

The Gospel of Luke

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IT HAS BEEN ONE of the common truths of Christian Testament scholarship that Luke shows a particular interest in women.¹ Most relate this to the author's broader concern for the poor and the outcast, and some see it as an expression of his universalism. But the presence of women in Luke could also be an example of his emphasis on the success the Christian preaching had among the noble and well-off, since many of the women appear, in various ways, to be relatively resourceful.

Compared with other Christian Testament writings, the Gospel according to Luke contains more material about women. Most of this is in the specifically Lukan material. Since the material peculiar to Luke is so rich in traditions about women, it is all the more striking that the proportion of such material in Acts is much smaller than in the Gospel. This difference between the two volumes corresponds to a remarkable divergence in the present perception regarding the treatment of women by Luke: Is Luke within the Christian Testament corpus a rare friend of women reflecting equality and a radical revision of the role of women in the early church? Or is his major contribution to impose "the Lukan silence," representing a programmatic androcentrism that pleads the subordination of women in a more subtle and indirect manner than the direct parennetic enforcement of the letters? These are the extreme positions of an ambiguity that seems to be intrinsic to the Lukan construction in itself.

Luke's presentation is not a systematic treatise but a narrative. It tells a story and indicates a development by placing events in a certain sequence. This very simple fact has significant consequences for understanding the Lukan construction. Events, persons, and sayings receive meaning from their location and function in the sequence of the narrative. The order is therefore not arbitrary, and the location (or indeed relocation) of varying traditions in a narrative sequence can be an effective means of dealing with tensions and contradictions. This means that pieces cannot be picked from anywhere in the work

and brought together to form a stable and unambiguous "Lukan" position. It may be that Luke has no coherent view of women. The narrative cannot be reduced to one fixed scene; it represents a complex movement and process. The narrative is in a special way a polyphony: it allows several and even contrapuntal voices to be heard in the course of events.

What follows is mainly an attempt at "reading Luke" while discerning patterns of gender in the Lukan composition. It is not a supplementary enterprise adding Luke's view of "woman" to a list of Lukan themes to make it more complete. By overcoming the gender blindness of most traditional studies and applying gender as an analytical category, interpreters are able to make women visible, which has a further effect in tracing patterns of gender as they develop in the story. It is like trying to discern in a weaving one of the warping threads through which the shuttle is pulled. In some places it may be more easily discerned than in others.

Gender, conceived as an analytical constant, has a biological basis in the fact that humans exist as women or men. But the difference between the sexes is further articulated in terms of culture and location in time and space. Gender differentiation and relationship will, no matter how they vary in their expressions, always have an all-embracing structural significance. In this widened feminist perspective it is necessary to investigate how differences and mutual dependence, sexual interplay and power structures are conceived. What follows is an attempt to make such an investigation in the case of Luke—still with special attention to the particular role of women.

My reading of Luke tries to understand the Lukan construction and does not aim at the reconstruction of another story or subtext using the Lukan text as a pretext. For the most part it ignores the history behind the Lukan screen and concentrates on the given text. This approach may, of course, be seen as lacking a certain feminist suspicion, but the rationale behind it is the wish and the need to see the full construction before deconstruction and reconstruction can take place. Therefore it may in the end, nevertheless, contribute to the further project of feminist rereadings of the story of Christian origins.

GENDER PAIRS: INCLUSIVENESS AND SEGREGATION

It has long been recognized that Luke has a tendency in his composition to generate doublets and parallels, and part of this parallel material is recognized as "gender pairs." These are not distributed in such a way that they can be attributed to or explained as deriving from a particular source.

As epic or narrative gender pairs (also as included in discourse material) the following should be identified:

Zechariah	Mary	Luke 1:11-20/26-38; 46-55/67-79
Simeon	Hannah	Luke 2:25-35/36-38
Naaman	Widow in Zarephath	Luke 4:27/25-26
Jairus's daughter	Widow's son	Luke 8:40-56/7:11-17
Jairus	Woman with issue of blood	Luke 8:40-41, 49-56/43-48
Men of Nineveh	Queen of Sheba	Luke 11:32/31
Man healed on sabbath	Woman healed on sabbath	Luke 14:1-6/13:10-17
Abraham's son	Abraham's daughter	Luke 19:9/13:16
Man sowed a seed	Woman hid yeast	Luke 13:18-19/20-21
Shepherd with sheep	Woman with coins	Luke 15:3-7/8-10
Men sleeping	Women grinding	Luke 17:34/35
Peter at tomb	Women at tomb	Luke 24:12/1-11

These epic pairs correspond to an explicit gender specification in many group and audience descriptions. Although the epic pairs are virtually nonexistent in Acts, there is some evidence for these coupled references. The double message in the parallel examples of women and men functions as an epic rejoinder to the description of the composition of the social group to whom the epic material is addressed or belongs. We are repeatedly informed that among those who follow Jesus (Luke 8:1-3; 23:49), are both women and men. The same applies almost stereotypically to the early communities of believers (Acts 1:13f.; 2:17f.; 8:3, 12; 9:2; 18:1-4; 21:8; 22:4), as well as various groups of audience (Acts 17:4, 12, 34; 24:24; 25:12, 23; 26:30). Apart from an instance in Acts 21:5 women are not simply added to strengthen the significance or magnitude of what occurs, as, for example, when Marthew, in the context of the multiplication of the loaves, adds "women and children" (14:21) to render the miracle even more spectacular. In these cases, the coupled combination is not "women and men," but the conventional pairing of "women and children," bearing the connotation of members of a minority and auxiliaries.

The gender-specified duality serves to include women in an explicit way. The presence of women is recognized even in contexts where a masculine terminology otherwise dominates, but the gender specification also serves to identify distance and segregation. Women and men belong to the same community; they are united by common rituals and live together in mutual material dependence. At the same time, men and women form groups of their own. This comes out very clearly when individual persons are given prominence on some occasions by being named. Luke then most often notes that they represent a larger group—so that the women named are referred to a group of women (Luke 8:2f.; 24:10) and the men to a group of men (Luke 8:51). The

community has inherent patterns of an organizational structure of gender division. A woman belongs to the larger community of faith primarily among the women, a man primarily among the men. This means that the whole community consists not primarily of individual members but of the group of men as well as the group of women.

There is no clear hierarchical order between the two groups. In the examples of the gender pairs, the rank of order is not consistent. Sometimes the example of the man comes first, and sometimes the example of the woman. Twice the grammatical construction emphasizes that the women constitute the core group of all those present. When compared with the earlier version in Mark, Luke's scene of the crucifixion (Luke 23:49) also names as present "all his acquaintances." This need not involve a minimizing of the women's importance; it is rather an expression of the more general pattern of gender pairs, which has the effect in other passages of introducing a group of women (cf. Luke 8:1-3). It may also be that the linking "and" in Luke 23:27 and 49 has an emphatic meaning, so that the women in these cases are seen as special representatives of the greater group.

It is commonly assumed that the Lukan doublets are based on Jewish demands about the number of witnesses needed for their testimony to be considered trustworthy. As a guiding principle of composition, it should serve to strengthen the credibility of the account. But the epic gender pairs can only indirectly have any value as testimonials, and Luke's dealing with the credibility of women's testimony elsewhere is at best ambivalent. In keeping with this, messengers in Luke-Acts are often characterized explicitly as men, whether heavenly or earthly, and these men often appear in a group of at least two (see Luke 24:4; Acts 1:10; 9:38; 10:19f.; 15:22). In all these cases, the men's mission has the desired effect. On the few occasions on which women come with a message, they are not believed (Luke 24:10f. and Acts 12:14f.)—at least not by the group of men. The gender pairs in Luke cannot be explained simply as expressing a motif of "dual witness"—that is, in the traditional understanding of a minimum attestation of two witnesses in order to be able to claim credibility. Nevertheless, a dual witnessing in the sense of a duplication of testimonials to address an audience composed of men and women is still meaningful. It may be a literary device by which the author seeks to capture the attention of a mixed audience.

All the stories are integrated into one common text addressed to the whole of the community, but in the community the women were primarily named with the other women and the men with the other men. Despite the emphasis on a communal life, Luke-Acts mediates a picture of a world divided by gender, of a culture and a mediation of tradition in which men and women within the same community keep each to their own sphere of life.

THE FAMILY OF JESUS

The pattern described above reflects a social system that, unlike our own, is focused collectively, not individually. The individual finds identity in her or his family or group. For the disciples of Jesus, who pay the cost of discipleship and sometimes leave (most of) their families behind, the flock of disciples represents a replacement. The disciples gain a fictive family relationship, the family of Jesus, with God as their only Father and each other as brothers and sisters.

The idea of the community of believers as a fictive family is inherent in the Synoptic tradition, and Luke reflects its seemingly common usage in the early communities. A key text is Luke 8:19–21, where Jesus rejects an approach by his mother and his brothers. In this scene, Mary is not mentioned by name. The focus is not on her person but on her motherhood. Jesus challenges the claims of his genetic family by transferring the categories of kinship to a new group: his mother and his brothers and sisters are those who live in the same obedience as he himself does. Compared with Mark and Matthew, Luke renders the statement of Jesus in a shortened version that is more inclusive of his genetic family. The possibility is kept open that his mother and his brothers and sisters too can find their place in the new family—provided that they, without any privileges attached, fulfill the criterion of hearing God's word and doing it.

This means that the proclamation of who is truly Jesus' family is less a statement of exclusion and election and more a statement of principle. The point is not primarily to exclude Jesus' mother and brothers and sisters in favor of the others who are present, but rather to redefine and transfer kinship categories on the basis of a new set of criteria. But the use of kinship categories in Luke 8:19–21 still retains a clearly critical function in relation to the biosocial family and its demands. The new family not only surpasses the old but replaces it.

The repeated pronoun in Luke 8:21 emphasizes that the family is established primarily in relation to Jesus and only indirectly among the believers themselves. They become *his* mother and brothers (and sisters). The family relationship they receive to one another is based in their adherence to Jesus.

The Lukan text in 8:21 appears less gender specific than that of Mark and Matthew in listing the family terms. Luke contents himself with two categories, omitting the sister. This has been seen as an attempt of Luke to omit the presence of sisters generally among the disciples; only Mary, the mother, was too prominent to be avoided. But the plural form "brothers," which is employed instead of the singular form used by the other evangelists, can be read inclusively as meaning "siblings." It is also possible that the representation

of women was already taken care of by means of "mother," and the point is to avoid a pleonasm while at the same time creating a verbal parallel corresponding to the presentation of Jesus' biological family in vv. 19 and 20. Moreover, the term "mother" carries greater dignity than the term "sister." It also implies the radical position that even the maternal rights that were essential to a woman's identity and honor are revoked and replaced by discipleship as the new form of motherhood.

The traditional values in a woman's life, her worth in the patriarchal process of reproduction, are thereby challenged. This is thrown into even sharper relief by an episode recounted in 11:27–28, which is peculiar to Luke. A woman in the crowd cries out to Jesus: "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!" This is a macarism expressed in Jewish phraseology; it is in fact a blessing of Jesus and not of Mary. That is, it says that a son such as Jesus makes his mother worthy of praise. In all its poetic power the beatitude focuses solely on the mothering function of the female body: womb and breasts. Jesus reacts by subjecting this to a critical appraisal, when he corrects her and replies, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!" So even Mary is blessed, not because she is Jesus' biological mother but because she hears the word of God and keeps it.

This reactivates previous remarks about Mary: not only her obedience (1:38) but also how she treasures up the words in her heart and ponders them (2:19, 51). Joseph, who is an important figure in Matthew's infancy narratives, plays a minimal role in Luke's version, and it is significant that Jesus' alienation from his family, as we have seen earlier, begins by affecting Joseph in particular (see 2:48f.). This episode is concluded by the emphatic statement that Jesus' parents did not understand the meaning of his words, but his mother kept all these words in her heart. Remarks such as this open the way for Mary's continued, but changed, role, determined by the word rather than by her rights as mother. Mary is the only person from the infancy narrative, apart from Jesus and John, who reappears in the following story and also in Acts. But it means that Mary becomes a receiver rather than a giver.

Other traits in the narratives of Jesus' infancy and birth in Luke emphasize likewise that Mary is to be understood as the exemplary disciple, a Christian prototype, through her listening obedience and her openness toward future explanation and fulfillment. Mary's obedience is not portrayed merely in passive terms: she expresses active acceptance and positive response (1:38), and further she proclaims God's wondrous acts with prophetic authority (1:46–55).

It has been claimed that the lack of an earthly father in the fictive family of disciples had the effect of de-patriarchalization and meant equality among the members of the family. If no substitute for the father was to be found among the disciples, this implicitly denied the status and power of earthly fathers.

Jesus did not use "God the Father" to justify and authorize a patriarchal order, but as a critical overthrow of all earthly structures based on domination. No brother could demand "the Father's" authority for himself, because this would be claiming a position reserved to God alone. The patriarchal structures are removed in the messianic community.

Thus, membership in the family of Jesus depended on criteria other than biological, and it was possible to reject demands and obligations laid down in bio-social terms. But even if the *patria potestas* is transferred to God alone, this does not automatically create equality between sisters and brothers. None of the family terms was neutral or conveyed equality; each had its own connotations colored by a patriarchal structure in which brothers had greater worth than sisters, and in which a mother was valued according to her ability to give birth to sons. The patriarchal structure of domination and subordination is transferred to the fictive family and contributes to a patriarchal consolidation of the community of believers. The Pastoral Letters bear witness to such a development.

THE WOMEN FROM GALILEE

In the Gospel of Mark a group of female followers of Jesus appears in the crucifixion scene (Mark 15:40f.). Retrospectively we are told that they had been with him already in Galilee, but they are not explicitly mentioned until the male disciples all have fled and only the women remain to witness the death of Jesus, the burial, and the empty tomb. Luke presents the tradition about the women at the cross in a slightly modified form. Early on in the Gospel, while Jesus was still in Galilee, a group of women is presented as followers of Jesus together with the Twelve (Luke 8:1-3). This brief passage resembles the summaries and does not deal with a particular episode but comprises something that is typical and generally representative.

Like Mark, Luke mentions three of the women by name. In most of the "lists of women" in the Gospels, some of the women are named specifically in pairs (Mark 15:47; Matt 27:61; 28:1) or a group of three (Mark 15:40; 16:1; Matt 27:51; Luke 8:2f.; 24:10; John 19:25). Such a presentation of an "inner circle" within a larger group is common. The selection of three recalls corresponding selections of three male disciples elsewhere in the Gospels (Mark 5:37; 9:2; 14:33; Luke 8:51). Moreover, the sequence of the names is significant. In Luke 24:10 priority is given to the two women named first in 8:3, while the third name is left out and replaced by the second name from the Markan list. This means that the list in 24:10 includes the two most important names from each of the traditions available.

Mary of Magdala is the only woman whose name is included in all the lists, and, with the exception of John 19:25 where family ties are given priority, she

also heads the lists. Her prominent position probably reflects her great prestige in many early communities and an authority comparable only to Peter's on the male side. In other words, her first place among the women listed at this univocal point in the tradition. In the Lukan text her priority seems at this point to be further justified by the fact that among all the women healed by Jesus, her case was an extreme one with seven demons being expelled.

It is significant that none of the women who are mentioned by name receives her identity by her relationship to a man, as was the convention of naming. The connection to men's names is introduced only when it is needed to distinguish between several women with the same first name. Mary of Magdala, however, is distinguished by her place of origin. Even in the case of Joanna, the prominence given to the information that she was the wife of Chuza, the steward of Herod Antipas, primarily serves to indicate her economic and social level. It substantiates that the women had access to means of sustenance and helps to establish the function they had in the group who followed Jesus.

Since many interpreters find it inconceivable that married women could have left home and family in this way in Palestine at that period, various suggestions have been made about the real nature and status of these women. The women are claimed to have been the wives of disciples, traveling together with their husbands; or they are named as widows, divorced women, or women rejected by their husbands. One can ask, of course, whether the majority of the women in the Jesus movement originally were less well integrated into family structures than the male disciples. This would make the following of Jesus by these women less controversial—even if what is inconceivable is not necessarily impossible. This would also help to explain why the list of the costs of discipleship in Luke 14:26 and 18:29f. includes "wife," but does not mention "husband." Others dismiss this kind of speculation and answer the question exclusively in terms of a merger of various traditions. The description of the women at 8:2f. then represents a retrojection into Jesus' life of later situations from outside Palestine as we see them displayed in Acts. The historical reference is to the well-off female benefactors (patrons) in the Greco-Roman world. Luke's portrait in 8:2-3 has been colored by a later situation; the women in 8:2-3 must be related to similar female benefactors elsewhere in Luke-Acts. But the question still remains why these women from Galilee appear in the Lukan story in this way as itinerant benefactors.

THE HEALED DAUGHTERS OF ABRAHAM

The experience implied in Luke 8:2-3 combines in an exceptional manner social insecurity and exposure with autonomous management of resources. A

movement from social marginalization and impurity to social integration and purity is given expression in the remark that the women had all been healed by Jesus. The tradition about all the women's sickness and healing is material peculiar to Luke. Their social marginalization as women is thereby intensified at the outset by sickness and impurity. But it is significant that the connection thus made between the experience of a wondrous act of Jesus and the calling to follow reflects a typical pattern particular to Luke.

In the Gospel a number of miracle stories relate how women are recipients of the wondrous acts of Jesus. Half of these narratives are peculiar to Luke, and half are based on Markan material. It is typical for Luke that narratives of healing often involve exorcism. Thereby the healings of Jesus are characterized more strongly as liberating acts and as part of an eschatological event. Moreover, for most of the women healing means being freed from a constant state of impurity and being resocialized into the community.

The healing of the bent woman in the synagogue on the sabbath (Luke 13:10-17) expresses that Jesus' wondrous act in setting the woman free is appropriate according to God's will because it fulfills the liberating intention of the sabbath. Jesus' controversial act toward the bent woman articulates also that "she is Abraham's daughter." Luke provides the only Christian Testament evidence of the term "daughter of Abraham," for the singular term "Abraham's son" (see 19:9). Abraham's son(s) is a traditional Jewish designation, but the feminine form is not. It has been suggested that "Abraham's daughter" might be a Lukan innovation.

But Abrahamic categories applied to a woman are found in 4 Maccabees (14:20; 15:28; 17:6; 18:20). All of these passages speak of one and the same person: an exemplary, strong, and God-fearing martyr, the mother of the seven young men. First she sees her sons undergo a cruel death at the tyrant's hands, before she herself seeks death unafraid and with courage. A dominant trait in 4 Maccabees' use of Abrahamic categories is that the persons in question, both men and women, are paragons of virtue and piety, so that the characterization is developed within the framework of a typological pattern. The woman's religious zeal with its willingness to accept sacrifice shows that she has the qualities of Abraham. There is also some scattered evidence in later Jewish sources of the use of the expression "Abraham's daughter" (*b. Ket.* 72b; *b. Git.* 89a) to convey an implicit positive judgment of morality.

The formulation in Luke 13:16 is an observation of fact, not an emphatic bestowal of a designation. The woman *is* Abraham's daughter; she does not become one. It is one of the premises of the healing, not a consequence of it, but it is not a statement about great piety on the woman's part. In relation to the examples discussed above, the surprising element is not primarily the fact that a Jewish woman is called Abraham's daughter, but rather that the woman about whom this is said is not a paragon of virtue and piety. She is a woman

who has been possessed by Satan for a great part of her life, and she is not given any attributes that might point to a special likeness or relationship to Abraham. Abraham plays no role as model or typological prototype.

The healing on the day of rest, which was an essential sign of the covenant, realizes her status as daughter. As a daughter of Abraham, she shares in the blessing that is promised to Abraham's progeny, and this is having a liberating effect in her life. The motif of liberation recurs in the Lukan adaptation of the Abraham traditions (Luke 1:52-53; 1:73-75; Acts 7:6-7). For Luke, Abraham is primarily the original recipient of God's election and of the promise to the fathers. The promise holds good for Abraham's progeny, and to be a child of Abraham implies both a privilege and an obligation. Thereby the need becomes urgent of defining who is truly to be counted among Abraham's children. Unlike Paul, who also struggles with this question, Luke neither engages in polemic against circumcision nor spiritualizes it. It seems rather that circumcision no longer plays a decisive role in the definition of membership among Abraham's children. Already in the initial phase of the Gospel, in the concluding lines of Mary's hymn of praise (1:54f.), reference is made to God's promise "to Abraham and to his descendants" and God's fidelity to this promise. Through her hymn of praise, the pregnant Mary gives a prophetic interpretation of the significance of her child. She predicts that the covenantal promise will be fulfilled radically in Jesus' life for the existing progeny of Abraham. The hymn makes it clear that the promise is fulfilled by means of a total social transformation, and when Abraham is mentioned later on, it is in connection with drastic and surprising reversals of inside and outside groups, as it happens in Luke 3:8; 13:28; 16:22-31 (and 13:16; 19:9). These individual examples thus take on the character of a concretization of salvation history.

With only one exception (Acts 13:26), Luke uses terms inclusive to both women and men when speaking of Abraham's progeny. This corresponds to the emphasis that the reestablished people of God comprises men as well as women (Acts 5:14; 8:3, 12; 9:2, 36ff.; cf. also 1:13f. and 12:12). In Acts 2:15-21, the outpouring of the Spirit is interpreted on the basis of Joel 3:1-5 with the promise that "your daughters" too shall prophesy. This is a major point of reference for the usage of the term "daughter" in Luke—with a certain, though not explicit, reference to the Abraham tradition. When Jesus addresses the woman with the hemorrhage in Luke 8:48 with a dismissal formula echoing the liturgy, this expresses more than a personal and intimate form of address. The term "peace" and the allusion to being saved mark the woman's share in salvation and her membership in God's people. This case too has the character of reversal and change, and of a surprising overcoming of alienating distance.

Thus, it is noteworthy that both of the women who are called (Abraham's) daughters are sick, socially stigmatized, and impure. Impure persons were nor-

ally regarded as a threat to the collective purity of the people. This was why the question of purity was a matter of fundamental social and religious importance. The only man in the Gospel to be called Abraham's son is the tax collector Zacchaeus (19:9). He is presented as a superintendent of taxes and very rich, and we are told plainly that he was held to be a sinful man with whom there should be no social contact. Jesus reaffirms that the tax collector Zacchaeus is a son of Abraham and is therefore heir to the promise of salvation. Thus, Jesus reinstates Zacchaeus as a true Jew, in opposition to the general opinion of him as an alienated sinner. These acts of Jesus suggest a universalist potential; but though Israel's boundaries are stretched wide, they are not broken through. In Luke non-Jews are never called Abraham's children, as they are in Paul. Israel remains the chosen people of God, Abraham's progeny, even if this Israel is differently qualified.

On the whole, the role of the women in the miracle stories remains remarkably respectful to common conventions regarding women's behavior. Women are characterized as passive partners, as persons who receive without any antecedent prayer or recommendation on their own part. A comparison of parallel narratives about men and women makes this very clear.

The distinguished Jairus appeals very humbly but still directly to Jesus and begs him to come to his home (Luke 8:41). The woman with the hemorrhage does indeed reach out to get help for herself, but she comes under the cover of the crowd of the people, hidden and approaching Jesus from behind, fearful and afraid. The dramatic interweaving of the two narratives plays on a whole set of contrasts between the synagogue president Jairus and the impoverished and impure woman. They are also played off against each other when the woman with the hemorrhage becomes the cause of Jesus' delay on the way to Jairus's dying daughter. A similar contrast is found between Jairus and the widow in Nain. Both have an only daughter (8:42) or son (7:12) called back to life. Jesus raises up Jairus's twelve-year-old daughter, who is of marriageable age, and the widow's son, who provides for her. But whereas Jairus himself takes the initiative for this to happen and comes to fetch Jesus with his request, the widow is quite simply seen by Jesus and awakens his compassion.

There may be several reasons for Luke's omission of the narrative about the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-30). Assuming that Luke did know the story from Mark, it is not impossible that Luke saw the woman's quick-witted insistence as "out of order." As she is described in Mark, she is a capable, argumentative variant of Jairus, and she would be an excellent parallel to the Gentile officer at Capernaum (Luke 7:1-10). Instead, the latter is placed next to the widow in Nain, who needs her son to be alive and is the passive object of Jesus' compassion. The coupling of these two narratives also corresponds to the parallel examples of Elijah and Elisha, to which Jesus refers in his speech in Nazareth (Luke 4:24-27).

The women lay claim to no rights. It is Jesus who sovereignly acknowledges that they have rights, and this is accompanied by a dramatic, healing alteration in their lives. Salvation has come to them. An exception is the "sinful woman" who anoints Jesus (Luke 7:36-50) in sovereign disdain of all norms for respectable conduct. Otherwise the women do not approach Jesus openly and directly with their request for help. Their appeals are indirect: others ask for help on their behalf (Luke 4:48), or they hide themselves in the crowd (Luke 8:43). Thus, an obvious respect is retained for rules of public decency that made it improper for women to address a(n unknown) man. The message of liberation is expressed with due consideration to possible public offense.

THE WOMEN FROM GALILEE AND THE RHETORIC OF SERVICE

Implicit in the motif of healing is a christological motivation of service. The benefaction by Jesus is given a response in the women's consequent benefactor activity. Peter's mother-in-law demonstrates her recovered health when she immediately rises and serves them (Luke 4:38f.). Some textual witnesses alter the plural "them" in v. 39 to a singular "him," as also in Luke 8:3. The singular, however, is a harmonizing reading under the influence of the parallel passage in Matt 8:15 and possibly also of Mark 15:40. The singular form would give a christological focus and would also enhance the impression that the woman's service would be a repayment she makes according to a customary pattern of reciprocity. The plural form tones this down. Jesus becomes the benefactor who, rather than ensuring repayments in kind for himself, creates benefactors for the larger group.

Luke frequently uses terms with the root *diakon-*, which means "to serve someone" (see 4:39; 10:40; 12:37; 17:8; 22:26f.). Although this can have a more general reference, it tends to be linked to meals and food. Meals in antiquity were subject to a strict hierarchical regulation, both regarding places at table and regarding the distribution of tasks. In a Jewish context it might be that if the person one served was worthy of honor, the service itself was also a matter of prestige. But in general the social associations of service were negative: service was a task of a lowly status. The preparation and serving of food were traditionally a woman's responsibility, unless slaves took care of it. The one who waited at table was always the one with the lowest place in the household. Since most families did not have house slaves, especially in Palestine, the task fell to the women of the family. In Luke, women are those preparing and providing the meals both in the narrative about Peter's mother-in-law and in the case of Martha (10:40). At the same time, Luke does refer to servants (see

12:35ff.; 17:7ff.), although these slaves may have been women (cf. Rhoda in Acts 12:13).

This was an area of life in which customs varied. It revealed tension between tasks assigned according to gender and status, and norms of propriety, which implied a certain segregation. The extent to which the women served at table when the household entertained guests varied depending on religious norms, ideals of propriety, and cultural and social location. While women did have the responsibility for the preparation of the food, they did not always serve at table, because they then had to appear in front of strangers. Sometimes under cramped conditions this was unavoidable, but the women did not themselves take part in the meal—although this could happen among the more aristocratic and well-off. (In later rabbinic material, social conventions forbid women to wait on any men other than their own husbands.)

According to Luke 8:3 the group of women “serve” Jesus and the Twelve. This seems to confirm that the role of waiting on others is theirs. The role of the women remains the same; only the recipients have changed. Those on whom they wait are no longer the men in their physical family, but the brethren in the fictive kinship community in the flock of disciples. In this passage Luke links the women’s service to their property. He diverts attention from the relationship to Jesus in the description and the terminology of discipleship in Mark 15:40f. The women are no longer seen as disciples but are directed to a special function of care that is determined in material terms. The parallel to Peter’s mother-in-law is clear, and despite a certain expansion of meaning when compared to 4:39, the service of the women in 8:3 retains a primary association of food and physical care.

The women take care of the material needs of the group; they provide the basic sustenance for Jesus and those who follow him, having left everything behind. The women’s use of their property permits the group around Jesus to be free of concern about what they will eat or what they will wear (Luke 12:22, 30–34). The costs of discipleship are covered by the new community, the new family (Luke 14:26ff.; 18:28ff.). This is in keeping with Luke’s view of the family as an economic unit. This is why most family-related activities are aimed at pooling resources and at the distribution of food, possessions, and work. This distribution is the primary expression of the relationship between the members of the family.

By serving from their own resources in order to cover the needs of the others, the women from Galilee are portrayed as prototypes of an ethos that is to be valid universally among the people of God. In many places Luke voices a demand/ideal of giving up possessions and property to the benefit of the community (see Luke 12:13–14; 14:33; 18:18–30; 19:1–10; Acts 4:35–37; 5:1–11). This is not an ideal of poverty but a model of radical redistribution. Through the realization of property, almsgiving and an organized distribution of means,

the community is able to meet the basic and legitimate needs of all in God’s family for food, clothing, and a place to sleep.

The widow by the treasure chest in the Temple (Luke 21:1–4), who makes available all that she has is perhaps the most dramatic example. The widow puts in what she has: she risks her life. Some scholars interpret 8:3 in a parenetic sense: rich women in the community are called by the example of the women who followed Jesus to serve with their property. The women in 8:3, through their continuous contributions of property, implement the ideal that disciples, whether they possess much or little, shall renounce without reserve what belongs to them in order to meet the needs of the others, so that no one suffers from indigence.

The women’s service often seems to be connected with a certain prosperity to which they themselves had access. The expression “out of their resources” in 8:3 also presupposes that the women had means of their own, even if it does not necessarily imply that they were all equally well-off. Roman law in this period allowed women to inherit and to own and manage their own property. Many women had means at their own disposal. Even if the legislation in the Greek and Jewish contexts was stricter, a relaxation occurred in the Hellenistic period that permitted women a certain right to own property. The majority of women had their lives filled and limited by domestic obligations, but there are also many examples in antiquity of professionally active women. Some women were economically self-supporting. This was true not only of slave women, who had no choice but to work, or for small farms in the countryside, which demanded the work of the whole family. The women in question were not especially rich, or particularly poor. Some worked in family businesses or workshops (cf. Priscilla, who operated a tent-making business together with Aquila [Acts 18:3]). Otherwise, women tended to work in professions that were a natural continuation of their domestic duties and were concerned with food, fabrics and clothes, health and comfort (cf. Lydia, who dealt in purple cloth [Acts 16:14]). This means that they were active in small trade, in service industries, and as doctors and midwives. These women not only contributed to the daily maintenance of the family but were also able to lay by some reserves for themselves.

Women with means could function as financial benefactors for public and religious projects and for various kinds of groups and associations. Through their patronage they were able to acquire an influence that was otherwise formally denied them in public life. This was also the case for the early Christian communities, which included a considerable number of rich (and high-standing) women. Luke gives a pertinent picture of such women, who kept house for the community: Martha in Luke 10:38–42; Tabitha in Acts 9:36ff.; Mary the mother of John in Acts 12:12; Lydia in Acts 16:15, 40; and also Priscilla in Acts 18.

It is not clear what this patronage further involved. Beyond doubt, the women who were materially able to accommodate the community in their houses had thereby also power and influence. But it is uncertain whether a status as patron/ess implied a formal directive authority. Some scholars insist that the patronesses had regular functions of leadership in communities that bore an egalitarian stamp. It is also claimed that *diakon-* terms are technical terms for this leadership of house-churches and that the terminology is due to the fact that the responsibility for the community's Eucharist and for the common meal as well as for preaching was assigned to these householders. But it is difficult to establish with certainty that the status of benefactors and patrons also involved institutional positions of leadership, and there are no texts that clearly couple such functions specifically with the *diakonia-* terms or with responsibility for the meal. Phoebe was a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, but we are not told whether she had a community in her house. Indeed, some texts seem to indicate the opposite: those providing the material means were not the ones to direct the redistribution of these. Redistribution was entrusted to leaders who themselves lacked personal possessions and who were chosen either by virtue of charismatic endowment or through a more institutional election. This does not, of course, exclude female patrons' having dominant positions, especially if a patron also had the community in her house. Nor does it exclude the communities' having female leaders. The point is simply that there was not an immediate connection between the status of patron and the formal function of leadership (where that existed), and there is no convincing terminological evidence that *diakonia* was especially associated with this kind of leadership.

Whether the women are on the road with Jesus or stay in the house that he/the company visits, they fulfill the same function: their service represents a basis of sustenance for Jesus and those who follow him. The description of the women in 8:2f. is not to be explained simply against the background of the patronate. Here various traits are combined in a condensed manner: the new healed life and the women's share in the social abandonment involved in the Jesus-movement, and the service, sharing, and benefactory activity of rich women.

The women's service thus transcends the specific framework of the meal—although Luke still emphasizes the practical and material character of the term. But even scholars who agree on this point draw very dissimilar conclusions from it. For example, very different assessments have been given of the extent to which the women's service as described in Luke represents a step forward or a step backward in relation to earlier praxis; this depends on the background against which the Gospel of Luke is read. Some presuppose a background in a strict patriarchal setting in Palestine and claim that the service of the women in the Gospel stories means that women are given access to

tasks from which they were traditionally excluded because the recipients were outside the family. The social provocation lies not in what the women are doing but in where and whom they serve. On the one hand, the radical offense given by the presence and the tasks of the women who followed Jesus is emphasized; on the other hand, there is an edificatory and comforting confirmation of the women's task as exclusively confined to charitable activity.

Feminist readings have reconstructed a story of early Christian communities and missionary activity in which women played an active role in proclamation, worship, and leadership. The "waiting at tables" (*diakonia*) expresses leadership exercised at the common meal including the celebration of the Eucharist, and to perform this service in the community represented a natural continuation of the traditional tasks for women. In this perspective, Lukan texts that refer the task of preparing or distributing food to a male leadership (Luke 9:13; 22:7ff.; Acts 6:1–6) are to be seen primarily as suppressing the mention of the women and overruling the role they actually played. Luke's construction is seen as an attempt to limit the activity of women to areas that were less provocative socially than proclamation and leadership. Luke reduces the women to benefactors, subordinate to the spiritual authority and leadership of men.

The two interpretations outlined above may differ widely in their approach and preferences, but in both cases a distinction is at work between a function of caring, especially appropriate for women to undertake, and a male function of proclamation and teaching, represented by Jesus and the Twelve. Luke 8:1–3 may well give a positive description of women's service but mainly attests a differentiation of tasks according to gender. To proceed further, a closer view of the transfer and alternation of role patterns in the story of Luke is needed.

It is possible to discern in Luke's terminology a transfer of *diakon-* terms. In the first part of the Gospel this term occurs exclusively as a description of how women quite simply behave, before it shifts to the master-servant relationship in the two parables in Luke 17. Here a motif of role reversal is introduced. In Jesus' testament to the Twelve at the Last Supper in Luke 22 this is further developed to an instruction for the leaders of the people of God with Jesus himself as the model—the more so as he actually is serving them at this particular meal. In the case of the women, service needs no particular justification. It is only when the role of servant is presented as an ideal for free men and rulers that it requires a specific and christological warrant.

The christological mediation of service bestows a new significance and dignity on the role of service as it first was carried out by the women. The women's service acquires exemplary value for the leadership function as it should be exercised by the new leadership in the people of God. The most humble in status according to the patriarchal system were exalted as models

and thereby the claim to power and domination over others is challenged. This is even more emphatically expressed in conflictual juxtapositions with those who claim leadership but who are rich and false. "Do you see this woman?" Jesus says to the Pharisee in Luke 7:44. "This woman" is the local prostitute whose lavishing service makes the Pharisee's hospitality seem full of omissions and defective—no matter whether the failures in providing service with which the Pharisee is reproached go beyond what one could expect to be included by usual hospitality. It is also clear that for some of the services mentioned it would indeed have been the host's duty to see that they were offered, but it would have been the servant's duty to carry them out. The woman therefore does not take on the host's role, but by performing a serving task she, the despised one, represents a corrective over against his leading role as host.

The widow in Luke 21:1–4 is placed in a double contrast. She is contrasted both with the hypocritical scribes and with the rich, who merely give out of their superabundance an amount that they themselves hardly notice. By means of what she does in giving what little she has, the failures of the rich rulers are exposed.

However, although the women and their traditional role are idealized, the women are excluded from actual positions of leadership. Contrary to what has often been said about Luke 22:24–27, Luke does not advocate a reversal of roles. That would imply that the servants now are to rule. What takes place is a corrective and paradoxical merger of two traditionally opposite roles, the role of woman/servant and the role of ruler. The leaders are to enter into functions of service that would not normally be indicated by their status. They are "to be like the one who serves."

The terminology moves from a concrete and direct use based on the experience of service to a metaphorical or rhetorical use based on the privilege of leadership. The development of a leadership rhetoric of service is clearly to be followed in the early part of Acts (Acts 1:17, 25 and, especially, 6:1–7). The argument resulting in the naming of the seven plays with various *diakon*-terms in a way that shows that at this stage they are not fixed terms but a certain mode of speech. No matter what task the leading men undertake, it is to be called "service."

The leaders as recognized by Luke are all men. It is even so that an explicit criterion of gender is introduced in Acts to exclude women from the possibility of being elected to the service of leadership, whether of the Word or of the table. Both the new apostle after Judas (Acts 1:21) and the Seven (Acts 6:3) should be elected from among the men. Is this introduction of a criterion of maleness an extreme expression of an androcentric mind? If so, why is the point made at all? It is, of course, probable that according to the preserved lists of names, both the Twelve and the Seven were men. But in the society at the time that was no sensation. So why does it need an explicit warrant? Could

it be that the positive and vigorous presentation of women in the Gospel makes it necessary to give a particular justification for the fact that they were not among those named as leaders of the Jerusalem community? There is a certain irony to this: those who *de facto* serve are not considered eligible for the service of leadership. The reversal not of roles but of role values coincides with and justifies a masculinization—from serving women to lords who are to be "as one who serves."

THE REST IS SILENCE

In Luke 10:38–42 Jesus visits two sisters, Martha and Mary. Martha with her serving activity is set in contrast to her sister Mary, who listens in silence at the feet of the Lord. The two sisters are cast in roles that, without becoming caricatures, are almost stereotypes. This has encouraged interpretations of the two women primarily as symbols of various attitudes, forms of life or theological principles: for example, righteousness by works against righteousness by faith; Judaism against Christianity; the *vita activa* against the *vita contemplativa*; and so on. Not only do interpretations like this set aside any historical or literary understanding; they are also blind to the gender perspective.

Martha is the hostess who welcomes Jesus in her own home and provides whatever hospitality is required. This text is probably the oldest evidence of the Aramaic name Martha, a feminine form of *mar*, which means sovereign lady, ruling lady. In many ways, Martha is representative of a typical female figure in Luke-Acts. She is one of the number of relatively well-off and independent women who keep their own house and place it at the disposition of the community or of itinerant preachers.

Martha's role is repeatedly characterized by *diakon*-terminology in v. 40. Attempts to read the narrative in Luke 10:38–42 on a reconstructed subtext presupposing that its special and primary aim on Luke's part was to contest Martha's role of diaconal leadership, contain a number of sharp insights, especially into the portrait of Mary. But they are based on assumptions of a widespread and almost technical use of the *diakon*-terms, which is not well attested.

In the story, Martha plays the active role that drives the narrative forward; seen in this regard, she is the protagonist. Her activity is emphasized with vivid words, and her own words are related in direct speech, when she rebukes her sister's lack of practical activity. Mary's role in Luke 10:38–42 is passive; contrary to the active and outspoken Martha she listens in silence. Mary sitting at the Lord's feet and listening to his words is portrayed in the typical position of the pupil (cf. Acts 22:3). This description of a teacher-pupil relationship is an important feature of the text. The role as student in which Mary is positioned goes beyond the normal opportunity for women to hear the word in the con-

text of worship. Moreover, the text alludes to terms that in rabbinic tradition are connected to teaching institutions. It also echoes other sayings about "hearing the word" as the decisive criterion for discipleship directed to both women and men (see Luke 6:46ff.; 8:15, 21; 11:28).

Martha does not address Mary directly, but reproaches Jesus for his lack of interest in the unfair division of labor. She takes it for granted that priority belongs to the service she herself carries out, and she takes Jesus seriously to task because he does not see to it that Mary takes a part in the same service. The reproach uttered by Martha thus shows a certain set of priorities about what ought to be women's primary occupation. It is not, however, accepted by the Lord, even though it is formulated in such a way that it expects an affirmative answer. Martha's choice of words also refers continually back to herself. This intensifies the contrast to Mary's concentration on Jesus' words. But at the same time, Martha's appeal to Jesus implies that the relationship between host(ess) and guest is altered; even the hostess Martha operates with Jesus as the ultimate authority.

When Jesus rejects Martha's implicit demand that her sister should help, this is done by means of a two-sided argumentation. Negatively, it is said that Martha troubles and bustles about with many things. Positively, it is said that Mary has chosen the good part. The transition between the two descriptions of the women is mediated by the saying of Jesus about the one thing necessary. There are large text-critical problems about Jesus' answer in vv. 41f. The sensitive point seems to be "the need of one thing" (v. 42a), where the textual witnesses are divided among three quite distinct variants, two of which are very well attested: (1) "Few things, little, are necessary" (P38, P3, sy pal); (2) "Few things are necessary, or only one" (Nestle's text in earlier editions, and attested, e.g., by Sinaiticus and Vaticanus); (3) "One thing is necessary" (attested by the oldest papyri and the koine group). Among scholars there is a wide variety in the choice of which variant is to be preferred. The choice is influenced by the question whether Martha's activity totally can be dismissed as devoid of value and unnecessary. For those who cannot bring themselves to sweep Martha aside completely, the variants with "few things" are the most comfortable. Then something is said in Martha's favor; her mistake is simply that she bothers with much *more* than is necessary. A little, or only one thing, can suffice. Perhaps this refers to the number of courses to be laid on the table. Such an interpretation can in fact be said to be covered by all three variants, provided that "the one thing necessary" in v. 42a is not identified with "the good part" that Mary has chosen (v. 42b).

Jesus' reply to Martha concerns not her serving but the form it takes accompanied by trouble and agitation. It can thus be claimed that the fundamental antithesis is not between hearing and serving, but between hearing and agi-

tated toil. What truly causes the problem is that Martha, in her agitated toil with so many things, demands her sister's assistance. From her own needs for help she intervenes in Mary's choice, and she even tries to ensure that Jesus supports this intervention of hers. So Martha represents a threat that Mary's part can be taken from her.

We should note that this is not portrayed as a conflict between men and women but as a conflict between two sisters. This is not a matter of a "divide and rule" strategy by putting woman up against woman. It is rather an illustration of how various and possibly conflicting roles for women may be balanced. The antagonism between the two sisters is provoked by Jesus' presence. But he is not the first to articulate the difference in the categories of conflict: Martha has this part. Jesus does indeed confirm the antithesis, but not in Martha's version. Instead, he rebukes Martha's toil and agitation, and defends the discipleship of Mary. It is, however, important that the priorities are established as the outcome of a situation of conflict of interests, in which Martha makes demands on Mary. Thus, the priorities are not necessarily absolute: the rejection of Martha's utterance comes unambiguously only when Jesus adds that Mary's good part is not to be taken from her. When there is a set priority among "the parts," these cannot be played off against one another. Devotion to the Word is given priority even where this may lead to conflict with the preoccupation that demands that one give support in provision, hospitality, and service.

Mary's passivity and silence raises, however, some further questions. Does the preference for Mary's choice mean that women's relationship to the word is to be defined primarily in terms of silence? Is the public modesty of the women in the healing stories part of a more consistent pattern? Are women who argue and speak up like Martha and the Syrophenician woman in Mark (whom Luke omits) nothing but an embarrassment or offense? Are women to keep silent and not to speak, to listen and learn but not to teach? Does Luke represent an implicit variant of the same ideal as is explicit in 1 Tim 2:11f., where it emphatically is said that a woman shall let herself be taught in silence?

Even if there are similarities between Luke's portrayal of women and that of the Pastoral Letters, the differences too are obvious. In 1 Tim 2:11, the warning is not about women's access to instruction, but the author wishes to limit what he sees as improper consequences of this: they are to receive it in silence and in subordination. In Luke the sexually based functions are set aside in favor of the relationship to the word of God, and the women in Luke are noticeably independent. Women's choice of the word is a priority, even if it happens to be at the cost of the virtues for a woman's life valued so highly by the Pastoral Letters: the domestic life with husband and children. The decisive dissimilarity between the Pastoral Letters and Luke in these matters is to be found in their totally diverse attitude to marriage.

Neither is Mary in Luke 10:28-32 specifically portrayed as the ideal woman, but more generally as an ideal disciple. When the word of the Lord is proclaimed people should listen and receive. Early on in the Gospel, everyone has a listening role as recipients in a situation in which Jesus' proclamation dominates. So the preference for Mary also indicates that the real and primary host is Jesus himself providing his word. The deeper structure of the narrative in Luke 10:38-42 is therefore similar to that in 8:1-3—the service of Jesus comes first.

Nevertheless, limitations and restrictions are at work concerning women's exercise of the word also in Luke. The process of masculinization not only occurs through the transfer of the service terms, but is also reflected in an emerging difference between women's and men's relationship to the word. They all begin by listening to the words of the Lord. But while the male disciples may become public preachers, women are never given any explicit commission to preach. The criterion of maleness in Acts 1:21 excludes women from testifying to Jesus' resurrection, even if they otherwise satisfy the criteria of eligibility.

In the story of the empty tomb in Luke 24:1-10, it becomes clear how certain factors operate in silencing women. The peculiar Lukan version of this story may help to explain the remarkable gap between the Gospel's emphasis on the role of women on the one side and on the other side Acts' reduction of them to invisibility in favor of the healing and preaching activity of the leading men. By the use of almost ironic devices, the women become simultaneously recognized and rejected.

At the burial, Luke assigns to the women a more active role than does Mark. By including the women's preparations for the anointing of Jesus' body in the burial scene, Luke connects the narratives about the burial and the empty tomb more closely to one another so that they become one single sequence. The women do as much as they can as quickly as they can, without breaking the sabbath regulations. But even before sunrise they return to the tomb with the fragrant oils they have already prepared on the burial day itself. The women's service continues, and they undertake what was women's work, in Luke's story attended to by no one else. The women come to the tomb in order to continue their service, but the situation they encounter makes the preparations they have carried out inadequate and renders their practical concern and service unnecessary. It has been suggested that the women's role in the structure of the tomb narrative is intermediary. They are merely transient bearers of the news of the resurrection. The message with which they are sent away is not for the women themselves but for the male apostles. In relation to the content of the message, the women remain passive, without understanding—in fact, outsiders. The message is for the men, and the women are only “errand girls.”

It can indeed be claimed that in Luke the women run immediately to bring the male disciples the good news. But this is a spontaneous action on their part. No commission is given to the women to go and tell the disciples that Jesus is risen (as in Matt 28:7) and/or to tell them to meet him in Galilee (as in Mark 16:7 par. Matt 28:10). Instead, they are reminded of how Jesus told *them* that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, be crucified, and rise again on the third day (Luke 24:6-7). Thus the “errand girl” commission is replaced in Luke by a statement that focuses on the women's own role as disciples in the Gospel story. They are asked to remember what he told them while he was still in Galilee, where they were together with him and listened to his word.

This explains why the characterization of the women as those following Jesus from Galilee is emphasized by being repeated twice in close sequence—Luke 23:49, 55. The retrospective reminder thereby makes sense. The summary notice in 8:1-3 is once more activated in the narrative, and the reference to the passion predictions in 24:7 imply that the women are counted among “the disciples” in 9:18ff. and 17:22ff. The exhortation to the women in 24:6 to remember what he had told them also echoes the various statements earlier in the Gospel about hearing the word and taking care of it (8:15, [21]; 11:28; 10:39).

The women's role in Luke's tomb narrative is thus not one of substitution. The women from Galilee are themselves the first addressees of the resurrection message in a way that confirms their discipleship and the instruction they have received as disciples. In this situation, their diaconal resources are not needed. Relevant is their relationship to the word of the Lord: they have listened to his words. In these words they have the resources that now may help to overcome their confusion and anxiety. They are asked to remember how he told them. The use of the verb “remember” combined with the word of the Lord in v. 6 and v. 8 has parallels in 22:61; Acts 11:16; 20:35; Matt 26:75; 27:53; John 2:(17), 22; 12:16; 15:20; 1 *Clem.* 13.1; 46.77; Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians* 2.3. It may have been a customary phrase to introduce a word of Jesus, but there are great differences among the various writings in terms of the function of this “remembrance.” In Luke it is exclusively linked to the instruction of Jesus entrusted to the disciples. His words are to be “remembered,” while the word of scripture is to be read, interpreted and expounded, opened up—in the light of words that Jesus spoke while he still was with them, and which are entrusted to their memory (see the general references to scripture in Luke 24:25ff., 32, 44ff.).

The exhortation to the women to remember does not make any insinuation that they might have forgotten. Nor should the words addressed to the women be understood as a sharp reproach, like the accusation against the disciples on the road to Emmaus in 24:25f. The main emphasis lies on the posi-

tive proclamation of the resurrection, which explains to the women why the tomb is empty. In Luke, the women themselves have already established that Jesus' body is no longer there. The kerygmatic formula "he is not here, but has risen" is further strengthened by appealing to the women to recall Jesus' earlier prediction and does not carry less meaning than the joyful Easter message in the corresponding narrative in Mark. Those who insist that the angelic messengers are not really recalling the kerygma tend also to presume that the women's remembrance only is an inadequate faith. On the whole this reflects and defends a theological bias which claims that only the christophanies can evoke faith and actually did so. The empty tomb is then at best ambiguous.

As an interpretation of Luke this is not convincing. The exhortation to the women to remember what Jesus told them in Galilee serves to support the message of the resurrection, and the explicit emphasis that the women did remember implies that they truly received this message. It also implies that they both had heard the words and had taken good care of them. Thereby the women from Galilee fulfilled the criterion granting membership in God's family, and they are indeed included among the blessed. By means of the continuous presence and role of the women from Galilee, Luke establishes strong links between the stories about cross and tomb and the rest of the Gospel.

The women's service leads them to a tomb that they find to be empty, to a body that is no longer there—among the dead. In this situation, the women are reaffirmed as hearers of the word: they are the first to hear the message of the resurrection, and this calls to their remembrance the word they once heard from Jesus. This makes them leave the tomb behind, and they go forth and tell everything to the eleven and to all the others. Their act of witness is due to their own spontaneous initiative as a continuation of what they themselves have heard and remembered. The women appear as the first witnesses of the resurrection, and, unlike the narratives in Mark and Matthew, the narrative in Luke 24 says nothing about any hesitation, confusion, or fear on their part as they make their way from the tomb.

The narrative itself guarantees to the reader that the women are trustworthy and credible witnesses. They do speak the truth. The integrity of their testimony is emphasized first by the statement that they told "all this." The later repetition of the story included in the Emmaus narrative (24:22) demonstrates afresh the reliability of the women. The women are also sufficiently numerous to satisfy the formal demand about the number of witnesses; three of the women are named, and the list of names comes pointedly at the close, just as a protocol of testimony concludes by mentioning the names of the witnesses. The imperfect form of the verb in v. 10 can in fact be understood to mean that the women repeatedly told all that they had experienced. Nevertheless, they are not believed; their words seem to the apostles and the male disciples to be empty chatter (v. 11a), and they disbelieve the women (v. 11b). It is not solely a

matter of the incredibility of the content of the story the women tell. The form of expression in v. 11b shows that it is not irrelevant that women are the storytellers. Here the apostles' unbelief is linked directly to the women. This is in keeping with the fact that women were considered less credible (than men), and, as a rule, they were not accepted juridically as witnesses.

The positioning of the list of names at the close serves also to accentuate a contrast between the women and the men. Luke (as compared with Mark and Matthew) widens the group of women and men to include all. The whole group of women, "Mary of Magdala and Joanna and Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them" (v. 10), are set over against the whole group of men, "the eleven and the rest of the men" (v. 9). All the women give a full testimony, and all the men refuse to believe them.

Peter's visit to the tomb in 24:12 puts him in a slightly more positive light, but only in relation to the rest of the men and their complete lack of belief. Over against the women he comes across as a pale variant. It may serve to prepare the version given by the two disciples on their way to Emmaus (24:22ff.), which in its turn points directly to the Christophany traditions. But this is hardly sufficient to hold that in the Lukan narrative a kind of Petrine primacy is promoted to replace the women's (in particular Mary of Magdala's) testimony so that the risen Lord's revelation to Peter was the point where the church's faith was anchored.

It is indeed true that in Luke the risen Lord himself is supposed to have shown himself to Peter first—although this is not reported in a particular revelation narrative. But the narrative of the women at the empty tomb is not thereby deprived of its character as proclamation of the resurrection. This is why none of the interpretative models referred to above does justice to the special character of the narrative in Luke, as a point of tension where the Gospel's positive emphasis on women's participation encounters the confining and oppressing conditions determining the relationship between women and men. The women's experience is sufficient for them to appear as proclaimers, but when they attempt this, they are not believed, not even by those who should have the ears of faith. It is the men's unbelieving reaction that creates the distance in the Lukan story between the women's early faith and witness and the male disciples' late acceptance.

If irony works by an element of distance between the comprehensive power of the author and the voice of the implied narrator, it is certainly at work in this story. The narrative itself has established in detail that the women from Galilee are trustworthy and fully deserve credit. When the message fails to get across the first time, this is because of the unjustified disbelief of the men. As was also the case concerning the function of service, there is no direct transfer from women to men; here too a christological mediation is necessary. In order to believe, the male disciples must see the risen Lord.

But the conclusion is, all the same, that the persuading force of the women as witnesses is discounted. As witnesses, they possess credibility, but they lack the possibility to convince—even to convince those who ought to have been the most readily prepared to believe. Despite the fact that the women accompanied Jesus on his long journeyings, despite their faithful and fearless perseverance, despite their sustaining service and their discipleship, despite their knowledge of the Lord's word as well as their insight into it, despite their credibility, the effect is that women actually are prevented from the public proclamation and teaching activity. In the further unfolding of story, they are not accepted as appropriate witnesses when Jesus' resurrection is to be proclaimed publicly from Jerusalem to Rome, and the path is laid for the leading men's dominance in Acts.

PUBLIC MEN AND DOMESTIC WOMEN

It is a particular point in Luke, serving apologetic aims, that Jesus' activity followed by the preaching of the apostles and the missionaries takes place openly, not in secret. The public proclamation is maintained by Luke as a male privilege; it is exercised by men and explicitly directed to men. This does not exclude the possibility that women are supposed to be present in the audience and also among the followers of Jesus, but it means that only the men are recognized as active participants in public contexts, which officially were all male. The invisibility of the women does not necessarily reflect the actual reality but is a construction that is ideologically undergirded and maintained. The point is not to maintain that there existed a system of extreme physical separation, but to emphasize that, as a rule, power was organized so that family and home had exclusive significance as the life sphere determining women's identity and function. This is often expressed and exercised in terms of locality; the women belong to "the house."

This construction is a reflection of how the distance between the world of men and the world of women in antiquity largely coincided with the difference between a public and a private room. Women lived in a space defined primarily and ideally as being within "the house," and their education, even in stoic schools, had domestic virtues as its aim. Women could be seen in public places, but their conduct was strictly regulated and there were narrow boundaries for what was seemly. It was only to a limited extent and/or in indirect ways that women were able to exercise functions within the public sphere. Even well-off and aristocratic women were seldom direct participants in a public context. Women who established an autonomous economic basis either through the affluence of their family or through their own business activity could make their mark in the public sphere through their donations and

projects. Inscriptions show that they, in reward, could be assigned honorable titles, but apart from their patronage they seldom had an official and direct political role to play. Nor did they, with few exceptions, carry out central religious functions that were not linked to the home or to the more closed societies or associations.

The exception was a number of religious rituals and feasts that gave women the opportunity not only to come out but also to behave in ways that would have been unseemly in their daily life. Whereas women in the more official religious cult played a withdrawn domestic role, the "new religious movements" of an oriental type were more open for women and had a corresponding attraction for them. There was often considerable suspicion about women's participation in such "foreign" cults, but actually women had more freedom to take part in this sort of nontraditional worship, because of their lack of a public role and importance. This may help to explain why the wife is the one who is Christian in most of the mixed marriages known to us—even if a woman was expected to share the faith of her husband. A Christian man with a pagan wife is the exception.

Women could be active in societies or clubs. Well-off households could also provide lodgings on a short-term or long-term basis for philosophers and preachers. Such occasions as these created an intermediary zone in which the public and the private converged, and there were local and social nuances and differences. The sources available indicate that women's rights and opportunities were best established and practiced in Egypt and Asia Minor. But marriage contracts from these regions show, nevertheless, that even if the husband was reminded about his obligations in a stricter manner than previously was the custom and thus a greater limitation was placed on his freedom, traditional restrictive ideals about subordination and confined movement continued to be prescribed for the wife. There may have been less freedom for the husband, but not necessarily more freedom for the wife. The main concern was the inviolability of "the *oikos*," the household. Deviant conduct by women threatened the fundamental values of society, whereas a conformist conduct safeguarded these.

Women's activity in Luke is most often linked to the house. While the angel Gabriel reveals himself to Zechariah in the Temple, the meeting with Mary takes place in the house where she lives (1:26–28). The outpouring of the spirit on Elizabeth and Mary (1:40–56) happens in Elizabeth's home. On the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1–4 the Spirit fills the house where they are all gathered, but it is Peter and the eleven who appear in public and address the crowd. Even Priscilla is portrayed as listening in the synagogue and active in the instruction of Apollos at home. The woman who lost one of her coins (15:8–10) knows that it is to be found in the house, and when she finds it, she rejoices together with her female friend and neighbors. Exception must be

made, however, for the aged widow Hannah (2:36–38), who speaks prophetically in the Temple, and for the woman with the continuous flow of blood (8:47), who must come forward and tell her story before all the people. She so does, but trembling and afraid.

As the Lukan story unfolds, an original alternation between Temple and house grows to become an ever-stronger movement toward the house. Despite the emphasis on the public proclamation and the defense of the faith in front of the authorities, a gradual transfer from Temple, square, and synagogue to the house becomes apparent. It is emphasized that both men and women take part in the private gatherings, and when women are in the house, they are not on the periphery but close to the heart of the life in the community. Sheltered by the house, they have a certain freedom and religious significance, and they are not to be tied down by conventional domestic tasks. But the house also represents their limitation: the men keep hold of the public world as a male world of power. Luke provides scarce information about the ongoing life of the house-communities. Because of his apologetic interests, the public sphere retains its importance as the place of defense, and the rest of the story remains untold.

In other words, within the given framework of the patriarchal system, boundaries are touched and perhaps stretched. This is emphasized by the priority of "nondomestic" functions as "the better part." But the patriarchal system in terms of a divided world is not threatened. The more the communities orient themselves to the world outside the house, the more will women's activity have to be restricted. A comparison with other writings may illustrate that more clearly. In the Gospel of John traces of a noticeably egalitarian reflection and praxis are evident. Women carry out some of the same functions as in Luke's writings, but in full public view and *vis-à-vis* both women and men. When meeting Jesus, the women in John cross the threshold of the house—indeed, they are quite directly summoned forth. The Apocryphal Acts two or three generations later are also highly relevant to the question about women's leeway in regard to a private and a public sphere. These narratives presuppose a world where a woman's "proper place" is within the private sphere, in her father's or her husband's house. The man, on the other hand, moves freely in the external, public world. By remaining in the house a woman will normally show her acceptance of the place given her. Leaving the house means that she crosses boundaries and penetrates the man's domain. Thereby she arouses suspicion and hostility. The social and sexual exodus that these stories advocate therefore takes on local expression. The radical consequences of an ascetic choice become clearest in the majority of the cases where women break up and out. By defying the physical boundaries placed around women's space, they express their defiance of the social and sexual norms that culminate in patriarchal marriage.

An ascetic life within the boundary of the house is a borderline case, testing the presuppositions of the house from within. In the Apocryphal Acts this is expressed locally by the fact that the ascetic wives annoy their family by continually slipping out. It represents, however, a less problematic and provocative solution, because the surface structure of the organizational power is kept seemingly intact. In my view, this is the situation reflected in Luke. Even if the women are subordinated to the governing division between the public and the private, and to the consequently established masculine order of leadership, the independent integrity of the group of women is respected. There is no demand, nor any narrative adjustment, to indicate that the women are to subordinate themselves according to the ethos reflected in the household codes.

ASCETIC EMERGENCY

In the Lukan parable of the Great Feast—in the Marthean parallel, a wedding feast—marriage serves as an excuse for not attending (14:20). Luke thus names the contracting of marriage as one of the obstacles to joining the feast of God. In accordance with this, he gives an ascetic emphasis to the common Synoptic ethos of voluntary abandonment. To break with family relationships belongs more than anything else to the costs of discipleship as they are listed in Luke, and the inclusion of "the wife" in these lists (14:26; 18:29) involves an intensification toward asceticism. Even where the break does not take on a geographic expression, the family relationships that continue to exist are preferably to be arranged ascetically, and new marriages are to be avoided.

This may also be the reason why the Markan passage defending marriage as an order of creation over against the Mosaic warrant of divorce (Mark 10:1–12) is not taken up by Luke. Only the well-known logion about divorce and remarriage is included in Luke 16:18, and the Lukan adaptation is more concerned about prohibiting remarriage than divorce. In my view 16:18 not only addresses those who want to remarry after divorce but excludes primarily the possibility of remarriage by those disciples who have left their wives behind (without necessarily divorcing them; cf. Luke 14:26; 18:29). The same applies to new marriages with abandoned wives. In such cases, Jewish law too would count a new marriage as adultery, because the first marriage still formally was valid despite the separation. The logion thereby testifies to the continued validity of the Law. But the intention in Luke is not the protection of marriage. The point is not that the husbands ought to return to their wives, nor is there any point in formally seeking to dissolve the marriage. The whole thrust is to avoid the contraction of new marriages. The decision to follow Jesus is absolute, and one cannot fall back on more comfortable solutions (by marry-

ing a "sister"?)) once one has made an ascetic break with the past. It is hard indeed to force one's way into God's kingdom (cf. 16:16).

The wording of Luke 16:18 is totally androcentric. The man is consistently the subject, the acting partner: it is he who leaves his wife and who also commits adultery if he marries anew or marries an abandoned woman. This masculine control is in accord with the dominant praxis of marriage and divorce at least in the eastern regions of the empire. The admonitions in 14:26, including the call to abandon the wife, taken together with the masculine imagery used in the following pair of parables (which is not complementary in gender terms) about adequate calculation, can indicate that the costs of discipleship represented a special problem for comfortably established men. But it does not define ascetic discipleship exclusively as a male privilege or an intensified demand made of a male leadership elite.

Women's gift of prophecy is presented by Luke most often as a charismatic privilege of virginity: the women prophets are often either widows or virgins (see Luke 1:45-55; 2:36-38; Acts 21:9). Mary's virginity has a particular and unique function in relation to the birth of Jesus. But the transfer of Mary's relation as mother from the physical family to the fictive family of Jesus opens the possibility of an alternative motherhood for all the women who, like her, "hear God's Word and do it." In Jesus' words to the daughters of Jerusalem (Luke 23:27-30) the reference is to the coming times of tribulation, which make a normal life an impossible burden. These times are so hard that women with children are to praise as blessed the childless women whom they would otherwise bewail. Unlike the "women from Galilee," the "daughters of Jerusalem" with their children are bound by conditions of life that will intensify their suffering.

In the patriarchal cultures of antiquity, where marriage was the destiny of a woman's life and childbearing her social and theological legitimation, the redefinition of woman's role in terms of a permanent ascetic discipleship was in defiance of the ruling ethos. Ascetic tendencies of various kinds were widely known in antiquity, and temporary continence was frequently a prerequisite for ritual purity; but it was never commonly approved as a permanent alternative for the whole of life. The cult of Isis, which was considered strict in its demands for periods of abstinence, still did not request permanent chastity. Among the philosophical schools, not even the Cynic itinerant philosophers were ascetic in their defiance of public morality. Neither is the wish that many men in philosophical circles nurtured about remaining unmarried any clear evidence of ascetic inclinations. It should rather be seen as an expression of a sexual appetite that tried to avoid the obligations and complications of marriage.

In Judaism the case against celibacy is not as univocal as has been commonly assumed. There is some scattered evidence of ascetic anchorites, and

most of the male inhabitants of Qumran probably were celibate to safeguard their cultic purity and to be prepared for the imminent holy war. Philo is highly ambiguous in this matter, but his description of Therapeutae and Therapeutrides demonstrates his admiration for their simple and encratic life. Still asceticism remained outside the mainstream of Judaism, and maternity, not virginity, was the highest vocation for women. Widows like Judith were not ascetic figures. Like the Roman *univiras*, she was an illustrious example of the extreme monogamous wife, remaining faithful to one husband only.

The Augustan legislation on marriage aimed particularly at the legitimate reproduction of the Roman aristocracy and the preservation of the hierarchical order of the state. By the legislation, the emperor, as *pater patriae*, sought to have as many as possible constantly married, at least until the age when procreation no longer was likely. Accordingly, widowed and divorced persons were to be rushed into new marriages. The childless were subjected to legal disadvantages, while a freeborn woman who had given birth to at least three children obtained the right of *sui iuris*. The precise impact of this legislation is difficult to tell, but it bears witness to a public and common ethos linking the traditional order of the house/family to the well-being of the state and making the right and legal status of a woman dependent on her capacity of childbearing.

Widows occur more frequently in Luke-Acts than in any other Christian Testament writing. The term "widow" has kept in Luke a traditional denotation of devastation, poverty, and vulnerability, but the Lukan interest in widows is not just another expression of his concern for the poor and the outcast. In Luke the widows appear to form a special and respected group always portrayed in a positive light. They transcend the roles of victims and receivers and act in such a way that they become prominent examples of faith and piety.

Luke seems to share the presupposition, inspired by Judaism and common among Christians, that the religious community has the duty of providing for widows (Acts 6:19; 9:39ff.). It is likely that most of the women who were supported by the community, even the young ones, really were widows or divorced/abandoned women. But the system may have entertained also other women, who for various reasons had been deprived of the social security in the family or who had deliberately chosen a life free from marital bonds. As most of these women would have difficulties providing for themselves, the regulations for the care of widows that we glimpse in Luke mean that even a poor woman could have real choice. Thereby a life without new marriage was not only desirable; it was also feasible.

This confirms that the author of 1 Timothy did not initiate a new order to facilitate the problems of the widows; he was rather attempting to diminish the increasing importance of an already existing order and wanted to limit the number of widows who could be enrolled. His interference shows that Chris-

tian communities very early on had made provisions for widows. It seems clear that these provisions included young women as well as old; they were supported by the community, and they fulfilled tasks such as acts of charity and visitations in the homes, while their main occupation was intercessory prayer. They had also probably pledged themselves to chastity.

The brief presentation of Hannah in Luke 2:36-38 is a specially intense and concentrated introduction of an ideal widow—with roots in Jewish types of piety such as Judith and apparently concordant with the criteria of the true widow launched in 1 Tim 5:3-16. The similarity between Hannah and “the true widow” in 1 Timothy is, however, limited to only a few elements in the life of a pious widow, especially her persevering prayer. Hannah’s function, as she appears in Luke’s narrative, is primarily that of prophetic proclamation, and all the information issued about her serves as background and justification for this. Not even Hannah’s advanced age represents anything other than a superficial correspondence: for even if she now is a very old widow, she has been a widow for most of her life. The ideal is not the old and irreproachable widow as such, but a woman who, despite becoming a widow while young, nevertheless refrained from remarrying and remained a widow throughout a long life consecrated to God. Hannah is identified by her own rights, not her deceased husband’s family and tribe. No independent importance attaches to the fact that she was once married and thus has fulfilled the conventional expectations of a woman’s life, nor is it interesting to know whether she has given birth to children. The point is the short duration of the marriage in comparison to the long period of widowhood. Her life, seen as a whole, has been “without a husband,” characterized first by her virginity and then by her widowhood. Hannah is thus first and foremost an ascetic figure, and she represents a model even for young women.

It is not without reason that most of the women in Luke-Acts have been assumed to be widows because of their peculiar independence as they act on their own behalf. But the point in Luke is rather that a life without the obligations of marriage, a life no longer determined by sexual bodily functions, is not necessarily restricted to widows. It is offered more generally as a permanent alternative for the women following Jesus.

Luke 20:27-38 provides a key to understanding the ascetic position of Luke. The levirate puzzle by which the Sadducees try to trap Jesus and expose the absurdity of resurrection faith dwells on the question of marriage, death, posterity, and resurrection. There is reason to believe that the conservative Sadducees, over against the “new” concept of resurrection, held their own view of resurrection as the raising of posterity. The institution of levirate marriage was a provision by which a man who died without leaving any children still might have posterity. It is significant that the Sadducees refer to levirate

marriage in terms of Gen 38:8, where the ambiguous “raise up offspring/children” is used.

All three Synoptic versions of Jesus’ response reject the claim that the objection raised by the Sadducees against resurrection is a relevant one. Instead, the different nature of the resurrected life is emphasized, implying that the woman then no longer belongs to any man. In Mark, followed by Matthew, Jesus states that when they rise from the dead they will be like the angels so that in the age to come marriage is abolished and procreation ended. The categories as well as the dichotomy are all temporal. In Luke, the first part of Jesus’ answer (vv. 34-37a) has a peculiar variant form that made it a favorite among the early monastics. It is an independent little treatise on the ethos of resurrection in terms of immortality. Purely temporal categories and dichotomies are overcome. The opposition between the present age of death and marriage and the age to come after resurrection is anticipated and already visible in the difference between the sons of this age and those who are accounted worthy to attain to the resurrection and the age to come. The two groups are distinguished by their practice of marriage. While the sons of this age marry and let themselves be married, this is not so with the sons of God; they do not enter into marriage.

The repeated parallel use of the verb in 20:34f. is the same as in 17:26 (and 1 Cor 7:36, 38). This is striking not only because this particular verb is very rare but because all the occurrences in the Christian Testament are found in contexts involving criticism of marriage. The double form shows that it concerns both men and women, while it also reflects the unequal role of men and women in contracting marriage. But in the case of the women, it is not the customary passive form that is being used—although it is commonly interpreted and translated thus. Rather, the rare middle form makes the women the subject: they let (or do not let) themselves to be taken in marriage. It implies that also the women are left with a choice.

Their abstinence from marriage is explained by their future part in the resurrection, which will render them immortal so that they will be like the angels. The reason for their likeness to the angels is that they cannot die. Immortality is therefore a more important characteristic of the heavenly life than asexuality, but the Lukan text suggests an intimate connection between marriage and death. Because the need for marriage is considered to cease when individual resurrection and immortality are promised, the reverse conclusion would be that it is death that makes marriage necessary—since the main purpose of patriarchal marriage is male procreation and thereby the possibility to gain an afterlife in one’s own offspring. So the criticism of marriage in Luke is not due to pragmatism but is the expression of an ascetic reservation that is eschatologically determined.

When participation in the future life is no longer dependent on procreation, with the result that the patriarchal intention in marriage can be abandoned, an end is set also to the male's fundamental need for the female's assistance in procreating and perpetuating himself. Within an androcentric patriarchal model, this actually means that the original reason and justification of the woman's existence *de facto* cease to exist. Positively it promotes an ascetic liberation of the woman by providing an opportunity of life outside the confinement of patriarchal marriage. In recent years this dimension of liberation in early Christian asceticism has been introduced as a major explanation of why so many Christian women were attracted by an ascetic life, and also as an important aspect in Christianity's power to bring conviction to certain groups of women. It gave them the possibility of a power and an authority from which they were otherwise excluded and an opportunity to move outside the limiting constraints of their conventional roles as daughter, wife, and mother. By withdrawing their sexuality from control by others, they achieved a sort of control over their lives and their possessions. Free from the patriarchal dominance by either father or husband, free from risky pregnancies, free from painful and often life-threatening childbirth, free from the demands of constant caring, and even free from great economic worries, these women had a freedom that was usually reserved for the *hetaerae*; moreover, they enjoyed ecclesiastical and theological honor and respectability.

But this ascetic freedom had its price. Within an androcentric anthropology an ascetic life might imply for women that they no longer remained female. By means of asceticism, it was possible for them to escape their femaleness and develop maleness, which was considered superior or prior to what was female. Even if Christian Testament texts hardly give more than scattered and weak indications of this motif, the path still was prepared through androcentric terminology. In Luke 20:34ff. the women are counted among the "sons," but there is no clear trace in Luke of the idea that the ascetic life for women is a way of becoming male. The terminology may be influenced at first by the fact that the ethos had as its model the Son of God (as also the baptismal formula in Gal 3:28-29 shows), who himself prototypically fulfilled the demand to abandon one's life.

Luke shows knowledge of an ascetic strain in Paul's preaching (Acts 24:24-25), and this ascetic Paul is known also from his own writings, especially 1 Corinthians 7. But not only does Luke preserve Paul's ascetic preference; he also intensifies it to some extent. This has its roots in the radical requirement of discipleship in the Jesus traditions, and it contains elements that point forward to the later preaching in the Apocryphal Acts. It is certainly not without reason that Luke later becomes a favorite Gospel in the early Syrian church, where asceticism is demanded of all who are accepted for bap-

tism, and where "to hear God's word" plays a prominent role in the liturgical tradition.

Luke thus differs from the Pauline tradition as it is claimed by the Pastoral Letters. The Pastorals are strongly in favor of marriage and emphasize the subordinate and domestic role of women to the extent that childbirth and the successful fostering of children are made a prerequisite for a woman's salvation. The image of the ideal widow and the regulations for the order of widows are adjusted accordingly. Luke, however, is critical of marriage and encourages an attitude and a praxis that present problems for the author of the Pastoral Letters a few years later. The same is true of the Lukan defense of women's right to occupy themselves with the Lord's word, even if this happens at the cost of those virtues in a woman's life that the author of the Pastoral Letters esteems so highly.

The ascetic inclination in Luke may help to explain the independent integrity of the women's group. Ascetic ideals exempted women from meeting traditional role expectations in marriage and family. They thereby also limited the patriarchalizing effect of the family model when this was transferred to the community in the house and contributed to the special combination of inclusivity and segregation between a group of men and a group of women.

DANGEROUS REMEMBRANCE

The Lukan story draws up quite strict boundaries for women's activity in relation to the public room. In this way, Luke is in accord with the apologetic considerations that also color the epistles. But Luke transmits a double message. The ambivalence takes the form of a narrative sequence that gives a rare insight into the establishing of structures that impose silence on women and promote leadership as a male privilege. But in the Gospel narrative Luke also preserves extraordinary traditions about the women from Galilee and their role in the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The women are brought to silence, but at the same time they continue to speak through the story. There is an ironic twist to the double message: the women from Galilee were indeed capable and qualified, but the men suspected and rejected them. The male consolidation of power occurs against a story in which the men have shown weakness and failure rather than strength.

By means of the narrative sequence and of the positioning of the Gospel as a "first volume," the traditions from Jesus' life, in all their historical transparency, are located in the past. They take on the character of remembrance. The same is true of the women from this past story of Jesus' life. The Gospel does not represent a romantic and idealized version of an irrevocable golden age.

Luke's own employment of the motif of "memory" shows that to remember is to keep the key to rooms where critical insight and new understanding are to be found. When people remember, their eyes are opened so that they see and believe. The story retains its force, and the women from Galilee are still on the road.

NOTES

1. This article is heavily based on the results from my forthcoming monograph on gender perspectives in Luke-Acts to be published by T. & T. Clark in the near future. There one will find both a fuller argument and all the references and notes missing here.

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