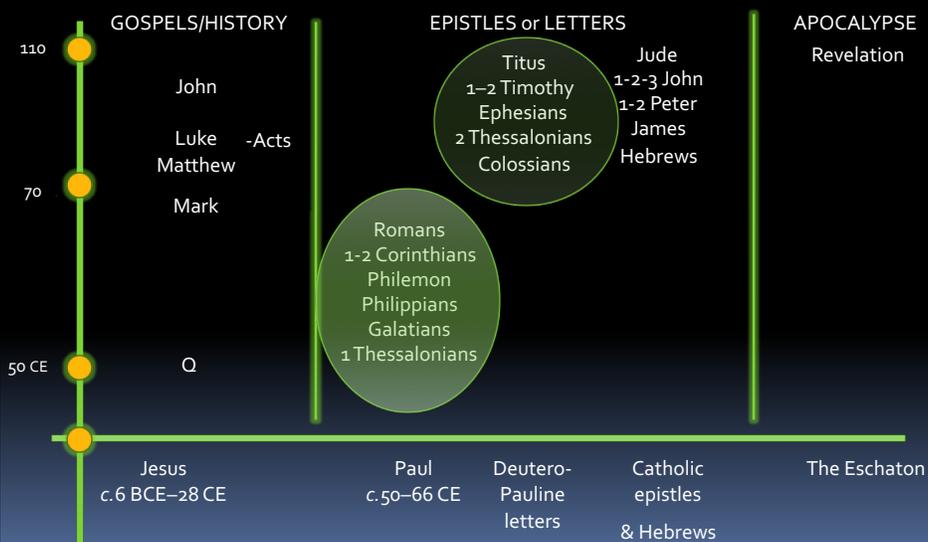


Class gb

THE ECSTATIC FEMALE PROPHETS IN CORINTH & THE COMPLIANT WIVES OF PAUL'S INTERPRETERS

Paul Impact on the New Testament



1 Corinthians

Background



- **Date** 54 CE **WHEN**
- **Place** Written from Ephesus (Turkish coast) to the city of Corinth in Greece, a recently established Roman colony **WHERE**
- **Author** Paul, "apostle to the Gentiles" **WHO**
- **Audience** Corinthian Christians, former Jews and Gentiles, most of whom Paul had met **FOR WHOM**



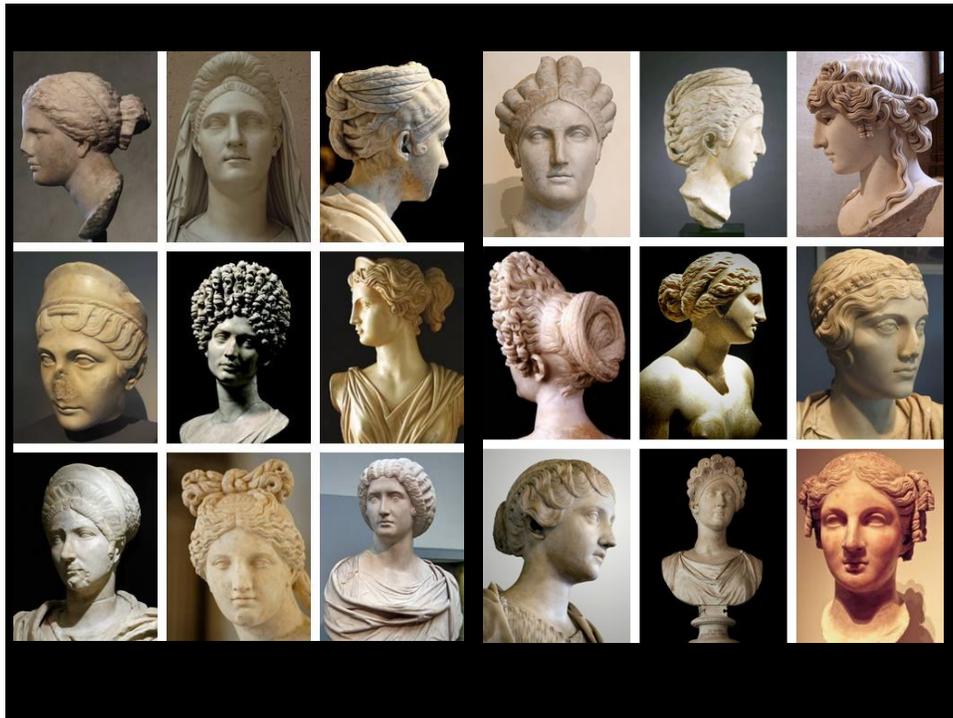
The Archaeological Site of Corinth:
Temple of Apollo to the left, Lechaion Road to the right



Temple of Apollo in Corinth,
Acrocorinth in the background

1 Corinthians 11:3-16

³But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the husband is the head of his wife, and God is the head of Christ. ⁴Any man who prays or prophesies with something on his head disgraces his head, ⁵but **any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head—it is one and the same thing as having her head shaved.** ⁶For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, she should wear a veil. ⁷For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and reflection of God; but woman is the reflection of man. ⁸Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man. ⁹Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man. ¹⁰For this reason a woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. ¹¹Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman. ¹²For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman; but all things come from God. ¹³Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head unveiled? ¹⁴Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is degrading to him, ¹⁵but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. ¹⁶But if anyone is disposed to be contentious—we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.



Taking Paul Two Ways

Two Opposite Traditions in the Early Church

Paul's Teaching

1

Women must get married,
have children, be submissive
to husbands, have no role in
public worship

*Ephesians, Pastoral Epistles
(1-2 Timothy, Titus)*

2

Women must remain virgins,
have no children, be independent
of men (sort of), and can then be
religious leaders

Acts of Paul and Thecla

Ecstasy vs Constraint

In 1 Corinthians,
women **lead**

They are among the
“spirit people” –
exhibiting charisms
or gifts (celibacy,
teaching, healing,
tongues, prophecy)

In 1 Timothy and
Ephesians, women are
forbidden to lead

They are told to be
silent and subject to
their husbands

The Pastoral Epistles

1–2 Timothy, Titus

- | | | |
|------------|--|----------|
| ▪ Date | 90s–110 CE | WHEN |
| ▪ Place | Unknown | WHERE |
| ▪ Author | It says Paul, but it probably isn't
(style, vocabulary, theological themes differ) | WHO |
| ▪ Audience | Timothy and Titus and their communities; these men are Paul's apprentices and shepherds (= pastors) of their communities, thus the letters are called “pastoral” | FOR WHOM |

1 Timothy 2:8-15

⁸I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument; ⁹also that the women should dress themselves modestly and decently in suitable clothing, not with their hair braided, or with gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, ¹⁰but with good works, as is proper for women who profess reverence for God. ¹¹Let a woman learn in silence with full submission. ¹²I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent. ¹³For Adam was formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

The Letter to the Ephesians

- | | | |
|------------|---|----------|
| ▪ Date | 80–100 CE | WHEN |
| ▪ Place | Unknown; Ephesus? | WHERE |
| ▪ Author | It says Paul, but it probably isn't
(style, vocabulary, theological themes differ) | WHO |
| ▪ Audience | Christians in Ephesus, one of the top four cities in the Roman Empire | FOR WHOM |

Ephesus



Ephesus



The Household Codes

Haustafeln

- Codes prescribing a social hierarchy in the household: husband over wife, parents over children, masters over slaves
- Influenced by, and conforming to, Roman *patria potestas* law of the first century
- Ephesians 5:22–6:9; Colossians 3:18–4:1 (other passages presume the codes, such as 1 Tim 2, Titus 2:1-10 and 1 Peter 2:13–3:7)

The Shift from Freedom in Christ to Constraint in the Household Codes

Galatians

3:28 There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians

5:21 Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ

5:22 Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord.

6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

6:5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling..., as you obey Christ...

Ephesians 5:21-33

²¹ Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²² Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." ³² This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. ³³ Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

HOW SECULAR SOCIETY
DISCIPLINES WOMEN

Judith Butler

Gender Trouble (1999)

In the first instance, then, the performativity of gender revolves around...the way in which the anticipation of a gendered essence produces that which it posits as outside itself. Secondly, performativity is not a singular act, but a repetition and a ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration.

Judith Butler

in Gillian Townsley's reading

Gender is always a "doing" (not a "being" or identity). It is "the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeals over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being." Performativity is that process of producing gender.

Acts of gender parody, like drag, can be subversive of the regulatory frame, or they can reinforce it.

Townsley poses that the women's performance in Corinth supports the hetero regulatory frame because of the "one-sex body," but the men's performance is more subversive

Judith Butler

in Teresa Hornsby's reading

Those who fail to do their gender right
are regularly punished.

Who can I become in such a world
where the meaning and limits of the subject
are set out in advance?

How Secular Society Disciplines Women Patriarchy

- Patriarchy: literally, the rule of the father
- Assumes the domination of men over women
- The focus of second-wave feminist critique, since equal power was the goal

But is patriarchy the problem?

Does gender difference always privilege (all) men?

And is gender the only basis for unequal power?

How Secular Society Disciplines Women

Kyriarchy (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza)

- Kyriarchy is the interconnected systems of domination and submission within which we all operate.
- A person oppressed in one context might be privileged in another.
- "Kyriarchy" elaborates the concept of patriarchy, recognizing that multiple factors influence one's position of power (economic status, race, etc.).

How Secular Society Disciplines Women

Kyriarchy (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza)

- Such systems of domination "discipline" subordinate others
- [Disciplining] practices fashion the docile, subjected, and made-up body as the ideal body of "femininity"
- They also serve to reinforce, sustain, and legitimate domestic and sexual violence
- Such bodily discipline ..., however, is not "forced" upon women. Rather it is perceived to be "freely chosen" for the sake of beauty and love, or to be endured because of fate and family honor.

How Secular Society Disciplines Women

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza

- Four-fold strategy for disciplining gendered bodies
 1. Prescribes the perfect shape of the body
 2. Controls bodily movement
 3. Dictates the decoration of the body
 4. Eroticizes female submission and masculine domination

How Christianity Contributes to the Problem

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza

- Christianity emphasizes love: of self, neighbor, enemy
- But ESF identifies four problematic features about love
 1. Texts like the household codes prescribe that love is enacted as domination and submission.
 2. Submission is required by the myth of Eve's sinfulness, which had to be remedied by Christ.
 3. Suffering and victimization are theologized as necessary and redemptive (women are saved by pain and submission; their pain has its model in Christ).
 4. Teachings on forgiveness/love of enemy lead women to remain in abusive situations.