



(RE)PRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW AND LUKE-ACTS

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ment: Q's image or its retention in Luke does concern women's ordination. On including the parable in Q, see Kloppenborg, "Jesus and the Parables" 311-17; Jacobson, *First Gospel* 227.

60. Then again, the juxtaposition of the two parables may have suggested to Q hearers that the man and woman were married or members of the same (temporarily ill-tuned) household.

61. See Corley, "Women and Gender" ms. 20-35, esp. note 59. See also William Arnal's "Reconstruction of Q 7:29-30," paper presented to the International Q Project, Claremont, CA, May 1994, which Corley follows. The reconstruction, including "prostututes," was rejected by the majority of members.

62. Batten, "More Queries" 48; Corley, "Women and Gender" ms. 4. The point is also made by those supporting Matthean priority (Farmer, *Gospel of Jesus* 76).

63. Schottroff, "Sayings Source Q" 523.

64. See n. 18 above.

65. Arnal, "Gendered Couplets" 2, who offers several examples from contemporary literature of forensically based pairs.

66. *Ibid.* 12.

67. On relating the saying to dining rather than to "two men on a bed," see John Kloppenborg, "Symbolic Eschatology and the Apocalypticism of Q," *HTR* 80 (1987) 287-306, esp. 302 n. 57. I thank Kathleen Corley for this reference. See also Corley's *Private Women, Public Meals: Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993) 117-18. In *GThom.* 61, the reference to the dining couch is explicit.

68. See the sage comments of Allison, *The Jesus Tradition* 43-46.

69. For comparative models using different databases from within the canon, as well as from Greek, Roman, and Jewish outside sources, see inter alia, Schottroff, *Lydia's Sisters*; Schüssler Fiorenza, *Jesus*; Batten, "More Queries"; and Arnal, "Gendered Couplets."

70. Cf. Levine, "Yeast of Eden" 13.

71. *Ibid.* 32.

72. With thanks to Dale C. Allison, Jr., Mary Rose D'Angelo, William E. Arnal, Kathleen Corley, Jay Geller, Deirdre Good, Ross Kraemer, and Adele Reinhartz for critical comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.

Re-presentations is a particularly apt description of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke; these works in some sense present Jesus again by rethinking Mark's narrative so as to integrate the sayings of Q. Both provide (independent) stories about the birth and childhood of Jesus that supply Jesus with the father he lacks in Mark (6:3-4) and bring the narratives closer to ancient biographies. Both aim at cleaner narrative and more elegant diction. Both texts use language and forms that associate them with the Bible, offering themselves as an extension or completion of the sacred writings. For both, interpretation of the Bible is central, but they use very different exegetical techniques to identify and explain Jesus and the early Christian community. Both carefully supply resurrection appearances and commands to the disciples that provide for the continuance, transformation, and growth of the community. In the case of Luke, this effort produced a second volume, the Acts of the Apostles. And each has been read both as the most inclusive and as the most repressive of the gospels for women.

Since both authors reuse material on women and gender from Mark and Q, one entrée into their representations of women is to examine the ways these authors revise the stories about women from Mark and the gendered sayings from Q. But this approach must be used with caution and attention to context; their revisions respond to a wide variety of factors that include, but are not limited to, the gender prescriptions and assumptions that characterized the community. For instance, both Matthew 12:41-42 and Luke 11:31-32 use a saying from Q that contrasts the wickedness of "this generation" to the Ninevites, who repented at the preaching of Jonah, and the queen of the South, who came from the ends of the earth to hear Solomon. They use the examples in reverse order,

but this reversal probably corresponds not to the respective genders of the queen of the South and Jonah, but to the authors' preferences in christology. In Matthew, the comparison with the queen is climactic because Matthew prefers Wisdom christology; Matthew's genealogy identifies Jesus as a descendant of David through Solomon (1:7). In Luke, the climactic comparison is with Jonah because Luke prefers a prophet christology; Luke's genealogy identifies Jesus as a descendant of David through Nathan (3:31).

Similar problems arise with the attempt to interpret the omission of stories or sayings that refer to women. Mark's generous widow (Mark 12:41-44) does not appear in Matthew. But any conclusions about gender implications have to take into account Matthew's interest in joining the tirade against the Pharisees from Q (Matthew 23) to a revised version of Mark 13 that predicts the Jewish war, the fall of the temple, and the coming judgment (Matt 24:1-26:1). The Gospel of Luke does not reuse Mark's story of the Greek (Syro-Phoenician) woman. But is the story omitted because the author is hostile to uppity women or wishes to restrict the gentile mission to the male apostles Peter and Paul? In fact, the story of the Greek woman falls into the so-called "great omission," the lengthy section of Mark (6:45-8:26) entirely absent from Luke. If the author knew and omitted the whole section, the omission of this story need not result from Luke's views on gender, but from other concerns.² Further, it is possible there was no deliberate omission; Luke may have used an edition of Mark that did not include this section at all.³

Matthew

Matthew is widely believed to have been written at the end of the first century in Syria.⁴ Much attention has been devoted to its "Jewish background," and Kathleen Corley's claim that Matthew is "most Jewish" and "most egalitarian" was made as a salutary antidote to the tendency among feminists and other scholars to explain away reflections of patriarchy, misogyny, or both in early Christian texts as an inheritance from Judaism.⁵ Indeed, Judaism is so widely taken to be the context of Matthew that one scholar refers to "Matthew's Christian Jewish community."⁶ Such characterizations are based on the centrality of legal and exegetical traditions to the gospel. The phrase "a scribe disciplined to God's reign" in Matthew 13:52 appears to be an apt description of Matthew and, in fact, of the communal life reflected in the gospel. The forms of scriptural interpretation the gospel uses and the legal and pious observances it commends resemble traditions from either of the two forms of ancient Judaism most familiar to Christian interpreters, that is, either the texts of Qumran (the Dead Sea Scrolls) or rabbinic Judaism, whose emergence appears to have been roughly contemporaneous with the writing of Matthew.⁷ The only evidence that some rabbinic practices and opinions were extant in the nineties of the common era is the appearance of similar traditions in Matthew, for the surviving major sources of rabbinic Judaism began to be compiled only in the third century CE. While analogies between Matthew's community and Jewish communities like

Qumran and the rabbinic groups are real and important, claiming that Matthew is "most Jewish" underestimates the possibility that the other gospels reflect or react to forms of Judaism that did not survive beyond the first or second century. It also obscures other problematic indicators of the gospel's context and concerns.

Matthew indulges in an anti-Jewish polemic that has contributed heavily to the history of Christian anti-Judaism. A particularly virulent and lengthy revision of Q's tirade against the Pharisees prefaces and justifies the predictions of the fall of the temple (23:1-26:1). This gospel's version of the Roman trial depicts Pilate as washing his hands of the blood of Jesus (and absolving the Roman government of the responsibility for Jesus' death), while the Jews accept blood guilt for Jesus' death on themselves and their children (27:24-25). The final commission to the eleven commanding them to make disciples of all the Gentiles may imply the mission to Jews is over (28:19); it certainly assumes a significant and growing gentile element in the community.⁸

In the Gospel of Matthew, the material from Mark and Q (as well as other unknown sources) was reorganized and integrated into tightly constructed units composing a "messianic biography" that gives a narrative explanation of Jesus as son of David and son of God (1:1, 15).⁹ Particularly noteworthy are five sermons or blocks of teaching, which have sometimes been interpreted as an attempt to model the book on the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible): the Sermon on Mount (5:1-7:28), a missionary instruction (9:34-11:1), a parables discourse (13:1-53), a "church order" (17:24-19:1), and a tirade against the Pharisees that leads into an apocalyptic speech (23:1-26:1).¹⁰ These sermons, which bear some resemblance to the type of ancient collections called "words of the wise," by no means exhaust the teaching of Jesus in Matthew. And in Matthew disciples are primarily learners or students; the invitation to discipleship is "learn of me" (11:29).

The importance of teaching in Matthew raises the question of whether women are treated as disciples in Matthew. Matthew's frequent references to the "twelve (or eleven) disciples" have been read by some interpreters as excluding women from discipleship.¹¹ The best starting point for considering this question appears to be the women at the cross.

There were there many women watching from afar who had followed Jesus from Galilee ministering to him; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. (27:55-56)¹²

As in Mark, three women are named as witnesses to the death of Jesus. In Matthew, not only the three named women, but also the great crowd of women, are explicitly said to have 'followed Jesus from Galilee.' With the latter phrase, the author elides Mark's note that the women had been followers of Jesus in Galilee, and it is possible to see this revision as changing their role from long-term disciples to mere companions on the journey. But the use of the word "ministering" in conjunction with "followed" makes any demotion unlikely. Two of the named women, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, provide the two witnesses Matthew deems necessary (18:16; Deut 19:15)

to connect the death of Jesus, the place where he was buried, and the empty tomb (27:55-6, 61; 28:1-8). At the tomb, the two women prove absolutely faithful, comprehending, and obedient; they withstand the spectacular descent of the angel and delight in his message, while the guards Matthew has introduced into the scene are comatose with fear. The two women also become the first to see the risen Jesus in a new very brief narrative (Matt 28:9-10) in which they are given a message for the disciples.

The woman who anoints Jesus (Matt 26:2-16//Mark 14:1-11) remains a prophet who both designates Jesus as Messiah and predicts his death by preparing him for burial. Kathleen Corley notes that in Matthew the woman seems to be among the diners.¹³ She is contrasted not only with the pusillanimous high priests (Matt 26:2-5) and the mercenary Judas (26:14-16), but also with the disciples, who are the ones who object to her "waste" of the ointment. The women at the tomb do not go to anoint Jesus, so Mark's ironic connection between the witnesses and this woman, who has already accomplished this task, is lost in Matthew. The wife of Pilate is also given a bit part in the passion narrative; she is the medium through whom a dream warns Pilate of Jesus' innocence (27:19). On the whole, the role of the women in these scenes seems to have been enhanced rather than diminished; if anything, Matthew is more conscious of the role of women as witnesses than Mark is.

Other issues in the treatment of women in Matthew surround the "mother of the Zebedees" who replaces Salome at the cross. This figure was introduced into the narrative to put forward the request Mark assigns to her two sons, the request for places on his right and left hand in his reign (Matt 20:20-23; compare Mark 10:35-40). By responding that those places are for the ones for whom they have been prepared by God (20:23), Jesus points forward to the two brigands who would be crucified on his right and left (27:38). Thus the author creates a new dramatic irony by making the mother of the sons of Zebedee a witness to this fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy. She disappears after the scene at the cross; it is hard not to conclude that, like Judas, she has learned her lesson. And the characterization of the mother has misogynist overtones. In making the request, she performs the legitimate maternal role of brokering the status and future of her sons.¹⁴ But the author uses her to remove the taint of misunderstanding and ambition from her two sons and at the same time evokes a stereotype of women as liable to cause competition and dissension among men that was a widespread feature of philosophical and literary debates about marriage.¹⁵

Whereas the first "teaching" of Jesus' ministry in Mark turns out to be an exorcism in the synagogue (Mark 1:21-28), Matthew's author supplanted this narrative with three chapters of practical wisdom, the Sermon on the Mount (5-7). Miracles come second in Matthew's narrative, organized into a suite of ten miracles interspersed with calls and teaching on discipleship (8:1-9:34). With the missionary sermon (9:35-11:1), these miracles provide the "deeds of the Messiah" (11:2-6) that identify Jesus as the "one to come." The cure of Peter's mother-in-law (8:14-15//Mark 1:29-31) is presented with two other miracles that illustrate Matthew's claim that Jesus' cures fulfill Isaiah 53:4 (Matt

8:17). As in Mark, she demonstrates and responds to her cure by "serving/ministering." In Matthew, her cure, with the many cures summarized in 8:16, leads to the emergence of new disciples and teaching on the cost of discipleship (Matt 8:18-22).

The double miracle of Jairus' daughter and the woman with the flow of blood (Matt 9:18-26//Mark 5:21-43) are also set into the context of discipleship; they immediately follow the call of the disciple named Matthew and the controversy stories that defend the practices of Jesus' disciples (Matt 9:9-17//Mark 2:13-22). Both miracle accounts are drastically shortened; the author generally tends to shorten and streamline the narratives of Mark. Miracles in particular are likely to be shorn of any detail that might associate them with magic and are focused more strongly around Jesus. In Matthew's narrative, the woman (described as bleeding) no longer cures herself, as she does in Mark; Jesus' commendation of her faith is no longer an acknowledgment of what has already happened, but the word that effects the healing. So, too, the emphasis on the crowd as an obstacle and the exchange of power and knowledge between Jesus and the woman disappear. Faith is no longer a prerequisite of Jesus' spiritual power as in Mark 6:5, but rather Jesus exercises that power to reward faith (Matt 13:58). The raising of Jairus' daughter is also modified. The girl's age is dropped, so that the symmetry between the woman's twelve years of illness and the girl's twelve years of life disappears. The Aramaic command and its translation have also been dropped, perhaps because the foreign language had magical overtones.¹⁶

Matthew's version of these two miracles has also been interpreted as a liberation of women from the restrictions of the Levitical purity code, and Amy-Jill Levine has addressed the highly problematic aspects of this interpretation.¹⁷ She notes that the woman is not described as having a flow of blood, but simply as bleeding, and points out that it is by no means certain that the bleeding in question is uterine bleeding.¹⁸ Dropping the note of the child's age also changes Mark's picture of a young girl dying on the brink of marriage. If this reading is correct, then the connection of the two women through twin perils to the female body disappears. Levine suggests a different juxtaposition: the bleeding woman reflects the saving blood of Jesus and the risen girl, an image of his resurrection.¹⁹

The Greek and Syro-Phoenician woman of Mark 7:24-30 emerges in Matthew 15:21-28 as a "Canaanite." This highly anachronistic characterization increases her foreignness; neither her language nor her place of origin connects her with the readers. Lest anyone miss the implication that "Canaanite" equals "Gentile," Matthew adds to Jesus' rude rebuff the explanatory words "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel" (compare Matt 10:6). By causing this gentle woman to address Jesus as "son of David," the author suggests that it is not only her persistence, but also the content of her faith in Jesus as the Messiah of the Jews that wins her case. In Matthew the exchange with this woman effects a unique grant to the Gentiles rather than a shift in Jesus' consciousness as in Mark; the succeeding cures appear to be set in Jewish territory (15:29-31). Thus it appears that, by comparison with Mark, Matthew has reduced not only

the active participation of the woman with the flow of blood in her own cure, but also the narrative importance of the gentile woman.

Does this diminution mean that Matthew specifically wishes to reduce the activity of women in the narrative? This does not seem to be the case. For one thing, miracles involving men are equally drastically revised (see Matt 8: 28-32/Mark 5:1-20). For another, Matthew also introduces women into narratives in Mark. Kathleen Corley points out that Matthew explicitly includes women and children in the narratives of the feeding of the five and four thousand in the wilderness (14:15-21, 15:32-38). Corley interprets this note as an indication that Matthew has transformed Mark's version of the feeding story from a male-only symposium to a family meal. Presumably, the author of Matthew either assumed that Mark's reference to five thousand men (*andres*, Mark 6: 44) implied the presence of many more women and children or else sought to inflate the miracle. She argues that women are consistently present in the meals narrated in Matthew, and that this reflects the practice, including the eucharistic practice, of Matthew's community. Corley also notes that in Matthew Herodias and her daughter appear to be present at Herod's banquet. This suggests that women are accustomed to dining with men in Matthew's social context. At the same time, she observes that in Matthew the hostility toward John is Herod's rather than Herodias' (14:4 as opposed to Mark 6:19).²⁰

One explanation for a diminished role of women in miracles may be that, since the gospel's christology is higher, miraculous power resides in Jesus, and the participants in miracles are less active. This could be read in conjunction with the references to "the twelve disciples" to suggest that the prophetic spirit is restricted in Matthew, so that communal authority is less egalitarian. In fact the picture is more complex. The function of miracles in Matthew is different than in Mark, where the miracles are central to the message, offering spiritual power to the reader. In Matthew, miracles function to identify Jesus as the Messiah and fulfiller of the scriptures. The prophetic experience of power and spirit resides in the process of teaching and learning, of making decisions about communal practice of God's will and word, particularly through the interpretation of scripture. The continuing presence of Jesus as the teacher of the community "wherever two or three are gathered" guaranteed this enterprise (18:18-20). The final words of the gospel are the promise, "I am with you always, until the completion of the age" (28:20). This promise is enabled through the Wisdom christology that has developed in part from sayings found in Q. In Matthew 11 the author weaves together a sequence of sayings to answer the question: "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" The author claims that the messianic works that Jesus does (11:2-6) are the deeds of Wisdom, the divine female persona: "Wisdom is justified by all her works" (11:19). The invitation of Wisdom herself is placed on Jesus lips to complete his identification with her:

Come to me all you who labor and are heavily burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke on you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my burden is light.

This invitation draws on a number of speeches of Wisdom (Prov 8:1-9:6; Sir 24:19-23; 51:23-28; Isa 55:1-3). A shorter version is attributed to Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas, Saying 90: "Come to me, for my yoke is easy and my lordship is gentle, and you will find rest for yourselves."²¹ But the author of Matthew, by joining Wisdom's invitation directly to the sayings that speak of the reciprocal knowledge of father and son, provides an explanation for the title "son of God." For Matthew "son of God" identifies Jesus not merely as the pious martyr of Wisdom 2 or as the messianic king of 2 Sam 7:14, but as Wisdom herself, God's image and God's offspring (Wis 7:24-26). Thus within the gospel the female persona of Wisdom virtually disappears behind the male person of Jesus. In Matt 23:34-35, Jesus articulates the divine plan by saying "on this account, I, I (Jesus) send you prophets and sages and scribes." In Luke's version (and probably Q's), divine Wisdom is the speaker: "On this account also the Wisdom of God said 'I, I shall send them prophets and emissaries'" (Luke 11:49-51). Wisdom's female persona may reemerge briefly here when Jesus compares himself to a hen gathering her chicks (Matt 23:36). The comparison between God's reign and the leaven a woman hides in dough may also involve a residual image of Wisdom who sets a table (13:33). The parable of the foolish and wise virgins in the last sermon of Jesus in Matthew draws upon two central wisdom traditions, the choice between the wise and foolish ways (Psalm 1; Matt 7:13-28; Didache 1-6) and the antithesis between woman Wisdom and foolish woman (Proverbs 7-9).²²

The greatest number of new references to women in Matthew are those in the genealogy and the five brief stories about the birth and early childhood of Jesus that open the gospel. Both the genealogy and the stories are forms of scriptural interpretation; their main purpose is to identify Jesus as the Messiah, the legitimate descendant and heir of David. The genealogy traces the ancestry of Jesus through three times fourteen generations from father to son; it includes the names of four women: Tamar (Gen 38), Rahab (Joshua 2), Ruth, and the wife of Uriah (Bathsheba; 2 Samuel 11-12). The key is Tamar: when her father-in-law Judah accused her of adultery, she produced the tokens to show the child was his. Knowing that she had deceived him in order to force him to fulfill the law by giving children to his deceased sons through her, Judah declared: "She is more righteous than I" (Gen 38:26). All four of the women are in some degree suspect, but each ultimately proves righteous and a worthy mother to the lineage. It may also be the case that the four women are meant to indicate the inclusion of Gentiles in the messianic line, but the ultimate point of including the four seems to be to defend Mary, mysteriously pregnant before cohabiting with her spouse (1:18-25). Mary herself figures in the background of the five tales of Jesus' birth, each built around a dream, a citation of scripture, and a synonym for Messiah or an explanation of Jesus' messiahship. But Joseph is the protagonist, perhaps also to defend Mary from the charge of being a loose woman and Jesus from the charge of illegitimacy.²³

The bulk of teaching in Matthew addresses practice; the material that most directly addresses gender is the divorce sayings. Wire takes the androcentric

articulation of the divorce prohibitions as evidence that teaching in Matthew was directed toward the literate male disciples and not toward the women.²⁴ In fact, androcentric language in teaching and exhortation does not necessarily imply a male audience or even a male author. Many centuries later, Julian of Norwich and Teresa of Avila both tend to speak of the Christian with the masculine pronoun or the collective "man," even when referring to their own experience. But as Wire notes, more than androcentric language is involved.²⁵ Several aspects of Matthew's versions raise important issues about the construction of gender within the gospel.

Prohibitions of divorce appear twice in the gospel, once in the Sermon on the Mount (5:29-32) and once immediately following the church order (19:2-12). The latter is directly based on Mark 10:2-12, which the author reorganizes by combining Mark's debate with the Pharisees (Mark 10:2-9) and the private teaching (Mark 10:10-12) that follows into a single public discourse. In the new debate, the question becomes whether a man may divorce his wife for every reason or only for impurity (a point of debate also attributed to the Pharisees in rabbinic sources). An exception for *porneia* (illicit sex) is added to the proscription of remarriage by a man (Matt 19:9). The proscription of remarriage by a woman who has divorced (Mark 10:12) disappears. Matthew then adds an entirely new section in which the disciples complain that, if that is the case of a man with a woman, it would be better not to marry—an opinion that Jesus commends, suggesting that those who are able to accept the counsel should make themselves "eunuchs for God's reign" (10-12).²⁶

The revisions in Matt 19:2-9 are usually seen as aimed at a Jewish context. The prohibition of divorce and remarriage to a woman is assumed to have been dropped because Jewish women were unable to divorce anyway. *Porneia* is frequently interpreted as those sexual relations between kin forbidden by Leviticus. As is widely noted, one of the texts from Qumran does list forbidden relations as fornication, along with polygamy and sex with a menstruating woman (Damascus Document 5:8-9), and Paul applies the word to such relations (1 Cor 5:1). But it is by no means clear that these observations explain Matthew's version of the passage. For one thing, the view that Jewish women never initiated divorce is mistaken.²⁷ And while *porneia* can refer to forbidden relations, it is used more broadly both at Qumran and by Paul.²⁸

While Matthew's revisions undoubtedly take some account of contemporary Jewish practice, they are formed primarily by the situation and concerns of early Christianity. Hermas, an early second century Christian prophet, recounts a visionary question-and-answer session that touches on divorce and remarriage. His formulation uses *porneia* to refer to the wife's adultery: if the husband knows her sin, and the wife does not repent, but persists in her fornication, he becomes liable for her sin and the sharer of her adultery.²⁹ Matthew appears to share this conviction, commending Joseph's decision to divorce the mysteriously pregnant Mary privately (Matt 1:19). This view was fostered not only by Jewish practice, but also by Roman law. Augustus' marriage legislation made adultery a matter of criminal law; men who did not divorce a wife accused of adultery could be prosecuted under a charge of pimping.³⁰ Thus an early Christian writer who

forbids divorce and remarriage as Matthew does might find it necessary to add the exception of adultery in order to make clear that Christian practice does not fly in the face of the moral standard enshrined in the law by tolerating adultery.³¹

Matt 19:10-12, like Mark 10:10-12, is a special teaching addressed to the disciples. But this teaching, unlike Mark's, is not private, and it changes the context of the divorce question, showing that for Matthew the issue in questions of divorce and remarriage is sexual purity as a spiritual practice whose ultimate demand, for those who can manage, is to become "a eunuch for God's reign" (Matt 19:10-12). Matthew combines the "antifamilial" sayings from Q and sets them into the missionary discourse (Matt 10:34-37//Luke 12:51-53, 14:25-27, 17:33); perhaps the author sees the invitation to "make oneself a eunuch for the reign of God" as an extension of the disruption the reign causes in familial bonds.

Another application of the divorce sayings appears in Matt 5:27-32, within the Sermon on the Mount. In Matt 5:21-48, Jesus proposes a series of interpretations of the law as a way of "being perfect as your heavenly father is perfect" (5:48). In Matt 5:29-32, sayings of Jesus are presented as instruction for spiritual practice of the commandment, "You shall not commit adultery" (5:27, Exod 20:14). The first saying, found only in Matthew, extends the commandment by equating a lustful gaze with adultery (28). Verses 30-31 revise Mark 9:43-47, a set of three sayings commanding that one sacrifice one's right hand, foot, or eye rather than "stumble" (apostasize). In Mark (and in Matt 18:7-10, where the verses also appear), the sayings constitute an exhortation to martyrdom. But in Matthew 5:30-31, the concern is sexual; the hand and eye ("touching" and "looking") are the occasion of sexual sin. In 5:32, Matthew introduces the stipulation of a deed of divorce from Deut 24:1, interpreting it as a casuistic law that protects and explains the command against adultery by ensuring that no one can marry a woman who is still another man's wife. The sermon supplants it with two new commandments, one charging a divorcing husband with causing a woman's adultery and the other equating marriage to a divorced woman with adultery (5:32).³²

Taken together, Matt 19:1-12 and 5:27-32 testify to the emergence of a Christian practice of sexual discipline regulating both the structures of marriage and the thoughts of the heart and culminating in rejection of sex "for those who can take it" (19:12). Although specifically Christian, this discipline builds on the teaching of Genesis and Deuteronomy, and the "exception" for adultery accommodates the Roman legal requirement that an adulterous wife be divorced. The practice is articulated in terms of the proper use of women by men. Women too are bound by it, but are not directly addressed. This does not mean that either this discipline or any of the rest of the prescriptions and decisions addressed to men throughout Matthew are not learned and practiced by women. But it does mean that women practitioners must either accommodate the teaching for themselves or themselves to the teaching.

Women are also perceived as sexual actors: prostitutes and tax collectors are said to have believed John and are preceding the high priests and elders into God's reign (Matt 21:31-32). Corley has taken this saying as an indication of

Matthew's more progressive gender ideology, which allows the community to risk the stigma of associating with loose women.³³ The first function of the saying in context is to shame the high priests and elders. But in the context of sexual practice in Matthew, the community may not so much signal its acceptance of former prostitutes as boast about its ability to transform them.

Thus Matthew seems to accept the continued communal and prophetic activity of women, as Mark and John do. But also as in Mark and John, anxiety about the flesh intervenes. Matthew's increasing concern with moral and ascetic practice causes women to be perceived as temptations, occasions when a man may give way to lust (Matt 5:28) or to greed and ambition (20:20). The Wisdom christology of Matthew is likewise two-edged; while its insistence on the continuing presence of Jesus endows the community with the capacity to rethink and remake its practice, it also effaces the female persona of Wisdom behind the male person of Jesus.

Luke-Acts

Luke-Acts is a two-volume historical work. In a formal dedicatory introduction, the author describes himself as following (*parakolouthēkōti*, a masculine participle) other writers and reworking material from sources and witnesses into a narrative that shows the surety of Christian instruction (1:1-4). Some portions of Acts were written in the first person plural, and tradition ascribes the work to Luke, the companion of Paul, but few contemporary scholars believe that the author was an eyewitness to any parts of the narrative. Dates assigned to Luke-Acts range from 90 to about 145 CE. A number of factors in Luke-Acts accord particularly well with a date in the early second century: the style of scriptural quotation, the author's interest in martyrdom, the concern with distinguishing Christians from Jews, the use of the word "Christian," and the character of struggles over gender reflected in the texts all fit best into that period. The gospel could not have been written after 145 CE, as Marcion, a second-century Christian leader who rejected any continuity with Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, posited a version of the gospel by about that date. Marcion's edition appears to have been both expurgated and originally shorter than the canonical edition. There is yet a third version, the so-called "Western" text of Luke-Acts, which is longer, particularly in Acts.³⁴ Thus Luke also underwent a process of development and editing. While Acts presupposes Luke, it is not certain that the author projected a second volume while writing the gospel.³⁵

The gospel offers a real date for the year of John's appearance and Jesus' ministry (3:1) and is concerned to present its narrative on a world stage (Acts 26:26). The author's cultural attention to the Roman world and frequent references to "cities" (as opposed to villages) suggest that his mental landscape is the cities of Asia Minor and Greece that appear in Acts. The two books are driven by a theory of history that divides it into three periods: the period of the law and prophets through John the Baptist, the center of history in the year of Jesus' ministry, and the era of the church, which begins with the Pentecost story in

Acts 2, but is already envisaged in Luke 24:49.³⁶ This pattern tends to place Jesus definitively in the past in a way that the other gospels do not. Mark points forward to the appearance of Jesus (16:7), Matthew closes with Jesus insisting on his continued presence (28:20), and John treats ascension as a prelude to Jesus' appearances (20:17). But in Acts 1:3-14, the ascension story explicitly puts an end to resurrection appearances. Luke's Jesus is described in retrospect as "a man, a prophet mighty in word and work" (Luke 24:19), and one whom God "anointed with holy spirit who went about doing good and freeing all those downtrodden by the devil" (Acts 10:38).

The author of Luke-Acts appears to have deliberately multiplied representations of women within the narrative; there are significantly more women in Luke than in Mark and Q together, and stories about women are particularly striking in the gospel's special material. A number of these stories have played an important role in popular Christian feminist interpretation of the Bible. Among them are the cure of the bent-over woman (Luke 13:10-17), the story of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42), and the infancy narratives (Luke 1-2). In the last (unlike Matthew's infancy stories), Mary is the protagonist; the other figures are related to Jesus through her, and the dilemmas and choices are hers. The story of the woman who had been bent over by "a spirit of weakness for eighteen years" (13:10) and became able to stand up straight had obvious appeal to the wide range of women struggling with the centuries of humiliations and restrictions imposed upon women by Christian denominations, as well as by the patriarchal social order. And the story is central to Luke's christology; it is articulated in terms of the prophetic message of release-forgiveness (*aphesis*) announced in Jesus' opening sermon (4:18-19); the woman was "bound" by Satan, and Jesus "freed her from her bond on the sabbath day" (13:17). The story of Martha and Mary played a role in arguments for the inclusion of women in discipleship; its ambiguities are discussed in chapter 5.

Unlike the other three canonical gospels, Luke-Acts uses gender as a central category. This has sometimes caused Luke to be read as the gospel for women.³⁷ But a number of feminist scholars have observed that Luke's writings also restrict or denigrate the participation of women.³⁸ Luke-Acts is less a compilation of good news for women than, in the words of Turid Karlsen Seim, a "double message."³⁹

The centrality of gender in Luke-Acts emerges most notably in the pairing of stories about women with stories about men. There are two types of paired stories in Luke. The first is a unit of two brief stories with an identical point or similar function, one story about a male figure and one about a female figure.⁴⁰ This technique does not originate with Luke; some pairs of this type are taken over from Q, while others are from Mark. But in many cases, the story about the man comes from Mark or Q, while the one about the woman is special to Luke; one example is the man who had a hundred sheep (Luke 15:1-7//Matt 18:10-14) supplemented in Luke by the woman who had ten coins (Luke 14:8-10). Frequently, the story about the woman displays interests characteristic of the author: the cure of the centurion's servant focuses on the centurion's recognition of Jesus as one under authority, whose mighty deed attests both power

and obedience (Luke 7:1-10//Matt 8:5-13). The raising of the widow's son follows this story in Luke and defines its christology in a Lukan vein: Jesus is a great prophet (7:16//Luke 4:19); his deed recalls Elijah and Elisha (Luke 4:25-27), both of whom also raised a woman's only son (1 Kgs 17:17-24; 2 Kgs 4:18-37). In some cases, both members of the pair are special to Luke and display characteristic Lukan themes. Among these are the two annunciations, to Zachariah and to Mary (Luke 1:5-38); the two prophets who greet the child in the temple (2:25-29); the examples of the widow and the judge and the Pharisee and the publican (18:1-17); Peter's cure of lame Aeneas and his raising of Tabitha (Acts 9:32-43).

The second type might be termed "architectural" pairs: two similar stories are told in different contexts to bind the narrative together and to manifest the coherence of "God's plan and work."⁴¹ As a list of the twelve male disciples precedes the sermon on the plain (Luke 6:12-19), so a list of named women disciples precedes the parables sermon (8:1-3).

Lukan pairs of one or the other type can be detected in almost every chapter of the gospel:

- | | |
|---|--|
| two annunciations: to Zachariah and to Mary | 1:5-23
1:26-38
1:46-56
1:67-79 |
| two songs: of Mary and of Zachariah | 2:25-35, 36-38
4:25-27
4:31-39
(Mark 1:21-31) |
| two prophets: Simeon and Anna | 6:12-19
(Mark 3:12-19) |
| two miracles: for gentle widow and male leper | 8:1-3
7:1-10
(Matt 8:5-13) |
| two first miracles: for possessed man and Peter's mother-in-law | 7:11-17
5:19-26
(Mark 2:1-12) |
| two lists of named disciples: men apostles and women ministers | 7:35-50
(Mark 14:1-11?) |
| two rescues from death: the centurion's servant | 8:26-56
(Mark 5:1-43) |
| the widow's son | 10:25-37
(Mark 12:28-34) |
| two penitents: the paralytic | 10:38-42
11:1-13 |
| the penitent woman | 11:29-36
(Matt 12:38-42) |
| three miracles: the Gerasene demoniac, the daughter of Jairus, the hemorrhaging woman | 13:10-17
14:1-6
(Mark 3:1-6?) |
| three questions about discipleship: the scribe | 13:18-19 |
| Martha the disciples | |
| two gentle accusers of Israel: the Ninevites and the queen of the south | |
| two "releases": the bent-over woman and the dropsical man | |
| two hidden parables: man (?) planting mustard | |

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| woman hiding leaven | 13:20-21
(Matt 13:31-33) |
| two finder parables: man with sheep | 15:1-7
(Matt 18:12-14) |
| woman with coin | 15:8-10 |
| two taken: men (?) sleeping, women grinding | 17:32-35
(Matt 24:40-41) |
| two examples of prayer: widow, Pharisee and publican | 8:9-17 |
| two attitudes to worship: scribes and widow | 20:45-21:4
(Mark 12:37-44) |
| two sets of followers: Simon and women | 23:26-32
(Mark 15:21) |
| two groups of watchers: women and all his acquaintances | 23:49
(Mark 15:40-41) |
| two groups of resurrection witnesses | 24
(Mark 16:1-8) |

It should be noted that, while the stories about women usually have been added by the author, not every story about a man is doubled with a story about a woman; men still outnumber women in the gospel.⁴² And in some cases, men are introduced to the narrative: men are added to the group of women watching at the cross (23:49).

Although the appearances of women are significantly fewer in Acts than in Luke, Acts also includes a number of references to women paired with men. But the pairs in the two works differ significantly. In Luke, the pairs consist of a variety of paired stories that form a single unit or a sequence and architectural pairs of stories, while in Acts most (though not all) of the references to women consist not of paired stories, but of either the names of couples or the merismus: "both men and women"

- | | |
|---|----------|
| two groups waiting | 1:13-14 |
| menservants and maidservants, sons and daughters | 2:17-18 |
| Ananias and Sapphira | 5:1-11 |
| a crowd of both men and women added | 5:14 |
| Paul as persecutor of both men and women | 8:3 |
| both men and women added | 8:12 |
| Paul as persecutor of both men and women | 9:2 |
| Peter cures lame man and Tabitha | 9:32-43 |
| worshipping women and first men of the city | 13:50 |
| Paul driven from Lystra by cure of lame man | 14:5-18 |
| Paul driven from Philippi by cure of mantic girl | 16:16-40 |
| Lydia baptized with all her household | 16:15 |
| jailer baptized with all his household | 16:32-34 |
| a great crowd of worshipping Greeks and not a few of the first women were persuaded | 17:4 |
| not a few respectable Greek women and men | 17:12 |
| Dionysius and Damaris converted at Athens | 17:34 |
| Paul received by Priscilla and Aquila | 18:1-4 |

four prophesying daughters of Philip and Agabus, the prophet from Judea 2:18-14
 Paul as persecutor of both men and women 22:4
 Felix arrives with Drusilla 24:24
 Agrippa and Bernike 25:13, 23, 26:30

The architectural pairs of women and men clearly serve the literary plan of the work. The two lists of disciples offer a good example; Luke uses them to create two parallel sections in the ministry of Jesus in Galilee and Judea. These sections consist of a suite of miracles and debates followed by a disciple list and a discourse; in each case the discourse closes with a reference to hearing and doing the word:

Lukan Parallel Sections
 4:31-5:16 cures, call of Peter 7:1-17 2 rescues from death: centurion's servant, gentle benefactor widow's son, "great prophet"
 5:17-6:11 debates, call of Levi 7:18-50 2 debates: question of John, benefactions of Jesus—"a prophet and more" deed of woman, "if he were a prophet"
 6:12-19 list of twelve 8:1-3 list of women disciples, women benefactors
 6:20-49 sermon 8:4-21 parables discourse: mother and brother and sister
 sermon closing: 8:21 hearing and doing word

The first section, 4:31-6:49, consists primarily of narrative from Mark followed by a sermon from Q; in the second, 7:1-8:21, partially narrative material from Q alternates with narratives about women that are special to Luke and is followed by an abbreviated version of the parables sermon from Mark. The stories about women manifest Luke's christological concerns. The raising of the widow's son casts Jesus into the heroic mold of Elijah and Elisha, and the crowd's response acclaims him as a prophet (7:16). The story of the repentant woman both demonstrates Jesus' prophetic knowledge of the human heart and proclaims his prophetic message of forgiveness of debts and release from bondage (7:39; cf. 4:18-19; Acts 10:38).⁴³

While there is no doubt that this deployment of gender is intentional, it is less clear what the author's intentions are. Closer examination of 8:1-3 underlines the problems:

After that he was journeying from city to village preaching and proclaiming the reign of God and the twelve were with him, and some women who had been cured from evil spirits and diseases: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven

devils had gone out, and Johanna wife of Chuza the steward of Herod, and Susanna, and many other women, who used to minister to them from their resources.

These verses revise Mark 15:40-41, the list of women disciples at the cross. As I suggested above, the list has been brought forward to parallel the list of male disciples in Luke 6:12-16. This highlights the notable contrast between the treatment of these women and both Mark's view of them and the treatment of the male disciples. In Luke 6:12-16, the twelve were explicitly called, given the title "apostles," and associated with Jesus' ministry. In 8:1-3 the women are said to be with Jesus not as result of a special call, but out of gratitude for cures; they are not described as following (disciples), as the women in Mark 15:40-41 are, and they share in Jesus' ministry not by preaching and healing as the twelve do in 9:1-6, but by ministering to them (Jesus and the twelve) "out of their resources," that is, by supporting them, acting as benefactors to the preachers and healers.⁴⁴

The same distinction between women and men appears in Acts 1:12-26. After a list of the remaining eleven (1:13-14), the author mentions the presence of women. The only named woman is Mary, the mother of Jesus; the women disciples named in 8:1-3 and 24:10 are not mentioned, though their presence must be assumed. These verses provide the introduction to the selection of Barnabas to replace Judas Iscariot in his "ministry and apostleship" (1:17, 25). The requirements for this role are defined here as including maleness (Acts 1:21; see above chapter 5).⁴⁵ Only after this distinction is made is the spirit poured out on "all your sons and daughters," all God's men slaves and women slaves (2:17-18).

Similarly, widows in Luke-Acts are distanced from a ministerial role. Acts speaks of widows as a group in 6:1-7 and 9:36-42; in both cases, widows are the recipients of charity. In Acts 6:1-7, the author narrates the creation of a separate ministry of the table distinct from the apostles' ministry of the word and the appointment of seven men to fill it. It is occasioned by dissension over the portions given to the widows of the Hellenists (probably the Greek-speaking community in Jerusalem), but the widows do not participate in the ministry; they are its objects. So, too, in 9:36-39, the widows, who might be considered to be the companions and associates of the disciple Dorcas, are actually described as the recipients of her alms in the form of garments she made (9:36-39).⁴⁶

In the gospel also, widows appear as emblems of vulnerability, and in one case, as contentious. Only one context in Mark mentions widows; in Mark 12:38-44, the accusation that scribes eat up houses of widows is contrasted with the widow who gives her whole living to the temple treasury. This contrast is adopted by Luke (20:45-21:4) and supplemented with a number of other examples: the widow of Sarepta (4:25-26); the widow of Nain (7:12); the troublesome widow and unjust judge (18:3-5); and Anna, the widow and prophetess in the temple (2:36-38). Luke's picture must be considered in light of 1 Tim 5:3-16, which explicitly restricts widows to forms of service that do not include preaching, teaching, or going about from house to house and also re-

stricts those who may be assisted as widows by requiring that they be once married, beyond the age of childbearing, celibate, and destitute.⁴⁷ For 1 Timothy, the widow's main task is to spend her days and nights in prayer (1 Tim 5:5).

Anna, Luke's ideal widow, offers both commonalities and points of contrast with 1 Timothy. A virgin until her marriage, Anna was married properly (though briefly) and once only and spends her time in the temple, worshipping God through fasting and praying. Luke does not share 1 Timothy's demand that young widows remarry, but approves Anna's early ascetic commitment. Though she has been stable rather than going from place to place, Anna's sphere is the public domain of the temple, and she is a prophet from Luke's era of the law and the prophets.⁴⁸ Thus, while Luke seems to treat widows as a distinct group, they are not allowed to take on the contours of a Christian ministry and function primarily as ascetics and exemplars of vulnerability and endurance. In antiquity, widows with either property or family might well have a relative degree of autonomy; this social reality may have instigated Luke, as well as 1 Timothy and later church orders, to restrict or deny their ministerial role in the community.⁴⁹

The question of prophecy raises further issues; the quotation of Joel that explains the outpouring of the spirit leads one to expect women prophets ("your daughters, God's maidservants") to figure prominently in Luke's narrative, particularly within the era of the church:

and it will be in those days, says God,
I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
and your youths will see visions
and your elders dream dreams
even upon my men slaves and women slaves
in those days I will pour out my spirit
and they will prophesy.
(Acts 2:17-18, Joel 2:29-30)

But this does not prove to be the case. Mary and Elizabeth both are given long and powerful prophetic utterances, but they are not explicitly said to prophesy and are distanced from the reader by the formal and archaic character of their speech and also by Luke's historical scheme: they belong to the period of the law and the prophets. So does Anna, who seems to have been modeled on Judith. Even so, although the reader is told that she spoke about the child Jesus to everyone entering and leaving the temple, Luke gives Anna no prophetic speeches. In Acts, the only Christian example of prophetic women is the four virgin daughters of Philip (Acts 21:8-9), but they are not permitted to speak. The prophecy of Paul's arrest in the succeeding verses is awarded to Agabus, the male prophet who is paired with them (21:10-14).⁵⁰ When the mantic servant girl in Acts 16:16-18 proclaims Paul's and Silas' mission, her words are not from the holy spirit, but from the demon from whom Paul frees her (Acts 16:16-18).

Within Jesus' ministry, women are no longer presented as prophets, but rather stories about women serve the portrait of Jesus as prophet. The woman

who pronounces a blessing on Jesus' mother in Luke 11:27-28 could be seen as speaking prophetically, but her prophecy is corrected by Jesus' response.⁵¹ Martha likewise speaks only to be corrected by Jesus; Mary, the sister of Martha (10:38-40), and the repentant woman (7:36-50), who are both approved and defended by Jesus, are themselves silent.

Most notably, the woman prophet who anoints Jesus in Mark, Matthew, and John disappears from the narrative. The only anointing in Luke is done by the repentant woman, who is identified not as a prophet, but as a sinner (7:37). She weeps and washes and kisses his feet, as well as anointing and wiping them with her hair (7:38). Jesus interprets her gesture as expressing love and penitence; she neither announces Jesus' messiahship nor predicts his death, but gives Jesus the opportunity to display his own prophetic knowledge of her heart and his host's (7:39-47) and to proclaim his message of release-forgiveness (*aphesis* 7:48-50; 4:18-19). In part this distancing of women from prophecy is due to Luke's christology and salvation history; references to the spirit and to prophecy, so frequent in Luke 1-4 and in Acts, disappear almost entirely after the sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth. Since Jesus is anointed with the spirit (4:18-19; Acts 10:37-38), his deeds are its manifestation, and it is wholly identified with his activity. But the twelve and the seventy (two) are able to share in his prophetic ministry of preaching and healing (9:1-2), and when a man responds to Jesus with a beatitude, his words are supplemented rather than corrected (14:15-24).⁵²

Thus Luke's multiplication of representations of women is accompanied by a corresponding limitation of their roles. Luke is concerned not with changing the status of women, but with the appropriate deployment of gender. The strategies that Luke uses to define the right roles of women also contribute to a construction of manliness. One indication of this is Luke's use of the word *aner*, *andros* (man) as specifically male, as hero or as husband. Most of the other uses in the New Testament connote husband, or at least sexual partner. The speeches in Acts continually open with the address "men, Israelites," (or "men, brethren, or "men, Athenians").⁵³ The address does not so much exclude women from its audiences as construct these audiences (the audiences within the narrative, but also the readers and hearers) as solemn civic assemblies.⁵⁴ The public aspect of the community corresponds to Luke's heroic christology. Luke is virtually alone in the New Testament in defining Jesus as *aner* (Luke 24:19; Acts 2:22), specifically as "a man, a prophet" (*aner prophētēs*), a compilation that probably reflects the language and the heroic prophets of the Deuteronomistic history. The word *aner* is used throughout Luke-Acts for heavenly figures⁵⁶ and the heroic martyrs Paul and Stephen.⁵⁷ The gospel, too, depicts Jesus as the heroic example of martyrdom by the courage and magnanimity with which he faces his death (Luke 23:33-48). In ancient martyr literature, women can also exemplify "manliness" (*andria*, courage).⁵⁸ But no women are praised for manly virtue in Luke-Acts.

Three interrelated concerns are among those that guide Luke's deployment of gender: the public character of the work, the desire to tame and limit prophecy, and the character of Luke's interest in asceticism. The first then, is the public character of the two-volume work, its conception as history set in real time on

a world stage. Seim contextualizes Luke's interest in gender in terms of the Attic conviction that "the world of men is one, the world of women another."⁵⁹ While this apothegm captures Luke's careful division and presentation of male and female roles in the community, the cultural and political context of Luke-Acts is Roman rather than Attic.⁶⁰ The dual nature of Luke's treatment of women corresponds to the increasing Roman interest in signaling public meanings through appropriations of the domestic world, that is, to the political use of "family values" begun by Augustus.⁶¹ In the late first and early second century, public functions of the women of the imperial family appear to have increased; the imperial women accompanied Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines on campaigns,⁶² as Drusilla and Bernike do Felix and Agrippa in Acts 24:24-25:13, 23.⁶³ The increasing appearance of *meisimoi* and couples in Acts (except for Agrippa and Bernike, marital pairs) probably relates to the heightened prestige and public function of marriage in the late first century and early second century.⁶⁴

A second concern is the desire to tame and limit prophecy. Luke appears to have chosen prophecy as the central explanation for Jesus (and, in fact, for the apostles and ministers) because it is a Biblical role that translates with relative ease into the god-inspired man of Greek and Roman religion and philosophy. But it leaves Jesus and the early Christians open to the charge laid against Paul and Silas in the Roman colony, Philippi: "They are Jews, and proclaim customs which we are not permitted to receive or do, being Romans" (Acts 16:20-21). The author of Luke-Acts transforms glossolalia from unintelligible to universally intelligible language in Acts 2:5-12.⁶⁵ More importantly, the author restricts the apostolic role by cutting off the revelatory appearances of Jesus with the ascension story (1:1-26) and awarding a quasi appearance to Paul (9:1-10). Peter and Paul are carefully distinguished from a number of Jewish and Samaritan magicians over whom they conspicuously triumph: Simon Magus (8:9-25), the Jew Bar Jesus (13:6-12), and the seven sons of the Jewish high priest Seva (19:11-20). Luke is clearly addressing the antique prejudice that equates Jews and other "orientals" with magic.⁶⁶ Antique prejudice also associated women with magic and with flirtations with oriental religions; at least one Roman author saw a woman prophet as the prototypical purveyor of Judaism to women:

No sooner has he pushed off than a palsied Jewess
Parking her haybox outside, comes round soliciting alms
In a breathy whisper. She knows and can interpret
The Laws of Jerusalem: a high priestess under the trees,
A faithful mediator of heaven on earth. She too
Fills her palm, but more sparingly: Jews will sell you
Whatever dreams you like for a few small coppers.⁶⁷

If this conjunction of Judaism, women, and prophecy in Juvenal's mind was shared by others of the imperial ruling class (or by the popular mind), it is not surprising that the author of Luke-Acts sought to minimize the undoubted participation of women in early Christian prophecy, as well as to dissociate Christianity from Judaism.⁶⁸

A third factor in this deployment of gender is the character of Luke's interest in asceticism. Sexual asceticism was by no means always hostile to women, as the story of Thecla shows (see chapters 11, 13, and 14). In fact renunciation of sexuality could allow for a more egalitarian leadership. Luke-Acts provides Anna as an exemplar of female asceticism, and presumably the virgin daughters of Philip are also to be seen as practitioners of asceticism.⁶⁹ Luke's revisions of the question about the woman married successively to seven brothers have frequently been interpreted as an endorsement of celibacy (20:20-23).⁷⁰ Further, Luke retains the prohibition of remarriage while eliminating prohibition of divorce (16:18). The wording of the saying assumes that only the behavior of the man is at issue, and even this saying functions primarily on the metaphorical level in Luke.⁷¹ While a husband may leave a wife for God's reign, the reverse is not stated, despite alternatives of leaving both parents and children, sisters and brothers (Luke 14:26, 18:29). As I suggested above, the prospect of a wife leaving a husband was seen as an assault on good order and particularly dangerous to a community under suspicion of un-Roman activities.⁷² Of particular interest is the relation between two sayings in Luke and Gospel of Thomas, Saying 79:

A woman from the crowd said to him, "Blessed are the womb that bore you and the breasts that nourished you."

He said to [her], "Blessed are those who have heard the word of the father and have truly kept it. For there will be days when you will say, 'Blessed are the womb which have not conceived and the breasts which have not given milk.'"⁷³

In Luke, the exchange of beatitudes appears separately (11:27-28), and the prediction that quotes a third beatitude is a prophecy of the revolt and fall of Jerusalem made to the women who weep for Jesus on the way to the cross (23:29). The conjunction of the sayings in Thomas constitutes an endorsement of celibacy for women. Seim suggests that it is addressed to the women of Jerusalem who weep over Jesus specifically to contrast them with the women followers of Jesus who are without children.⁷⁴ But it may be that Luke was inspired to reset the beatitude on the childless as a woe on Jerusalem by the need to avoid an explicit endorsement for celibacy for women. While sexual asceticism among women could enable their participation in prophecy and communal leadership, when asceticism was encouraged for men and discouraged for women, the anti-marriage tradition's misogynist arguments could emerge in the rationale for male celibacy. This never quite happens in Luke. But Luke's version of the banquet parable suggests that marrying a wife may hold a man back from the reign of God (14:20). When Ananias and Sapphira "lie to the holy spirit" by holding back part of the price of a field they sold, they do it jointly as a couple (Acts 5:1-10). The story may reflect Luke's concurrence in the view that marriage involves a man with material distractions from the world of the spirit.

The common factor in all of this is that the author includes women to display the good order in the private sphere that the Christians foster, and that makes them the best possible contributors to the public matter (*res publica*), potential citizens of Rome like Paul—even if, like Paul, they are so desperately misunderstood. This is not to say that the gospel reflects the reluctant concession of a

persecuted minority to the demands of a more rigid culture. Luke invites the Christian readers to exactly what he believes to be genuine good order—to what is safe not only because it is acceptable to Roman order, but also because it constitutes a kind of moral high ground. The Christians' women are omnipresent, but properly behaved. Male and female roles are clearly and appropriately delineated. Women exhibit the excellence of the community by receiving the gift of prophecy, but they do nothing obtrusive with it. They are chaste, and even celibate, but their chastity does not threaten marriage (as Thecla's does) or remove them from the proper role of women within the well-ordered family. And all of this good order is due to the ordered dispensation of the spirit of God in the laying on of the apostles' hands.

Conclusion

The double message in Luke becomes conspicuous precisely because Luke has found it necessary to address gender directly. But a double message inheres in all of the gospel literature. In all four of the canonical gospels (as in Mary and in Thomas), women have some access to the spirit of prophecy. In all of the gospels, anxiety about sexuality and sexual propriety emerges as an obstacle to women's ability to exercise the authority that attends it. Femaleness in antiquity is defined by sexual contact. In John, Mark, and Matthew, the participation of women in communal prophecy is assumed; where issues of sexuality or gender are addressed at all, they are articulated in terms of infringements of propriety or holiness. The exception may be the final chapters of John, which seem to reflect struggles over communal leadership. But if Mary's gender is part of the struggle, this issue is never made explicit. In Luke-Acts, Mary, and Thomas, the issue is addressed directly, and with strikingly different results. For Luke-Acts, women remain women; their role in the community deserves careful attention for the proper participation of women attests the good order and restraint of the Christians. For Mary, women's leadership, however problematic, rests directly on the revelations of the savior; no other consideration can intervene. For Thomas, femaleness remains an inhibition, but one that can, and must, be overcome: Mary becomes male. These varying positions by no means disappeared; they were e-spoused, rejected, combined, modified, and recombined in the long history of Christian attempts to accommodate its necessary and internal "others" and the concomitant history of women's attempts to accommodate or resist in return.

In retrospect, I want to return to a question I raised briefly above, the question of whether any of the four canonical gospels could have been the work of a woman. This is ultimately an unanswerable question; even the assumption of a male persona by Luke does not exclude the possibility that this Anonymous was a woman. Like Kraemer, I do not believe that a woman's authorship would necessarily be detectable by traces in the text, or that androcentric perspectives in a text exclude the possibility that a woman authored it.⁷⁵ Obviously, to be able to show that a woman wrote one of these works would offer the reassurance

that women did, indeed, write early Christian books and, even, the central scripture of early Christianity. But would it make any difference to the interpretation of the texts? On the whole, I have been inclined to argue that it would make very little difference: the worldview they enshrine is that of the early Christian communities. Allowing the texts to have women authors would only show what must already be assumed: that women, if they welcomed the participation that was permitted them, also in large part accepted the propriety of limitations that gender placed upon them—and taught it to their daughters. This would be most striking in the case of Luke's double message. But recently, my imagination has been stirred by Crossan's suggestion that the woman author of Mark may have enshrined her signature in the promise that the prophet who anointed Jesus will be remembered wherever the gospel is preached.⁷⁶

I do not, of course, wish to argue that the gospel was written by this woman prophet—or by any eyewitness to Jesus. But it has caused me to rethink the question, especially in the case of Mark and John. Mark ends with the silent women running from the empty tomb, and anonymous women figures, especially the Greek woman, offer themselves as ways for the audience to place themselves within the narrative. It is possible to postulate an early version of John ending with the figure of Mary Magdalene, charged with the message of Jesus' ascension, in which the voices of the Samaritan woman, of Martha and Mary, and of the mother of Jesus were even more prominent. To imagine a woman author of these works does not change the gendered arrangements they reflect. But it does cast the stories about women as signatures, as ways in which the writer declares herself within the narrative, placing a particular emphasis upon women of the final scenes. And this is a speculation that points the twentieth-century reader to what these gospels certainly had: women readers and women hearers for whom the gender of Mary Magdalene could be good news.

NOTES

1. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: Beacon) 97–98.
2. Franz Neirynck, "Synoptic Problem," in *New Jerome Biblical Commentary* ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1988) 587–95, esp. 589.
3. Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990) 284–86.
4. See the discussion by John Meier, "Matthew, Gospel of," *ABD* 4:624–25; Jack Dean Kingsbury, "Matthew, Gospel According to," in *HarperCollins Bible Dictionary*, ed. Paul J. Achtemeier (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996) 661.
5. Kathleen E. Corley, *Private Women, Public Meals: Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993) 185–186; see chapter 3.
6. Anthony Saldarini, *Matthew's Jewish Christian Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1994); see also Saldarini, "The Gospel of Matthew and Jewish-Christian Conflict," in *Social History of the Matthean Community: Cross Disciplinary Approaches*, ed. David L. Balch (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1991) 38–61.

7. See Alan Segal, *Rebecca's Children: Judaism and Christianity in the Roman World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986); see also Segal, "Matthew's Jewish Voice," in Balch, *Social History* 3-37.
8. Saldarini (note 6 above) and Segal (note 7 above) address these tensions in their discussions; Corley (note 5 above) is less attentive to the problem. For a summary of relatively recent opinions on the issue, see John Meier, "Matthew" 624-27.
9. The phrase is that of Wayne Meeks, *The Moral World of the First Christians* (Library of Early Christianity 6; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986) 136.
10. W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966) 14-15. The exact beginnings and endings of some sermons are my own revisions of the standard views.
11. Antoinette Wire, "Gender Roles in a Scribal Community," in Balch, *Social History* 113.
12. This translation and all translations in the essay are my own unless otherwise noted.
13. Corley, *Private Women* 171.
14. See Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Mother* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988) 168-70.
15. Susan Treggiari, *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991) 183-210.
16. John Hull, *Hellinistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition* (Studies in Biblical Theology, Second Series, 28 London: SCM, 1974) 73-86; Mary Rose D'Angelo, "Theology in Mark and Q: Abba and 'Father' in Context," *HTR* 85 (1992) 156-62.
17. Amy-Jill Levine, "Discharging Responsibility: Matthean Jesus, Biblical Law and Hemorrhaging Women," in *Treasures New and Old: New Essays in Matthean Studies*, ed. Mark Allan Powell and David Bauer (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996) 379-97. See also chapter 6 and D'Angelo, "Gender and Power in the Gospel of Mark: The Daughter of Jairus and the Woman with the Flow of Blood," in *Aspects of the Miraculous in Ancient Judaism and Christianity*, ed. John C. Cavadini (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, forthcoming).
18. Amy-Jill Levine, "Discharging Responsibility" 384-85.
19. *Ibid.* 396-97.
20. Corley, *Private Women* 160-64.
21. Trans. Marvin Meyer, Q-Thomas Reader, John S. Kloppenborg, M. Meyer, S. J. Patterson, and M. G. Steinhauser, eds. (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1990) 150.
22. For a discussion of Wisdom christology in Matthew, see Celia Deutsch, "Wisdom in Matthew: Transformation of a Symbol," *NovT* 32 (1990) 13-47; also Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah and Discipleship in Matthew 11.25-30* (Sheffield, UK: JSOT, 1987); Deutsch, *Lady Wisdom, Jesus and the Sages: Metaphor and Social Context in Matthew's Gospel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996).
23. Similarly, Corley, *Private Women* 147-51.
24. Wire, "Gender Roles" 105.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Mary Rose D'Angelo, "Remarriage and the Divorce Sayings Attributed to Jesus," in *Divorce and Remarriage: Religious and Psychological Perspectives*, ed. William P. Roberts (Kansas City, MO: Sheed and Ward, 1990) 83-84.
27. See Kraemer chapters 2 and 3.
28. D'Angelo, "Remarriage and the Divorce Sayings" 96-97.
29. *Shepherd of Hermas*, *Mandate* 4.4: see D'Angelo, "Remarriage and the Divorce Sayings" 98.
30. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage* 288.
31. See also Corley, *Private Women* 158.
32. D'Angelo, "Remarriage and the Divorce Sayings" 96.
33. Corley, *Private Women* 152-158.
34. R. M. Grant, "Marcion, Gospel of," *ABD* 4:516-20.
35. Richard Pervo and Mikael Parson, *Rethinking the Unity of Luke and Acts* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993).
36. This is a modified version of the schema described by Hans Conzelmann in *The Theology of St. Luke*, trans. Geoffrey Buswell (New York: Harper and Row, 1961) 150.
37. Constance F. Parvey, "The Theology and Leadership of Women in the New Testament," in Religion and Seism, ed. Rosemary Radford Ruether (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974) 139-46; Eugene H. Malby, "Women and the Gospel of Luke," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 10 (1980) 99-104 and the literature cited therein; also Celeste J. Rossmiller, "Prophets and Disciples in Luke's Infancy Narrative," *Bible Today* 22/6 (1984) 361-65; Rosalie Ryan, "The Women from Galilee and Discipleship in Luke," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 15 (1985) 56-59; Quentin Quesnell, "The Women at Luke's Supper," in *Political Issues in Luke-Acts*, ed. R. J. Cassidy and P. J. Scharper (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983) 59-79; E. Jane Via, "Women, the Discipleship of Service and the Early Christian Ritual Meal in the Gospel of Luke," *St. Luke's Journal of Theology* 29 (1985) 37-60; Via, "Women in the Gospel of Luke," in *Women in the World's Religions: Past and Present*, ed. Ursula King (New York: Paragon House, 1987) 38-55.
38. For earlier critical views of Luke, see Elizabeth Tedlow, *Women and Ministry in the New Testament* (New York: Paulist, 1980) 101; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Word, Spirit and Power: Women in Early Christian Communities," in *Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Rosemary Radford Ruether and Eleanor McLaughlin (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979) 52, n. 114; Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983) 161; and Schüssler Fiorenza, "A Feminist Critical Interpretation for Liberation: Martha and Mary: Luke 10:38-42," *Religion and Intellectual Life* 3 (1986) 21-35.
39. From the title of Turid Karlsen Seim's book, *The Double Message: Patterns of Gender in Luke-Acts* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1994); see also Seim's commentary in Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Searching the Scriptures: Volume 2, A Feminist Commentary* (New York: Crossroad, 1994). A very similar stance is taken by my article, "Women in Luke-Acts: A Redactional View," *JBL* 109 (1990) 441-61.
40. This technique was first discussed by Parvey ("Theology and Leadership of Women" 139-40). She points out that the pairing technique was noted by Jeremias in *The Parables of Jesus* (note 39).
41. On the technique, see Charles Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature; distributed by Scholars Press, 1974). Cf. Acts 5:38-39, with 2:23, 13:36, 20:27.
42. Jane C. Schaberg, "Luke," in *The Women's Bible Commentary*, ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992) 275-92.
43. For a more extensive discussion of the pairs and their function, see D'Angelo, "Women in Luke-Acts" 443-48.
44. On benefaction in Luke, see D'Angelo, "Women in Luke-Acts" 449.
45. See, similarly, Seim, *Double Message* 111-12.
46. Seim, *Double Message* 229-48; see also Clarice Martin, "The Acts of the Apostles," in Schüssler Fiorenza, *Searching the Scriptures* 780-82.
47. See chapter 11, also chapter 13 below.
48. Seim, *Double Message* 221-48.
49. See chapter 13.

50. See also Martin, "Acts of the Apostles" 786-87; Ivoni Richter Reimer, *Women in the Acts of the Apostles: A Feminist Liberation Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1995) 248-49, argues against "competition" between Agabus and the four women.
51. Mary Rose D'Angelo, "Blessed the One Who Reads and Those Who Hear: The Beatitudes in Their Biblical Contexts," in *New Perspectives on the Beatitudes*, ed. Francis A. Elgo (Proceedings of the Theology Institute of Villanova University; Villanova, PA, 1995) 56-61, 76-78.
52. D'Angelo, "Blessed the One Who Reads" 77.
53. Acts 1:16, compare 1:11, 2:14, 22, 29, 37; 3:12; 5:35; 7:2, 26; 14:15; 15:7; 13; 17:22, 19:25, 35; 21:28; 22:1 23:1, 6; 25:24; 27:10, 21, 25, 26; 28:17.
54. D'Angelo, "Women in Luke-Acts" 449-450.
55. Anēr appears in John 1:30 (the Baptist prophecy), also Eph 4:13.
56. Luke 9:30, 32; 24:4; 1:10; Acts 10:30; 16:9; cf. 10:19.
57. Acts 6:5; 21:11; 22:3; 23:27, 30; 25:1, 17.
58. See the apostrophe to the mother in 4 Macc 15:30: "O more noble than males for restraint and more manly than men for endurance!" See Elizabeth Castelli, "Virginity and Its Meaning for Women's Sexuality in Early Christianity," *JFSR* 2 (1986) 74-78; Mary Rose D'Angelo, "Beyond Father and Son," in *Justice as Mission: An Agenda for the Church* ed. T. Brown and C. Lind (Burlington, Ontario, Canada: Trinity, 1985) 109, 115, nn. 10-11.
59. Seim, *Double Message* 24.
60. It might be even better to say that it is both Roman and atticizing: as Judith Perkins (*The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* [New York: Routledge, 1995] 47-50, 66-68) points out, the second century saw a revival of interest in at least the forms of citizenship in the Greek cities; but, in the case of Luke, interest in patriotism for Athens (Acts 17) and Ephesus (Acts 19:21-40) is explicitly subordinated to the attractions of Roman citizenship (Acts 16:19-40, 22:22-29) 150.
61. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage* 291-98; Karl Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996) 128-40.
62. J. V. P. D. Balsdon (*Roman Women, Their History and Habits* [New York: Barnes and Noble, 1983; first published New York: John C. Day, 1962] 63) regards this as a significant change over earlier imperial practice. He discusses it under "female emancipation." But it actually manifests the new importance of marriage described by Peter Brown ("Late Antiquity: The 'Wellborn' Few," in *A History of Private Life, Volume 1, From Pagan Rome to Byzantium*, ed. Paul Veyne [Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1987] 247-48), but attributed to the age of the Antonines.
63. The mention of women of social prestige or relatively high status (see also Acts 17:4 and 11-12 and Johanna in Luke 8:2) may serve pedagogical purposes by adding a touch of worldly glamour (as the *Romanes of Joseph and Aseneth*, the Acts of [Paul and] Thecla, and the story of Cyprian and Justina do for later Christianity).
64. See Peter Brown, "Late Antiquity."
65. See Krister Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) 116-18; Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp with Christopher R. Matthews, trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, and Donald H. Juel, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 15-16.
66. B. A. Mastin, "Scaeva the High Priest," *JTS* 27 (1976) 405-12.
67. *Satire* 6.541-548; trans. Peter Green, *The Sixteen Satires* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1969) 147-48.
68. D'Angelo, "Women in Luke-Acts" 451-53, 457-60.
69. Seim, *Double Message* 229-48.
70. *Ibid.* 208-9.
71. D'Angelo, "Remarriage and the Divorce Sayings" 97-98.
72. See chapter 6.
73. Trans. Thomas O. Lambdin, *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 3rd rev. edition; ed. James M. Robinson (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988) 135.
74. Seim, *Double Message* 204-8.
75. Ross S. Kraemer, "Women's Authorship of Jewish and Christian Literature in the Greco-Roman Period," in "Women Like This": *New Perspectives on Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman Period*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine, *Early Judaism and its Literature* 1 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1991) 235.
76. John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991) 416.