tim 6:2b). Like the instructions for slaves the subsequent warning against false teachers is purely behavioral:

(3) εἴ τις ἕτεροδιδασκαλεῖ καὶ μὴ προσέρχεται ὑγιαίνουσιν λόγοις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆ κατ’ εὐσέβειαν διδασκαλίᾳ, (4) τετύφωται, μηδὲν ἐπιστάμενος, ἀλλὰ νοσῶν περὶ ζητήσεις καὶ λογομαχίας, ἐξ ὧν γίνεται φθόνος ἔρις βλασφημίαι, ὑπόνοιαι

⁸⁹ In the lists of qualifications in 1 Tim 3:1–13 the bishops are admonished not to act avariciously (*ἀφιλάργυρον*: 1 Tim 3:3), likewise the deacons not to be “greedy for money” (*μὴ αἰσχροκερδεῖς*: 1 Tim 3:8). Lohse, “Entstehung des Bischofsamtes,” 65, assumed that the episcopus had the task of managing the money of the congregation.

⁹⁰ Contra Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 120–22. But see Tit 1:8, according to which “a bishop [...] must be hospitable, a lover of goodness” (*φιλόξενον φιλάγαθον*). This might of course be written by another hand in a different situation.

⁹¹ Zamfir, 165–78, is right to remind the reader not to side with the author. By accusing the others of heterodoxy, he simultaneously constructs both the heterodoxy of the others and the orthodoxy to which it is opposed.

⁹² But see the accusations concerning the rejection of marriage and claims to food regulations, most likely with a Jewish background, in 1 Tim 4:1–3. See also 2 Tim 2:18 (resurrection as having already taken place). Malherbe, “Godliness I,” 391, underlines: “Our author limits himself to stressing, vituperatively, the character defects of the persons he opposes.”

⁹³ Malherbe, 392. Concerning the author’s own doctrinal testimonies Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 127, speaks of a “slim theological motivation.”

πονηραί, (5) διαπαρατριβαί διεφθαρμένων ἀνθρώπων τὸν νοῦν καὶ ἀπεστερημένων τῆς ἀληθείας, νομιζόντων πορισμὸν εἶναι τὴν εὐσέβειαν.

(3) Whoever teaches otherwise and does not *walk up* to the healthy *words* of our Lord Jesus Christ and *the teaching that is in accordance with godliness*, (4) is conceited, understanding nothing, and has a morbid craving for controversy and for *fight*s about words. From these come envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions, (5) and wrangling among those who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, deeming *godliness to be a means of profit*. (1 Tim 6:3–5; my translation based on NRSVUE)

Here we can identify three main features which characterize the group of heterodox teachers: First, they lead an itinerant life-style, second, their teaching is concerned with sayings probably stemming from Jesus tradition, and third, they receive material support, presumably from certain women of the congregation. The fourth characteristic is that they seem to be Jewish or Judaizers, something which can be derived from 1 Tim 1:4–7 as we will see below.

Concerning the first characteristic of itinerancy, the choice of words is telling: The *actor ad Timotheum* condemns whoever does not “approach” or literally “walk towards” (*προσέρχεται*: v. 3) the healthy words of Christ. This aligns with the use of *ἀποπλανᾶω* (1 Tim 6:10) to denote the opponents’ “wandering away from the faith”. The statement about young single women who “learn to be idle, gadding about from house to house” (*μανθάνουσιν περιερχόμεναι τὰς οἰκίας*: 5:13) seems to point in a similar direction. The references to learning and walking around

suggest that the threat comes from teachers who are not themselves embedded in households, and who travel from church to church embodying a message of radical renunciation of home, marriage and wealth – precisely the kind of itinerant ‘apostles’ we see mirrored in the apocryphal Acts as successors to the ‘wandering charismatics’ in the early Jesus movement.⁹⁴

We will return to Barclay’s second proposal after adding an observation from 2 Tim 3:6–7, bearing in mind that it might not have been written by the same author: Conforming to a stock accusation regarding male teachers, rival teachers are accused of “corrupting and seducing women after intruding into the house”⁹⁵. According to Zamfir, the women “who are always studying yet never able to recognize truth” (2 Tim 3:7), might well be “the disciples of the opponents.”⁹⁶

Regarding the second assumption, that the itinerant teachers represent a sayings tradition (such as the Gospel of Thomas or the logia source “Q”), we start by observing that the letter writer is preoccupied with distinguishing *words*. A central phrase of the

⁹⁴ Barclay, “Household Networks,” 282.

⁹⁵ Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 190. In light of 2 Tim 3:6 and because a leading opponent is designated as “prophet” (Tit 1:12), Schreiber, “Häresie im Kanon,” 202, asks: “Bilden umherziehende Propheten ihre Kerngruppe?”

⁹⁶ Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 190.

letter reads: “The saying is sure (πιστὸς ὁ λόγος) and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1:15). Based on this fundamental statement he sets “the healthy words (λόγοι) of our Lord Jesus Christ” (6:3) apart from “fighting about words” (λογομαχία: 6:4). To deviate from faith leads to “idle talk” (εἰς ματαιολογίαν: 1:6), as is stated in the opening passage of the letter. Even worse: Those “who desire to be teachers of the law” do not even themselves understand “either what they are saying or the things about which they make assertions” (v. 7). At the end of the letter, Timothy is warned to “avoid the godless empty talk (κενοφωνίας) and contradictions of pseudo-knowledge” (ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως: 6:20)⁹⁷. The term *κενοφωνία* indicates that what the opponents utter is no more than noises without meaning. Yet, this “knowledge” seems to spread within the *ekklesiā*. Considering the variety of meanings and uses of *γνώσις* in the New Testament, it seems unwise to assume that gnostic or protognostic currents are in the background here.⁹⁸ Rather, in combination with the words or sayings to which the letter repeatedly returns, we should understand *γνώσις* in terms of a knowledge which the itinerant teachers have of such sayings. If we associate the rival teachers with representatives of the Jesus movement as Barclay does (see above), the obvious conclusion is to think of sayings attributed to Jesus.⁹⁹ Consequently, the first two aspects just discussed suggest that itinerant representatives of a Jesus tradition are in view here.

In return for passing on their knowledge, the wandering charismatics received support from certain members of “Timothy’s” assembly, which brings us to the third aspect: Those who deviate from the pious doctrine (τῆ κατ’ εὐσέβειαν διδασκαλία: 1 Tim 6:3) are reproached for considering piety a means to profit (πορισμὸν εἶναι τὴν εὐσέβειαν: 1 Tim 6:5).¹⁰⁰ The subsequent appeal to “godliness combined with contentment” (εὐσέβεια μετὰ ἀνταρκείας: 1 Tim 6:6)¹⁰¹ connects piety to self-sufficiency (*ἀντάρκεια*) which is “a favorite virtue among philosophers, particularly among Stoics and Cynics.”¹⁰² The choice of words picks up on a widespread attitude which viewed philosophical teaching in return for remuneration as contemptible.¹⁰³ Within this frame of reference, Paul

⁹⁷ Translation by Witherington III, *Tit, 1–2 Tim, 1–3 John*, 291–92.

⁹⁸ Cf. Ong, “Is there a Heresy,” in *Paul and Gnosis*, 123.

⁹⁹ Like Q or the Gospel of Thomas.

¹⁰⁰ The author of 2 Timothy is faced with a different perception of their opponents’ piety and must concede that they are “holding to the outward form of godliness (ἔχοντες μὴ φῶσιν εὐσεβείας) but denying its power” (2 Tim 3:5). Apparently, the godliness of the addressed bore fruit within the community, considering “the outward form” being the decisive aspect of *εὐσέβεια*.

¹⁰¹ The theme is semantically taken up again by “we will be content” (*ἀρκεσθησόμεθα*: 1 Tim 6:8).

¹⁰² Malherbe, “Godliness I,” 393. Itinerant charismatics of the Jesus movement, such as those appearing in the sayings gospel Q, were very similar to Cynics in appearance and ethos, cf. Theißen, “Legitimation,” 211. Goulet-Cazé, *Kynismus und Christentum*, 178, offers a nuanced comparison of Cynics and itinerant Jesus-followers, pointing out: “Die frappierendste Ähnlichkeit beider Bewegungen besteht zweifellos in der Umkehrung konventioneller Werte und hierarchischer Verhältnisse sowie in der privilegierten Position, die den ärmsten und hilflosesten Menschen gewährt wird.”

¹⁰³ Cf. Malherbe, “Godliness I,” 388–89. According to Schmeller, 2 *Kor II*, 167–68, there was an ongoing quarrel between those who could afford to offer their lessons for free and those who earned their living by teaching.

accuses the itinerant teachers of exploiting the piety of the church members who support them. In other words, the rival teachers imagine their εὐσέβεια as a means of gain (1 Tim 6:5). For Chris Hoklotubbe “the threatening prospect that wealthy benefactors might financially support and spread the teachings of rival religious entrepreneurs animates the paraenesis of 1 Timothy 6.”¹⁰⁴ In my view, this rather reflects the actual situation. What animates the paraenesis is that resources like money and/or hospitality are *currently* flowing from members of the assembly in the direction of itinerant teachers.

To get a clearer picture of the supporters, we may think of the wealthy women to whose θεοσέβεια the author appeals in 1 Tim 2:10. There could have been some kind of patronage relationship between them and the external teachers. That financially independent women would act as benefactresses or patrons on behalf of wandering philosophers or missionaries is perfectly in line with what has been outlined concerning Phoebe as προστάτις of Paul (Rom 16:2), the female supporters of the disciples (Luke 8:3), and others (see under 3).

Turning to the fourth of the above characteristics, the opponents obviously maintain Jewish traditions. The author brings this up several times in a derogatory manner.¹⁰⁵ The verdicts aim at people falsely claiming to be “teachers of the law” (νομοδιδάσκαλοι: 1 Tim 1:7) and deride an inclination to Jewish traditions as “myths and endless genealogies” (1 Tim 1:4).¹⁰⁶ This depiction accords well with the assumption that the group addressed is rooted in the Jesus tradition.

Obviously, the letter writer sees the wandering teachers as a threat to his assembly and his vision of the church. Historically, the constellation of itinerant charismatics and local community leaders is generally characterized by a close and at the same time conflictual symbiosis.¹⁰⁷ Various traditions, maintained in different lifestyles, asserted their claims and led to many conflicts that permeate the history of emerging Christianity. Representing a Christian household model, the author of 1 Timothy seeks to transfer privileges of itinerant missionaries to resident church leaders. With the proverbial quote “The laborer deserves to be paid” (5:18) he takes up a logion that is found in Paul’s defense against the earliest itinerant missionaries around Peter and James in 1 Cor 9:9. It is also ascribed to

¹⁰⁴ Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*, 139.

¹⁰⁵ While bearing in mind that the letter to Titus might not stem from the same author, he [who? I think this should be made explicit] writes in a similar fashion about “rebellious people, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision” (Tit 1:10), “genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law” (Tit 3:9), as well as “Jewish myths [...] [and] commandments of those who reject the truth” (Tit 1:14). Cf. Schreiber, “Häresie im Kanon,” 201; Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 176–78; Häfner, “Die Pastoralbriefe,” in *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 474. Due to this, to speak of a general “Israel-Vergessenheit” of the PE, as Theobald, *Israel-Vergessenheit*, suggests, seems misleading.

¹⁰⁶ Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 178, sees this as an argument for pseudepigraphy. Other than the genuine epistles of Paul which “reflect an inner-Jewish debate [...], the PE express an external censure of Jewish traditions.”

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Theißen, *Jesusbewegung*, 80. The *Didache* struggles to distinguish the wandering prophets it holds in high esteem from impostors who seek to be fed by the community for profit. Besides the instructions in *Did.* 11 on the reception of a true prophet who may not remain in the church for more than three days, *Did.* 12:5 warns against a χριστέμπορος – “Christmonger”: He who wants to remain idle during his stay instead of working for his food proves to be such and is to be avoided.

Jesus in Luke 10:7, using it to justify the disciples' claim to support through the homes to which they are admitted. These disciples are closely related to the itinerant charismatics with whom Paul is struggling in Corinth (see 1 Cor 9:5). Put another way, in 1 Timothy the authority of resident officials is legitimized with a saying that the synoptic Jesus uses to bolster entitlements to maintenance of non-settled missionaries, represented by the first disciples.¹⁰⁸ In short: A sedentary church authority tries to appropriate the tradition of wandering charismatics.¹⁰⁹

The resulting image is that of wandering charismatics of Jewish affiliation,¹¹⁰ whose teachings attract high status women in the community. By supporting the itinerants as their students and spreading their "knowledge" (γνώσις: 1 Tim 6:20) within the congregation they cause offence among groups that strive for a different social order.¹¹¹ According to "Paul" the women in question should stop acting as benefactresses to rival traveling teachers and instead provide their funds for internal community purposes. These would include special allotments of food or money to widows in need and male resident leaders.¹¹²

5 Channeling women's θεοσέβεια

To conclude our argument, let us once again consider the passage about women's piety examined at the beginning of the paper, this time focusing on the following sub-clause:

...ἀλλ' ὁ πρέπει γυναῖξιν ἐπαγγελλομέναις θεοσέβειαν, δι' ἔργων ἀγαθῶν.

...but with good works, as is proper for women who profess reverence for God.
(1 Tim 2:10)

Nearly every word in this quote belongs to the semantic field of ancient civic benefaction. It has been argued above that this applies to θεοσέβεια, to be interpreted as an attitude of beneficence which a pagan sympathizer displays towards Jewish recipients. Examining the collocation ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι θεοσέβειαν further corroborates this *Sitz im Leben*: The writer employs the term θεοσέβεια as something the addressed women would "profess". Yet, the verb ἐπαγγέλλομαι should be translated slightly differently here, namely as

¹⁰⁸ Likewise, in 1 Tim 4:14, the gift of prophecy, a characteristic feature of the itinerant missionaries who are also addressed as prophets, is appropriated by the church officials.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Barclay, "Household Networks," 282 fn. 58.

¹¹⁰ Accordingly, they have a certain phenotypic similarity to the "Hebrews" against whom Paul lashes out in 2 Cor 11:22.

¹¹¹ Barclay, 286, sees a conflict between two visions of the church, namely a school model that encompasses itinerant as well as resident life-styles vs. a traditional household model.

¹¹² In my view, rather "to reign in controversial leaders who promote women preaching in the assembly and an equality among slaves and masters," as suggested by Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*, 7, the author's aim is to reign in those women eager to learn from the controversial leaders.

“promise, offer” or “confirm” (LSJ).¹¹³ Within the framework of ancient reciprocity an *ἐπαγγελία* results from a negotiation over a benefaction: The *ἐπαγγελία*, *pollicitatio* in Latin, denotes a kind of ritual in the civic assembly of a Greco-Roman city, when wealthy honoraries are publicly asked, or sometimes rather bluntly urged, to contribute to a certain public expenditure.

Es war nicht ungewöhnlich, im Falle des Geldbedarfs für öffentliche Gebäude oder andere Zwecke die Sammlung freiwilliger Beträge zu beschließen. Die ‘Zusage’ (*ἐπαγγελία*) bzw. das ‘Versprechen’ (*ὑπόσχεσις*) eines Geldbetrages, eines Baues oder anderer Leistungen wurden von den Betreffenden in der Volksversammlung abgegeben und dann schriftlich hinterlegt.¹¹⁴

The promise to make a donation for (parts of) a public building or to help the city out in times of need with grain, oil, money, or in other ways, was frequently preceded by fierce disputes in the *ekklēsia* or even on the doorstep of the homes of wealthy citizens. Since by no means all dignitaries felt prompted by their sense of honor to make generous benefactions, many had to be urged to do so by their fellow citizens.¹¹⁵ That someone was publicly called upon was known as a *παράκλησις*, i.e. an exhortation or summons to a contribution. This was noted in honorific inscriptions in phrases which describe a benefactor as having been “summoned by the *dēmos*” (*παρακληθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου*) or the like and, of course, that he or she had then complied with this request.¹¹⁶ When the reluctant donor was eventually pressured into promising a certain amount of money, the benefaction was likely to be acknowledged in an honorary decree afterwards, often labeled as an *ἀγαθόν* or *ἀγαθὰ* in the plural, bestowed by a “pious” (*εὐσεβής*) benefactor to their most-beloved hometown.¹¹⁷ In connection with promising benefactions Kloppenborg mentions the *epidosis* (*ἐπίδοσις*) as a type of public subscription that aimed at “maximal participation by citizens [...] and other residents.”¹¹⁸

On the basis of the evidence presented I offer the following reconstruction: Female members of the assembly with some money feel attracted to teachings of wandering charismatics with a Jewish or Judaeo-Christian affiliation. The women spread what they learn from this tradition, allegedly sayings attributed to Jesus, within their congregation while supporting these itinerant teachers, presumably with money and/or hospitality. This kind of beneficence practiced by pagan God-fearers (*θεοσεβεῖς*) on behalf of Jewish beneficiaries was known at the time as *θεοσεβεία*. The *auctor ad Timotheum* picks up the

¹¹³ See also 1 Tim 6:21. On the following cf. Adrian, *Mutuum date*, 233–51, see also Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 248–52.

¹¹⁴ Quaß, *Die Honoratiorenschicht*, 373.

¹¹⁵ On the ennui of many civic benefactors regarding the mechanisms of euergetism see Macro, “Cities,” in *Aufstieg Und Niedergang Der Römischen Welt*, 687–94.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Quaß, *Die Honoratiorenschicht*, 300–301. The occurrences of *παράκλησις* in Luke 6:24 and Acts 4:36 are interpreted in this vein by Adrian, *Mutuum date*, 140–142, 312, 320.

¹¹⁷ According to Stephan, *Honoratioren – Griechen – Polisbürger*, 177, benefactors often referred to their *polis* as their “sweetest home-town” (*γλυκυτατὴ πατρίς*/“allersüßeste Vaterstadt”).

¹¹⁸ Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 249.

wording which the Jewish teachers could have used to honor their benefactresses. He might do so with a mocking undertone to indicate that he is well aware of where the women's funds are currently going. At the same time, by using the phrase ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι θεοσέβειαν δι' ἔργων ἀγαθῶν, he asks these women to pledge benefactions for congregational purposes instead. What these purposes are can possibly be gleaned from another passage, namely 1 Tim 5, where "Paul" defines the groups that should be entitled to support from the central church fund. Destitute widows of a certain age are named as well as the new male elite of elders for taking on the task of teaching in the assembly. Comparing the honor or double honor with allotments in Greco-Roman associations on the occasion of banquets it can be inferred that widows and elders are assigned certain amounts of food or money distributed on particular occasions like congregational meals.

If it is accurate to assume that the women in question are among those who are encouraged to donate for the purposes just mentioned, they presumably face an unpleasant situation: They should stop teaching publicly and stop supporting their own tutors. Instead, they are asked to participate in providing the honorary portions that are distributed to widows and, even in double the amount, for elders as a token of appreciation for their teaching in the assembly, precisely the privilege which they themselves are denied. Thus, it seems justified to ask whether these women experience due "recognition of largesse"¹¹⁹, as Kloppenborg puts it. To ensure that benefits keep flowing, it is essential to properly recognize those benefits already received. In this case, it would be up to the author to express appreciation to the benefactresses in the community. Yet, there is no mention of tangible honorary awards for services performed on behalf of the *ekklēsia* except for the elders, if the "double honor" in 1 Tim 5:17 is interpreted correctly. Insofar as the female God-fearers can be counted among the prosperous community members addressed in 1 Tim 6:17–19,¹²⁰ at least the promise of a "foundation for the future" (6:19) would apply to them, too.¹²¹ In view of this rather bleak outlook Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza is probably right to state "that the writings suggesting this kind of patriarchal dynamic are *prescriptive* rather than *descriptive*, since the male clergy were often dependent upon wealthy and influential women even into late Antiquity."¹²²

¹¹⁹ Kloppenborg, 256.

¹²⁰ Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, *Memory of Her*, 287; Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*, 132.

¹²¹ Something like *silence is golden* could be inferred, but that is not made explicit. In contrast, 1 Timothy takes a purely derogatory stance against "meaningless talk" (ματαιολογίαν: 1 Tim 1:6) and "empty chatter" (κενοφωνίας: 1 Tim 6:20) in connection with so-called knowledge. Only in 2 Timothy is performing good works while abstaining from any teaching activity associated with a vague award, when the image of different utensils in a large house is employed: Those vessels that keep themselves pure from strife over words (λογομαχεῖν: 2 Tim 2:14) "will become special [or: honorable] utensils, dedicated and useful to the owner of the house, ready for every good work" (εὐχρηστον τῷ δεσπότῃ, εἰς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἡτοιμασμένον: 2 Tim 2:21). In opposition to these silent vessels willing to benefit the *pater familias* are "lovers of themselves, lovers of money (φιλάργυροι) [...], ungrateful (ἀχάριστοι) [...], haters of good (ἀφιλάγαθοι)" (3:2–3).

¹²² Schüssler Fiorenza, *Memory of Her*, 310, emphasis in original.

Bibliography

- Adrian, Matthias. *Mutuuum Date Nihil Desperantes (Lk 6,35): Reziprozität Bei Lukas*. NTOA/StUNT 119. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019.
- Ameling, Walter. *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis: Band II: Kleinasien (=IJO II)*. TSAJ 99. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004.
- Barclay, John M. G. *Paul and the Gift*. Grand Rapids (MI): Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2015.
- Barclay, John M. G. "Household Networks and Early Christian Economics: A Fresh Study of 1 Timothy 5,3–16." *NTS* 66, no. 2 (2020): 268–87.
- Bieberstein, Sabine. "Gemeinde, Kirche, Amt." In *Neues Testament: Zentrale Themen*. Edited by Lukas Bormann, 197–222. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Theologie, 2014.
- Crook, Zeba A. *Reconceptualizing Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*. BZNBW 130. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004.
- Dunn, James D. G. *Romans 9–16*. WBC 38B. Waco (TX): Word Books, 1988.
- Dunn, James D. G. *Beginning from Jerusalem. Christianity in the Making 2*. Grand Rapids (MI): Eerdmans, 2009.
- Gielen, Marlis. "Die Wahrnehmung gemeindlicher Leitungsfunktionen durch Frauen im Spiegel der Paulusbriefe." In *Neutestamentliche Ämtermodelle im Kontext: Tagung der „Arbeitsgemeinschaft Katholischer Neutestamentlerinnen und Neutestamentler“ im Februar 2009 in Münster*. Edited by Thomas Schmeller, Martin Ebner and Rudolf Hoppe, 129–65. QD 239. Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 2010.
- Goulet-Cazé, Marie-Odile. *Kynismus und Christentum in der Antike*. Edited by Marco Frenschkowski. NTOA/StUNT 113. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016.
- Griffin, Miriam. "De Beneficiis and Roman Society." *Journal of Roman Studies* 93 (2003): 92–113.
- Häfner, Gerd. "Die Pastoralbriefe (1 Tim/2 Tim/Tit)." In *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*. Edited by Martin Ebner et al. 3rd ed., 459–83. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 2019.
- Harrison, James R. *Paul's Language of Grace in Its Graeco-Roman Context*. WUNT II 172. Tübingen, 2003.
- Herzer, Jens. "Zwischen Mythos Und Wahrheit: Neue Perspektiven Auf Die Sogenannten Pastoralbriefe." *NTS* 63, no. 3 (2017): 428–50.
- Hoklotubbe, T. Christopher. *Civilized Piety: The Rhetoric of Pietas in the Pastoral Epistles and the Roman Empire*. Waco (TX): Baylor University Press, 2017.
- Horrell, David. "Leadership Patterns and the Development of Ideology in Early Christianity." *SocRel(W)* 58, no. 4 (1997): 323–41.
- Klauck, Hans-Josef. "Vom Reden und Schweigen der Frauen in der Urkirche." In *Gemeinde, Amt, Sakrament: Neutestamentliche Perspektiven*. Edited by Hans-Josef Klauck, 232–45. Würzburg: Echter, 1989.
- Kloppenborg, John S. *Christ's Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City*. New Haven (CT): Yale University Press, 2019.

- Koch, Dietrich-Alex. "The God-Fearers Between Facts and Fiction." *ST* 60, no. 1 (2006): 62–90.
- Lendon, Jon E. *Empire of Honour: The Art of Government in the Roman World*. Oxford u. a.: Clarendon Press, 1997.
- Levinskaya, Irina A. *The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting*. The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting 5. Grand Rapids (MI): Eerdmans, 1996.
- Lohse, Eduard. "Die Entstehung des Bischofsamtes in der frühen Christenheit." *ZNW* 71, 1–2 (1980): 58–73.
- MacDonald, Margaret Y. "Women in the Pauline Churches." In *The Blackwell Companion to Paul*. Edited by Stephen Westerholm, 268–84. Blackwell Companions to Religion. Chichester, West Sussex, Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- MacGillivray, Erlend D. "Romans 16:2, Προστάτις/προστάτης, and the Application of Reciprocal Relationships to New Testament Texts." *NovT* 53, no. 2 (2011): 183–99.
- Macro, Anthony D. "The Cities of Asia Minor Under the Roman Imperium." In *Aufstieg Und Niedergang Der Römischen Welt: Politische Geschichte; Halbbd. 2, (Provinzen Und Randvölker: Griechischer Balkanraum; Kleinasien, Forts.)*. Edited by Hildegard Temporini. Reprint 2014. ANRW 7. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016.
- Malherbe, Abraham J. "Godliness, Self-Sufficiency, Greed, and the Enjoyment of Wealth: 1 Timothy 6:3–19: Part I." *NovT* 52, no. 4 (2010): 376–405.
- Malherbe, Abraham J. "Godliness, Self-Sufficiency, Greed, and the Enjoyment of Wealth: 1 Timothy 6:3–19. Part II." *Novum Testamentum* 53, no. 1 (2011): 73–96.
- Morgan, Teresa. *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2015.
- Oberlinner, Lorenz. *Die Pastoralbriefe. Folge 1, Kommentar zum ersten Timotheusbrief*. HthKNT 11,2,1. Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 1994.
- Ong, Hughson T. "Is There a Heresy in the Pastorals? A Sociolinguistic Analysis of 1 and 2 Timothy via the Ethnography of Communication Theory." In *Paul and Gnosis*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and David I. Yoon, 119–38. Pauline Studies 9. Leiden, Boston (MA): Brill, 2016.
- Osiek, Carolyn. "The Politics of Patronage and the Politics of Kinship: The Meeting of the Ways." *BTB* 39, no. 3 (2009): 143–52.
- Paget, James Carlton. "Hellenistic and Early Roman Period Jewish Missionary Efforts in the Diaspora." In *The Rise and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries of the Common Era*. Edited by Clare K. Rothschild and Jens Schröter, 11–49. WUNT 301. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.
- Pesch, Rudolf. *Die Apostelgeschichte. Teilband 2: Apg 13–28*. 2nd ed. 2 vols. EKK V. Zürich/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verl., 2014.
- Quaß, Friedemann. *Die Honoratiorenschicht in Den Städten Des Griechischen Ostens: Untersuchungen Zur Politischen Und Sozialen Entwicklung in Hellenistischer Und Römischer Zeit*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1993.
- Rajak, Tessa. "Benefactors in the Greco-Jewish Diaspora." In *The Jewish Dialogue with Greece and Rome: Studies in Cultural and Social Interaction*, 335–91. AGJU 48. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

- Reynolds, Joyce, and Robert Tannenbaum. *Jews and God-Fearers at Aphrodisias: Greek Inscriptions with Commentary: Texts from the Excavations at Aphrodisias*. With the assistance of Robert Tannenbaum. Cambridge, 1987.
- Robert, Louis. *Nouvelles Inscriptions de Sardes. I, Décret Hellénistique de Sardes. Dédicaces aux Dieux Indigènes. Inscriptions de la Synagogue*. Paris, 1964.
- Roloff, Jürgen. *Der erste Brief an Timotheus*. Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 15. Zürich: Benziger, 1988.
- Saller, Richard P. *Personal Patronage Under the Early Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1982.
- Schmeller, Thomas. *Der zweite Brief an die Korinther: Teilband 2: 2Kor 7,5–3,13*. EKK VIII/2. Neukirchen-Vluyn, Ostfildern: Neukirchener Theologie, 2015.
- Schöllgen, Georg. “Die Διπλή Τιμή Von 1Tim 5,17.” *ZNW* 80, 3-4 (1989): 232–39.
- Schreiber, Stefan. “Häresie im Kanon? Zum historischen Bild der dritten christlichen Generation.” *Biblische Zeitschrift N.F.* 58, no. 2 (2014): 186–210.
- Schumacher, Thomas. “Den Römern Ein Römer. Die Paulinischen Glaubensaussagen Vor Dem Hintergrund Des Römisch-Lateinischen Fides-Begriffs.” In *Glaube: Das Verständnis Des Glaubens Im Frühen Christentum Und in Seiner Jüdischen Und Hellenistisch-Römischen Umwelt*. Edited by Jörg Frey, Benjamin Schließer and Nadine Ueberschaer, 299–344. WUNT 373. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.
- Schüssler Fiorenza, Elisabeth. *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*. New York (NY): Crossroad, 1983.
- Standhartinger, Angela. ““Eusebeia“ in Den Pastoralbriefen. Ein Beitrag Zum Einfluss Römischen Denkens Auf Das Entstehende Christentum.” *NovT* 48, no. 1 (2006): 51–82.
- Stegemann, Ekkehard W., and Wolfgang Stegemann. *Urchristliche Sozialgeschichte: Die Anfänge Im Judentum Und Die Christusgemeinden in Der Mediterranen Welt*. Stuttgart, 1995.
- Stephan, Eckhard. *Honoratioren – Griechen – Polisbürger: Kollektive Identitäten innerhalb der Oberschichte des kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien*. Hyp. 143. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002.
- Theißen, Gerd. “Wanderradikalismus: Literatursoziologische Aspekte Der Überlieferung Von Worten Jesu Im Urchristentum.” *ZThK* 70, no. 3 (1973): 245–71.
- Theißen, Gerd. “Legitimation Und Lebensunterhalt: Ein Beitrag Zur Soziologie Urchristlicher Missionare.” *NTS* 21, no. 02 (1975): 192–221.
- Theißen, Gerd. *Die Jesusbewegung: Sozialgeschichte einer Revolution der Werte*. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verl.-Haus, 2004.
- Theißen, Gerd. “The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity.” In *The Blackwell Companion to Paul*. Edited by Stephen Westerholm, 248–67. Wiley Blackwell Companions to Religion. Chichester (UK): Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- Theobald, Michael. *Israel-Vergessenheit in den Pastoralbriefen: Ein neuer Vorschlag zu ihrer historisch-theologischen Verortung im 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr. unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Ignatius-Briefe*. SBS 229. Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2016.

- Tiwald, Markus. *Das Frühjudentum und die Anfänge des Christentums: Ein Studienbuch*. 1. Auflage. Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament Heft 208 = 11. Folge, Heft 8. Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2016.
- Trebilco, Paul R. *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor*. MSSNTS 69. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Veit-Engelmann, Michaela. *Unzertrennliche Drillinge? Motivsemantische Untersuchungen zum literarischen Verhältnis der Pastoralbriefe*. BZNW 192. Berlin: De Gruyter 2012.
- Veyne, Paul. *Le Pain et le Cirque: Sociologie Historique d'un Pluralisme Politique*. L'Univers Historique. Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1976.
- Wagener, Ulrike. *Die Ordnung des "Hauses Gottes": Der Ort von Frauen in der Ekklesiologie und Ethik der Pastoralbriefe*. WUNT II 65. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994.
- Wilker, Julia. "...und machten diese gewissermaßen zu einem Teil der ihnen." Prose-lyten, Gottesfürchtige und Sympathisanten und der Normentransfer zwischen Juden und Nichtjuden im 1. Jahrhundert n. Chr." In *Athen, Rom, Jerusalem*. Edited by Gian F. Chiai et al., 55–76. ESt.NF 66. Regensburg: Pustet, 2012.
- Williams, Margaret H. *Jews in a Graeco-Roman Environment*. WUNT 312. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.
- Witherington III, Ben. *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy and 1–3 John*. Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians 1. Downers Grove (IL): IVP Academic, 2006.
- Zamfir, Korinna. *Men and Women in the Household of God: A Contextual Approach to Roles and Ministries in the Pastoral Epistles*. NTOA/StUNT 103. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013.
- Zeller, Dieter. *Charis bei Philon und Paulus*. SBS 142. Stuttgart: Verl. Kath. Bibelwerk, 1990.