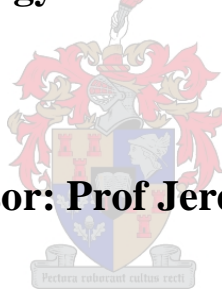


Women, Teaching and Leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15: A rhetorical-critical study, with reference to Angola

**By
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Declaration

By submitting this research electronically I declare that the entireness of the work contained in that is my own original and that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not up to that time in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

April 2019

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Abstract

The perceptions on the role of women regarding teaching and leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 offer numerous challenges regarding its interpretative history. The central contested aspect is that the text appears to allow women to learn but forbids them to teach or to have authority over men. In Angola, if not in most African societies where there is a need for the empowerment of servants and for discipleship for the Kingdom of God, one is confused about how to understand this text as authoritatively forbidding women to take the roles of teaching and leadership. This study was undertaken on the assumption that the prohibition of women in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 was written to respond to a specific situation in Ephesus, regarding false teachings. Therefore, the primary aim of this study is to evaluate the use of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 by the Evangelical churches in Angola on the way they silence women. It seeks to investigate the interpretation of the verses from the perspective of the church leadership. The text challenges the contemporary readers because notwithstanding their literal interpretation, they express fundamental awareness of the social-cultural perception of gender importance and their respective roles.

The literary context of the text was surveyed by means of a rhetorical-critical method in order to comprehend the passage in terms of its literal and social context. The text was analysed verse by verse and the concept of silence and submission of women in the first century was explained. It is argued that the writer of the letter arranged his arguments in a way that would most likely convince his audience to follow what he considers the sound doctrine for the church.

The study, *Women, Teaching and Leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15* comprises six chapters. Chapter 1 offers a short outline of the purpose of the study, research problems and questions as well as the hypothesis of this thesis, in combination with the methodology. In Chapter 2 the text of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is examined exegetically through a close interpretation of the text, with emphasis on principle concepts that function within the text, and are believed to be aimed crucially at the resultant debate on women, teaching and leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in the setting first Mediterranean World. Chapter 3 elucidates the Social, Historical and Political context of 1 Timothy 2:11-15. It looks at the first century's social context, which formed the life background of 1 Timothy. It analyses the household within the Greco-Roman empire, and women's roles according to gender distribution, and how the church as the household of God has modelled itself along the same lines.

Chapter 4 analyses gendered rhetoric in 1 Timothy 2:11-15. It seeks to explore implicitly gendered rhetoric in the text and to discuss the diverse issues involved in interpretation as they relate to gender roles in that context. Rhetoric as an art of persuasion in its context, makes use of gender language to refer to the cultural constructs of masculinity and femininity constructed in relation to biological sex, particularly, culture.

Chapter 5 enquires about 1 Timothy 2:11-15 as a challenge for being a woman in the church in Angola. It attempts to apply the role of “Women, Teaching and Leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15” to the Angolan context. The chapter engages with some analysis done by scholars and uses two sermons from pastors in Angola as an illustration on how the text is interpreted among evangelicals. Chapter 6 connects the discussions of the chapters together and explains concisely the potential significance and influence of women, in teaching and leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 for the suggested context of Christianity today.

Opsomming

Persepsies oor die rol van vroue ten opsigte van onderrig en leierskap in 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15 skep talle uitdagings oor die interpretasiegeskiedenis heen. Die sentrale betwiste aspek is dat die teks vroue skynbaar toelaat om te leer, maar hulle verbied hulle om mans te onderrig of oor hulle gesag uit te oefen. In Angola, indien nie ook in die meeste samelewings in Afrika nie, waar bemagtiging van diensknegte en dissipelskap vir die Koninkryk van God nodig is, is mens verward oor hoe om hierdie teks te verstaan as 'n gesaghebbende verbod op vroue om die rol van onderrig en leierskap in te neem. Hierdie studie is onderneem met die veronderstelling dat die verbod op vroue in 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15 geskryf is as 'n reaksie op 'n spesifieke situasie in Efese met betrekking tot valse leerstellings. Daarom is die primêre doel van hierdie studie om die gebruik van 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15 deur die Evangeliese kerke in Angola te evalueer op die manier waarop hulle vroue daarmee stilmaak. Dit poog om die interpretasie van die verse uit die oogpunt van die kerkleierskap te ondersoek. Die teks daag die hedendaagse lesers uit omdat hulle, ondanks hul letterlike interpretasie, fundamentele bewustheid vertoon oor die sosiale-kulturele persepsie van geslagsbelang en hul onderskeie rolle.

Die literêre konteks van die teks is ondersoek. Deur middel van 'n retoriese kritiese metode is gepoog om die gedeelte te verstaan in terme van die letterkundige en sosiale konteks. Die teks is vers vir vers geanaliseer en die konsep van stilte en voorlegging van vroue in die eerste eeu is verduidelik. Daar word geargumenteer dat die skrywer van die brief sy argumente op so 'n manier gestruktureer het om die gehoor op mees waarskynlike gronde te oortuig om te volg wat hy dink die goeie leerstelling vir die kerk is.

Die studie, *Vroue, Onderrig en Leierskap in 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15* bestaan uit ses hoofstukke. Hoofstuk 1 bied 'n kort uiteensetting van die doel van die studie, navorsingsprobleme en -vrae asook die hipotese van hierdie verhandeling, in kombinasie met die metodologie. In Hoofstuk 2 word die teks van 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15 eksegeties ondersoek deur 'n noukeurige interpretasie van die teks, met die klem op sleutelkonsepte wat binne die teks funksioneer, en van kritieke belang beskou word vir die voortvloeiende debat oor vroue, onderrig en leierskap in 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15 in die omgewing van die eerste Mediterreense Wêreld. Hoofstuk 3 belig die sosiale, historiese en politieke konteks van 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15. Dit kyk na die eerste-eeuse sosiale konteks wat die lewensagtergrond van 1 Timoteus uitgemaak het. Dit analiseer die huishouding binne die Grieks-Romeinse Ryk, asook die rol van vroue volgens geslagsverspreiding, en hoe die kerk as die huishouding van God op dieselfde model gestruktureer is.

Hoofstuk 4 analiseer die geslagsgerigte retoriek in 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15 ge. Dit poog om implisiete geslagsretoriek in die teks te ondersoek en om die uiteenlopende aangeleenthede wat met interpretasie verband hou, te bespreek, aangesien dit betrekking het op geslagsrolle in daardie konteks. Retoriek

as die kuns van oorreding in daardie konteks, maak gebruik van geslagtaal om te verwys na die kulturele konstruksies van manlikheid en vroulikheid wat in verband staan met die biologiese geslag, veral die kultuur.

Hoofstuk 5 bevraagteken 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15 en die uitdaging om vrou in die kerk in Angola te wees. Dit wend 'n poging aan om die rol van 'Vroue, Onderrig en Leierskap in 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15' in die Angolese konteks toe te pas. Die hoofstuk sluit 'n analise van preke van twee pastore in Angola in, ter illustrasie oor hoe die teks onder evangeliese interpretasies geïnterpreteer word, in. Hoofstuk 6 verbind die besprekings van die hoofstukke en verduidelik kortliks die potensiële betekenis en invloed van vroue in onderrig en leierskap in 1 Timoteus 2: 11-15 vir die voorgestelde konteks oor die Christendom vandag.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to God who has always been my stronghold and provider. I also dedicate this work to my loving husband Rev. Baptista Alberto Panda for his love, support and understanding throughout my studies. And to my parents Rev. Nascimento David and Valeriana Noloti David who have always been there for me and the confidence they have in me even in critical times that our family went through they did not let me return home without finishing this research. And to all my family members: Paulo David, Fernando David, Maria David, Jovida David, Sabino David, Orlando David, Elias David, Benilson Brasil, and Yoleny Brasil, who have made great financial concessions so that I could continue in my studies. Also, for all the support, encouragement and love you have showered on me - this research is yours.

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Chapter 1: Background of the Study

1.1 Title

The title of this thesis is “Women, Teaching and Leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15: A rhetorical-critical study, with reference to Angola.” This chapter gives a brief summary of the justification and general organisation, as well as methodology and subject of the study.

1.2 Introduction

In recent years, the use of the Scriptures to silence women has been one of the major discussion points in biblical studies. According to several scholars, the Scriptures, particularly the New Testament have been found to be critical of the role of women in the church. Schottroff (1995:78) for example, affirms that the New Testament text engages in the oppression of women as well as female and male slaves and results in spreading hatred and discrimination that have become part of the Christian canon. The oppression of women – preventing them from assuming leadership roles – can be traced back to the time of Paul (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). Paul said that, “*Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. Vs. 35 if they wish to inquire about something, they are to ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church (NIV).*” Another form of oppression exists in families. According to 1 Peter 3:1-7 wives should submit to their husbands. As these authoritative verses of 1 Corinthians 14:34 point out there was a law which regulated the houses or relationship between man and woman, from which Paul bases his instruction on women, prohibiting them from having a position in the ancient context of the Scriptures¹.

In line with the Greco-Roman period in which the New Testament was written, contemporary churches around the world, including the Evangelical churches in Angola, have adopted the Scriptures literally and use them to silence women in the church. Evangelical churches in Angola do not allow women to assume leadership positions in them. And this is based on 1 Timothy 2:11-15 which states: “*A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit women to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet...*” (NIV). Understanding the context in which 1 Timothy was written, it is perceived that the Evangelical Church has been using the text out of context to suppress women in positions of teaching and leadership. These Scriptures fitted that society. Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:7) contends that “the Bible has been used to restrict women’s free roles in the Church as well as in the public sphere. And this is because The Bible itself emerges from a society and a

¹ “Like the church, the family, the state and other social structures, Scriptures constitute the place of patriarchal structures of domination” (Schottroff 1995:17).

literary process where this restriction was already at work”. For example, gender scholars have recently found the Pauline literature to be among the most influential parts of the Bible for regulating the role of women in the church. Schottroff (1995:71) argues that “the first epistle of Timothy fits to the specific traditions of women oppression”. One of the forms of oppression of women in the ancient world was manifested in the distribution of roles and responsibilities based on gender, in which women were assumed to be restricted in the private spaces, while men could frequent outdoor or public areas. These practices were brought about by gender stratification in which men were deemed superior to women, and which implied that women had to be completely submissive to their fathers or husbands or a similar male figure. This is supported by Machingura (2013:234) who observes that “both the Old and New Testament portray women negatively”. As seen above, it can be observed that 1 Timothy 2:11-15, does not only propagate a patriarchal order but has all too often also been used to impose a patriarchal order and to work against the emancipation of women today. Also in Angola, the oppression, silence, and limitation of women in the body of Christ is being reinforced day after day based on the inspired Word of God in the first letter of Paul to Timothy 2:11-15. This impression is strengthened by Machingura, (2013:233) who notes that “biblical texts like 1 Timothy 2: 11-12 can be applied out of context and erroneously used to serve to support patriarchal agendas”.

Against this background, the primary aim of this study is to evaluate the use of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 by the Evangelical churches in Angola to silence women. It seeks to investigate the interpretation of the verses from the perspective of the church leadership. It will investigate how the biblical culture within this passage and African culture, especially in Angolan perpetuates the oppression, restriction and silencing of women in the church’s hierarchal gender construction in which the man/male is assumed to be higher than the female for the fact that he had been created first, and the blame² put on women as the cause of the sin, quoting “1 Tim 2:13 *For Adam was formed first, then Eve.* (NIV)”.

1.3 Problem Statement

In Angola women are allowed to take leadership only among themselves, regardless of their skill or relevant knowledge in leadership. Although in some areas in the church women are now given the chance to learn and teach, in Angola most Evangelical churches, if not all, still use 1 Timothy 2:11-15 to silence, subjugate, and restrict the role of women in church. Although they are allowed to take

² “Unfortunately, the Mosaic laws and other Old Testament narratives have been widely interpreted as teaching that women were responsible for the fall of men, hence the adage that ‘the problems that befell humankind and the world are because of women’. In the creation story (Genesis 3: 12), a woman is portrayed as the originator of sin and death to humankind. It is then surprising when New Testament texts like 1 Timothy 2:13-15 are used to support the view that women need the leadership of and some handholding by men for them to behave harmoniously and live fruitfully in society? Therefore, the challenges are still with us today in this worthy debate about women” (Machingura, 2013:234).

leadership training, women are not allowed to engage actively in the ministry alongside men because of the particular, gender-biased interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

In this pericope in 1 Tim 2³ women are regarded as being inferior to men. The woman, often reduced to the singular as an archetype, is then seen as the cause of the human fall into sin, having been the one deceived by the devil, thus she must be quiet, learn in silence, not have a position of leadership, furthermore not rule over the husband. This study will attempt to expose the hermeneutical moves to restrict women in church leadership roles using 1 Timothy 2, and will also argue the significance of women's right to hold leadership roles to contribute to the success of the Body of Christ in Angola. The study interrogates the subsequent interpretations over the centuries and today, which are still pro-man and anti-woman. For example, in the denomination where I come from (IEPA) which is one of the members of evangelical churches, women are not ordained. This is based on the interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 according to which women should be silent and not rule over men.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

Against the background of the study and the problem statement as described above, this research project proposes that:

1. The author in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 was responding to a specific case within the church of Ephesus that needed the intervention of the literary Paul, portrayed as apostle and the founder of the church.
2. The author used imperial language based on gender inequality to apply authoritative power by claiming to be one of the founding fathers of the church to determine the position of women in the body of Christ and in the process of learning the word of God.⁴
3. That a study on the hermeneutical focus of 1 Tim 2:11-15 can expose the gendered setting of the text, both to expose problems in the text but also to offer alternative options for understanding the text, also for today.

³ According to Mbamalu (2014:1) "The pericope 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in particular, has attracted much attention because of its attitude against women leadership in the church. It has served as the manual by which some church communities organized their congregations, for in it they saw a pattern for church organisation and leadership".

⁴ The debate about the authorship of 1 Timothy and the other Pastorals, falls outside of the scope of this thesis.

1.5 Literature review

This section reviews literature on Rhetorical Criticism, women, and 1 Timothy, to provide the broad framework within which the study will be conducted. In each occurrence the main concepts will be deliberated with respect to their significance within the gendered rhetoric in 1 Timothy 2:11-15. These theories will help to develop the processes of emergence, Rhetoric Criticism, 1 Timothy and Women. Accordingly, the scholarship review attempt to provide a rich definition for each of the key theories (Mouton 2001:93) that will be used in this study.

1.5.1 Rhetorical Criticism⁵

Moller (2005:687) defines rhetoric as a classical discipline dating back to Aristotle in relation to his ancient textbook on Rhetoric. He distinguishes between rhetoric, the art of composition as written or verbal language with a persuasive appeal, and oratory as the art of effective public speaking. On the other hand, Schirren (2017:191) sees rhetoric as an concept that was invented by the Sophist school, which shaped the rhetorical basis as form of communication thought of especially in the Greek world as an *agon*: the appearance of one or more communicators engaging in a linguistic contest in public. Schirren (2007:192) gives a brief history of rhetoric as an achievement of the Greek enlightenment of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE to develop a theory of persuasion. In this tradition, he argues, the power of persuasive speech was connected to an element of magic. Consequently, the humiliation of using rhetoric only to one's own advantage has cleaved to rhetoric ever since.

A very influential book, *Rhetoric and Ethic: the Politics of Biblical Studies* (1999) by feminist biblical scholar Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza is a valuable resource for this study since the author engages with the rhetorical character of the biblical texts. In the book she proposes a fundamental change in how we understand and employ the biblical text. based on critical understanding of language as a form of power. She takes the political context of the Bible seriously, attempting to explore the rhetorical and theological practices within their socio-political context. In her Chapter 5 she develops the practice of rhetoric and gives many insights on rhetorical criticism and its function (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999). In the same line is Black's article on rhetorical criticism in Green's *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*. It will contribute to understanding how rhetorical notions pervaded the early Christian tradition. In our investigation, the significance of rhetoric in affecting the Scriptures in hermeneutical analyses is at stake. For Black, Rhetorical Criticism is one of the oldest approaches to the New Testament (Green, 1995). Since we are using the Rhetorical Criticism

⁵ Rhetorical criticism centres on the persuasive power and literary approaches of a text that carries forthcoming meaning in a original historical situation. It also highlights the text to be interpreted as well as the encounter with its modern interpreters.

approach, *Tradition and Rhetoric in the Pastoral Epistles* (1998) by Harding will enlighten the research on how rhetoric had influenced studies of the epistle to Timothy. Gossai endorses that Harding “explores the authorship and the persuasive strategies of the pastoral epistles” (Gossai, 1998: ix).

The other very important contribution is “*Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul*” by Anderson (1996), which Fiore (1998:1) analyses by arguing that Anderson’s study challenges those who study Pauline, and all New Testament texts with the support of categories and models of classical rhetoric to re-evaluate their methodological presuppositions and interpretive practices. Thus, the book represents a helpful review of the application of classical rhetoric to the NT, and particularly to Pauline literature (Fiore, 1998:1).⁶ While Schüssler and Harding analyse Pauline writings through the lenses of rhetorical criticism, accepting that Paul was skilled in ancient rhetoric, Anderson however, concludes that Paul probably had no real interaction with rhetorical theory as such. He poses that it is “rather unlikely that Paul enjoyed a formal rhetorical training. Therefore Paul, at the most, had been familiar with certain progymnasmata. Even this is uncertain” (Anderson, 1998:249)

1.5.2 Women in the first century

To investigate the notions of women within 1 Timothy involves a suitable understanding of several concepts of womanhood in relation to manhood in general. Thus, *Contextualizing Gender in Early Christian Discourse: Thinking Beyond Thecla* would help to understand the definition of women within the context of early Christianity. Stichele and Penner (2009) provide an overview of Greco-Roman views of gender, with specific emphasis given to the rhetorical inflections of gendered discourses, the fluidity of gendered identities, and the significance of gender within the social body of the empire. For them the definition of women was tied up with cultural, political and social boundaries. Another book that will help to understand the context of first-century women is *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace* by Serene Jones (2000). In her second chapter she poses the question of whether being a woman is matter of nature or nurture. Does womanhood express an inborn, natural female disposition or follow from socially learned behaviour? She argues that for a feminist, being a woman or a man is not the expression of a natural predisposition or biological fact; gender identity is better understood as performances in which one puts on the prescription of acculturated gender body, sex assumptions and thus enacts socially inscribed roles and positions.

⁶ While he correctly rejects breaking up the Pauline letters into mini-speeches, his caution ought not to impede the discovery of the way rhetorical patterns (and not just individual tropes) shape the argument and flow of thought in the sections of Paul’s letters as he moves from topic to topic, especially when these can be shown to be consistent with contemporary practice (Fiore 1998:1).

1.5.3 1 Timothy

Caldwell and James (2017:11) suggest that 1 Timothy has served to offer those called to leadership in God's house awareness and guidance that go beyond its first century context. Caldwell and James lament the fact that many modern scholars reject the applicability of 1 Timothy to the modern church; however, they appreciate that this interpretation is being challenged by an increasing group of scholars.⁷

It is commonly accepted that the main pastoral concern motivating 1 Timothy is the critical impact of false teachers at Ephesus, and it is mostly known that the passage under consideration, 1 Tim 2:11–15, forms part of the all main issues of the letter's reference to false teaching, which the author is addressing. The letter begins and ends with warnings against false teachers (1:3, 6:20–21) who are named explicitly as Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Timothy 1:20). (Foster, 2016:4). The body of 1 Timothy starts with the author describing the situation Timothy must address in Ephesus: some members of the Christian community are teaching “a different doctrine,” and are engaging in theological assumptions based upon material from the Hebrew Bible, particularly the genealogies and the law (Twomey 2009:17)⁸.

1.6 Research Design and Methodology

This research will be guided by a rhetorical criticism approach, which has been used commonly in New Testament studies, especially in the Pauline Epistles (Moller, 2005:689). According to Watson (2007:196) rhetorical criticism represents the investigation of the New Testament texts with attention to the development of their argument, the organization of their components and their style. The study will analyse the discourse of the letter, considering the use of the language in the text as well as its relationship to its society. As an exegetical focused method, the rhetorical criticism approach will lead us to its three defining features within the text, namely: the author (“the world behind the text”), the discourse (“the world of the text”) and the reader (“the world in front of the text”) (Möller, 2005:689).

⁷ Caldwell and James (2017:12) refer to Tomlinson's point, “Some commentators, including Köstenberger, argue that Paul's purpose for writing had a twofold dimension: (1) an *ad hoc* personal dimension, namely, to instruct Timothy on how to deal with false teachers at Ephesus; and (2) a more general dimension, to provide guidance related to a variety of issues facing not only the church at Ephesus but the church as a whole in perpetuity”. If these scholars are correct, then it seems wise to pay attention to the Pastoral Epistles in general, and 1 Timothy, so that followers of Jesus might “know how one ought to behave in the household of God” (1 Tim 3:15).

⁸ “The three New Testament letters to Timothy and Titus, collectively known as the Pastoral Epistles, are curiously paradoxical texts when considered in terms of their reception. Unlike a major Pauline letter such as Romans, for example, the Pastoral Epistles do not feature sustained arcs of theological reflection, nor do they produce (at least not in any substantial way) the sense of a unique voice, a distinct and distinctive personality. Yet they have been essential to the development of Christian theology and have contributed significantly to the traditional portrait of Paul” (Twomey 2009:17).

The study uses rhetorical criticism in the sense of analysing the text according to rhetorical strategies used at the time of the text's composition as well as the ideological critical approach to engage contemporary appropriation of the text. This twofold approach will help to understand both the linguistic and arguments structures as well as how modern readers engage with the text.

Due to nature of the text in analysis, this method will be appropriate to bring critical understanding to the layers of and behind the text. I will be looking at sources such as journals, encyclopaedias, articles and books.

1.7 Limitations and Scope of Research

This research project constitutes a small part of a much larger overarching theme regarding gender justice, also within church communities. For a better understanding of the subject and focused attention, this study will be limited to 1 Timothy 2:11-15 which makes the significant claims about the silence, restriction and subjugation of women to men, as well as gender inequality in church. This topic, of concern globally, will be related to Angola where it is also a very topical and important social concern.

1.8 Chapters outline

The research consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 gives an introduction and background to the study, offering a brief outline of the purpose, research problems and questions as well as the hypothesis of this thesis, in combination with the explanation of the approach and a literature review. In Chapter 2 the rhetorical situation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is investigated exegetically; this presents a close analysis of the text with attention given to primary perceptions which functions in the text. Chapter 3 continues the discussion by elucidating the Social, Historical and Political contexts of 1 Timothy 2:11-15. It looks at the first century social context, which set up the life background of 1 Timothy. It will analyse the household within the Greco-Roman empire, the role distribution according to gender, and how the church as the household of God, has modelled itself along the same lines.

Chapter 4 will analyse Gendered Rhetoric in 1 Timothy 2:11-15. It seeks to explore implicitly gendered rhetoric in the text and discuss the diverse issues involved in interpretation as they relate to gender roles in that context. Rhetoric as an art of persuasion in its context, makes use of gendered language to refer to the cultural constructs of masculinity and femininity imposed upon biological sex in a particular culture.

In chapter two the reference of rhetorical situation refers to the world of the text, which examines what is happening in the text, followed by a brief discussion on the authorship, the audience, and the author's motivation to write but at the same time looks at the exegesis of the text by analyzing the linguistic aspects of the text as well as the structure or division of the arguments. Chapter three elucidates the world behind the text, which focuses on the social, historical and political factors that gave rise the text and how it affected the writer's discourse. Chapter four picks up again on exegesis from chapter two, by assessing the gendered rhetoric specific language of the text as form of persuasion in the First Mediterranean World.

Chapter 5 will examine 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and the challenge of being a woman in Angola. It will make an effort to apply the role of "Women, Teaching and Leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15" to the Angolan context by means of ideological criticism. It will engage with some analysis done by particular African (and, Angolan) academics and pastors in interpreting and applying this text. Chapter 6 connects the discussions of the chapters together and concisely explains the potential significance and influence of "Women, Teaching and Leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15" as suggested in the text, on Christianity today

Chapter 2: The Rhetorical Situation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15

2.1 Introduction

Reading the text's persuasive charm with reference to rhetoric, this chapter will focus on the text's rhetorical situation¹. The role of women in the Pastor's² church will be investigated in its cultural structure that combines the roles, practices and societal perceptions of women. Within every written document in the Bible there is a motivation or a reason for that text to have been written.³ Therefore to understand any biblical text, one needs to discern the particular situation in which the writer is motivated to respond to that which has the potential of changing the situation (Black, 1995:257). Letters are frequently applicable and addressed to a single person or particular group at specific time in a certain situation (Classen, 2002:46).⁴

Rhetoric is the ancient art of persuasion used from the time of Aristotle forwards, during and beyond the New Testament era in the Greek-speaking world, to convince the audience about something (Witherington III, 2009:ix). It is believed that the biblical text was written with the purpose to of convincing its addressees (first century Mediterranean people) regarding their behaviour, faith and ways of life in order to change toward the perspective of the writer as expressed in the text.

Rhetorical criticism⁵ is particularly suitable for the text of the New Testament, for these texts are shaped in a culture in which rhetoric as persuasive speech defined public discourse (Pogoloff, 1990:72). Therefore, reading the biblical text rhetorically, as a historical document rooted in a structure of power, widens the space for evolving a greater opportunity of meaning and understanding with respect to the text (Roisman, 2005:2).

Erik Gunderson (2009: Preface) argues that a rhetorical emphasis illustrates the ancient Greek and Roman context from beginning to end. The aim of this study is to understand the text rhetorically in order to construct the possible historical situation. It does this by examining the author's rhetoric in

¹ Studying a text's rhetorical situation means reading a text in order to grasp the information it intended to impart, to understand its meaning or its message by appreciating and explaining the function of every single part of it as well as the composition as a whole (Classen, 2002:46).

² It is a reference to the writer of the letter, in this case referring to the "literary Paul" as the one claiming to have been the writer of the pastorals.

³ Classen (2002:5) contends that when one turns to the groups of rhetoric in order to appreciate more fully an author's writing, one should inspect what is known about the author; and this involves his education, background and other factors that influenced him. Roisman (2005:3) points out that orations are informative about what is expected of the 1st century men, but less reliable with regard to the actual fulfilment of these ideals.

⁴ Actual speeches, homilies or letters are direct responses to specific historical-political situations or problems.

⁵ It is a form of literary criticism that explores the particular historical use of language in a specific social political situation (Pogoloff, 1990:72).

the text and also by considering the audience as well as the information about the historical and social setting from others sources outside the text. However, the emphasis of Chapter 2 will be on the textual aspects of the Greek text⁶ of 1 Timothy 2:11-15. Rhetoric pervades every aspect of our lives, ultimately providing a corpus of opportunities, not only to understand rhetorical aspects of ancient texts and traditions, but also to understand how we configure rhetorically the methods we use and study (Penner & Lopez, 2012:49).

Penner and Lopez (2012:34) moreover argue, “rhetoric also forms the very fabric of our communicative practices.” Examining what the rhetoric does in a text is not just about the words and settings. The rhetoric represents the essential form of our social relations, self-perceptions, and belief systems. Rhetoric permeates each part of human life and, accordingly, human lived experiences are rhetorically constructed and arbitrated. With a focus of the first century context in mind, the emphasis in this thesis will be on how women’s role in church was rhetorically scripted in the text of 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

In this vein, DeSilva (2000:27) states that in order to understand what the New Testament culture entails, one needs to learn the language of honour and shame in the first century Mediterranean world. Therefore, the use of words relating to honourable behaviour can be seen as important rhetorical strategies to persuade the readers of a certain identity or lifestyle to which they should adhere.

Thus, when critically investigating the rhetoric embedded in biblical texts, attention is drawn to the early period of the Jesus’s followers movement. In the post-modern period there has been an enhanced consciousness within all theological and religious discourses about God, including biblical texts, that all literature is socially constructed and politically predisposed; my study will also reference these matters. While studying the situation of the text, this chapter will focus first on the exegetical aspect of the text, and more precisely, on the grammatical construction of the text.

2.2 1 Timothy

The epistle is dated in the first century. Traditionally, the historical evidence is believed to point toward 63-67 A.D. and to support the authorship of Paul (Hendriksen, 1964:33). In their reception history, the letters are rejected for various reasons. Ancient readers associated the Pastoral Epistles against Gnostic heretics, like Marcion or Valentinus (Twomey, 2009:3). According to Oden (1989:3), the letters to Timothy and other pastorals, were written under situations in which the subsistence of the Christian community appeared very uncertain to any objective observer. Many antagonistic

⁶ The importance of semantic examination entails relating the implications of words that are related to each other semantically, but these correspondences are limited in the sense of acting as replacements for one another, given that the scope of these meanings are often ambiguous, especially regarding connotative aspects (Louw & Nida 1989:8).

powers were challenging the continued existence of the fragile community. Thus, the author endeavoured to ensure that other generations would have the opportunity to hear the good news of God's own coming. Caldwell and James (2017:11) point out that 1 Timothy has served to provide those called to leadership in God's house teachings and guidance that goes beyond its first century context.

In the case of the author, the use of "Paul" will be used in reference of the literary Paul and not Paul the apostle. For it will help the reader to understand the literary disagreement on the authorship of Paul the apostle and analysis the literary composition of the text. This literary Paul is a constructed figure in 1 Timothy. In terms of teaching on women the Pastorals are not consistent with other Pauline documents. For example in Romans 16 Paul sends an extensive greetings to his fellow co-workers and among them women are listed as servants. The Apostle Paul advocates for women as co-workers, but 1 Timothy tends to advocate for women not so much as partners in ministry with men. According to some scholarly agreement the first letter to Timothy as part of Pauline literature is pseudopigraphal. They comprise the part of the documents written after Paul in an age group of Paul's death in second century A.D (Hendriksen, 1964:10). These are letters that appear to mirror a perception of ecclesiastical organization, customs, and polices quite dissimilar to those found in Pauline groups, for example the communities of Thessalonica, Corinth, the churches in Galatia (Twomey, 2009:2).

The Pastoral Epistles are a flexible texts, rather unclear body of images, ideas, personal and historical references, in the form of letters addressed by Paul to his co-worker, Timothy (in Ephesus) (Twomey, 2009:2). The rhetorical strategies would then be the use of a body of language and philosophies of the time used in writing and public speech. It constitutes a letter of exhortation which was written by Paul being the superior to his co-worker, endearingly called his "son", Timothy. He is designated as Paul's heir (2 Timothy. 2:1), is offered moral support in the form of encouraging remembrances of Timothy's mother and grandmother (2 Timothy. 1:5; 3:15), and is advised about his health (1 Timothy.5:23) and his young age (1 Timothy 4:12).

The relationship between Paul and Timothy can be traced elsewhere in the New Testament. At Lystra, Paul's second missionary journey, Paul chooses Timothy to accompany him, most probably because "he was well spoken of by the brethren" (Acts.16:2-3) of that area (Gillman 1992:558). At Corinth (I Thessalonians.1:1; II Thessalonians.1:1), Timothy carried on his missionary labours with Paul and Silas. On the third missionary journey, Timothy is with Paul during the latter's long ministry at Ephesus. From here, he is sent to Macedonia and to Corinth (Acts 19:21, 22; I Corinthians.4:17: 16:10). Paul expected that his fellow-worker would arrive in Corinth after I Corinthians had reached its destination. When the apostle arrived at Macedonia, Timothy joined him (Romans.16:21; Acts

20:3-4; II Corinthians.1:1; I Corinthians. 16:3) (Hendriksen, 1964:36). Paul and Timothy worked together for more than two years in Ephesus.

The first letter to Timothy can probably be associated with the city of Ephesus and the Christians converts mainly from paganism (Harding, 1998:131). It opens with a brief apostolic greetings (1 Timothy 1:1-2) to Timothy. As a result of judaizing heterodoxies in applying the law among the converts from paganism (1 Timothy 1:3-7), Timothy is charged to be in Ephesus to fight those false teachings. The body of the letter is arranged with respect to a core of prophetic texts, hymns and oracular parts (1 Timothy 3:14-4:5), which are proposed and interpreted for Timothy by the literary Paul, for the benefit of the church conceived of as God's household. 1 Timothy. 1:3-4 opens with reminders of the responsibility conferred on Timothy by Paul. This constitutes one of the key elements in the Greco-Roman letters (Harding, 1998:131). Then, there follows the apostolic commission for Timothy (1 Timothy. 4:6-6:21) (Quinn, 1992:571). It is generally accepted that the main pastoral concern of this letter is the negative influence of false teachers at Ephesus and it is mostly agreed that the passage under consideration, 1 Timothy 2:8–15, also addresses an aspect of the heresy. The letter starts and culminates with forewarnings against false teachers in 1 Timothy 1:3, 6:20–21 Hymenaeus and Alexander in 1 Timothy 1:20 (Foster, 2016:3). The text's language, style and conviction disclose a thematic consistency of the author's skill in Koine Greek, convincing argumentation and epistolary arrangement. The tone of the text is pastoral in character, a combination of exhortation and comfort in relation to its purpose (1:3).

2.3 1 Timothy 2:11-15

Schneider (1991:146) argues that linguistic and literary-criticism investigates the world of the text itself. The basic purpose of exegesis and criticism, according to the author, is to establish as rigorously as possible the ideal meaning of a given text. In this chapter, this is done by rhetorical-critical analyses in terms of grammatical and structure of 1 Timothy 2:11-15.⁷ The text under scrutiny is instructing men and women on how to conduct themselves during prayers wherever Christians meet to worship. In 1 Timothy 2: 8-10, and then from 11-15, the author moves from prayers to who are responsible to preach or teach in the public worship. These teachings continues till 1 Timothy 3:13.

⁷ While the focus of Chapter 2 will be on the textual aspects of the Greek text of 1 Timothy 2:11-15, it cannot be debated without connecting it to social and moral matters. Therefore, the main discussion will be with regard to important elements within the first century CE social and moral Mediterranean world.

2.3.1 1 Timothy 2:11-12

11 Γυνή ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ⁸ μανθανέτω ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ:

11a) *Let a woman⁹ learn, In quietness in all submission.*

The prepositions that are repeated (ἐν) are datives of manner; indicating the manner in which women are allowed to learn in quietness and submission. The writer uses two related words to emphasize the manner of learning, namely ἡσυχία (a noun, dative, feminine singular). It is used as dative of respect together with πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ indicating the state in which the women is to learn; it is keeping one's peace: a state of non-disturbance; and ὑποταγῇ: submission (Danker, 2009:366). These are the manners¹⁰ in which women are allowed to learn in quietness or silence and in all subordination. Together, they suggest attention to the word in order to learn from it and without contradiction which may cause disturbance in the process of learning.

In the phrase, ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ, Mounce (2000:118) argues that the word ἡσυχία must be understood against the background of the situation of the Ephesian women. Some of the women are characterized as loiterers, gadding about from house to house, gossiping and in general being busybodies. For Mounce (2000:118), quietness and submission are not negative qualities in this context, for they facilitate learning.

For Towner (2006:214), the term ἡσυχία translated as quietness (silence) can range from absolute silence to quietness of spirit to silence (quietness) in respect of some speaking activity. So, the context will determine the sense. Towner points out two elements in this context: the first would be the direct context "in quietness" describing the posture and attitude of proper reverence to the teacher. The second would be the social context. For Mouton (2012:121), the word ἡσυχία, having been used twice, would suggest "a quiet life". Therefore, in the socio-rhetorical context of 1 Timothy, the request for silence and full submission would embody a respectful, decent attitude for proper learning, spiritual inspection and receptivity.

⁸ἡσυχία quietness 1a) description of the life of one who stays at home doing his own work, and does not officiously meddle with the affairs of others 2) silence. ὑποταγῇ: the act of subjecting, obedience, subjection, submission, of conformity to or agreement with a confessional standard (2 Cor. 9:13) (Danker 2009:366).

⁹ Woman is a more likely translation of wife, because neither the sentence nor the context includes a personal pronoun to differentiate woman from wife, Eph 5:22 being the women to their own men (Spencer, (2013:75).

¹⁰ The literary Paul uses of (ἡσυχία) can mean "silence," in an absolute sense, or "quietness," in the sense of "peaceableness" (a cognate word, ἡσυχίον, is used in 1 Timothy 2:2: "that we may live peaceful and quiet lives"). Although the point is much the same in either case, there is good reason to think that the word should be translated as "silence" in this context, since its opposite is "teaching." Paul is concerned that the women accept the teaching of the church "peaceably" – without criticism and without dispute (Moo 1991:176). The same demeanour at public worship for women "quietness", is elsewhere commended for men (Acts 22:2; I Thess.4:11; II Thess. 3:12; I Peter 3:4; Titus 2:2. Certain women at Ephesus may have been disturbing the service of worship in some unspecified way under influence of disruptive teachers. The writer is concerned with those unable to listen (Oden 1991:97).

Winter (2003:106) points out another dynamic, beyond the advocacy of a conducive listening environment: “The participation of Roman wives in the various secular congregations held in the home (the philosophical symposia and banquets) portrayed harsh criticism from certain men endangered by the tendency of the new women” (see also in Towner, 2006:215). In this context, if the invasion of the new woman example was in view, then “learning in quietness”¹¹ may have been restrained to restrict women from engaging in any give-and-take argumentations during lessons (Towner, 2006:216).

The phrase *πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ* (in all submission) is the first of the two qualifications of what the author means by quietness, which means to learn in a submissive manner (Mounce, 2000:119). The word designates the relationship of people to the authorities: in this case wives to husbands, children to parents, slaves to masters and the younger to the elder.¹² For Earle (1978:361), “full submission” needs to be treated wisely because it is not clear toward whom the woman is to be submissive; whether it is referring to all males, husbands or teachers.

In his analyse from a word study approach, Earle (1991:361) relies on Vine (1940:40) and argues that the command does not stand to emphasize a renunciation of one’s ability to think and moral sense of right or wrong, neither the abdication of the responsibility of isolated decision. Rather, the phrase constitutes an instructing against to the forceful taking of authority, as the author will do in the next verse (12) where he writes, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man.” In this context, Paul was explicitly opposed to confusion in the public services of the church.

The verb, *μανθανέτω* is present active imperative third person singular, from *μανθάνω*¹³ and means to learn. With this verb the writer is giving the woman an opportunity of acquiring knowledge through instruction or receipt of information (Danker 2009:222).¹⁴ According to Spencer (2013:58), *μανθανέτω* is the first imperative in the letter. The women were to learn mainly by study. The word *μανθανέτω* could also refer to acquisition of knowledge or skill gained by education. Moo (1991:176) points out that the fact that the Pastor wants Christian women to learn, constitutes an important point, for this practice was not commonly encouraged by the Jews. However it is the manner in which they are to learn that concerns the Pastor: “in quietness” and “with full submission.” Through these

¹¹ Spencer (2013:58) argues that Paul emphasised that women were to learn in silence because it was the best way of learning among ancient people. Silence had positive connotations among the ancient Jews because the Old Testament has positive connotations of silence (Proverbs 17:27-28). In educational settings, Spencer argues, it refers to the state of calm, restraint of the proper time, respect and affirmation of a speaker. It does not necessarily mean not speaking.

¹² Titus 3:1; Mark 12:17; Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-14; Colossians 3:18; Ephesians 5:22; I Peter 3:1; I Timothy 3:4; Luke 2:51; I Peter 5:5; I Timothy 6:1-2 (Mounce, 2000:119).

¹³ The word means to increase one's knowledge, to be increased in knowledge, to hear, be informed, to learn by use and practice.

¹⁴ Mt 9:13; 24:32; J 6:45; 7:15; Ac 23:27; Ro 16:17; 1 Cor 14:31, 35; Gal 3:2; Eph 4:20; Phil 4:9; Col 1:7.

concepts, Spencer (2013:58) argues, the literary Paul is encouraging the women at Ephesus to be “wise learners”, and this encouragement constitutes praise from Paul to women (see Moo.1991:176).

For in the Pastor’s time and based on the cultural boundaries in regard to gender and space, women had no right to learn in the same classroom with men.

The learning process was to be celebrated by women since it was best accomplished with a particular attitude of tranquillity fitting to the qualities culturally associated with first CE women (tranquillity, quietness, and calm). Thus, the Greek phrase γυνή ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ μαθανέτω ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγ encourages that a woman should be a learner under quiet conditions inwardly and outwardly, showing attention to the received teachings (Oden, 1983:96). Thus, for Oden, the idea is not to be silenced and submissive but to seek inward quietness and attentiveness to the proclamation. For Mounce (2000:117), verse 11a is the main point and it is repeated in verse 12c, for emphasis. He is of the opinion that this verse is emphasising the women’s attitude. In contrast to segments of Judaism that prohibited women from learning, Paul asserts the ability and values of women’s education. Therefore, the whole idea of verse 11 does not allude to the idea that women should not learn but *how* they should learn (Mounce, 2000:19).

The positive side of the text is that it stands in contrast to the Jewish belief that women should not be allowed to learn and should also be subjected to physical silence regardless of their desire to grow in knowledge. Thus, the permission to learn in the verse would show that the literary Paul was not encouraging physical silence but a teachable spirit. Also, it is not specified to whom women should be compliant. But scholars surmise that it might refer to the leaders in congregation who were accountable for teaching the believers’ doctrine (Lea, 1992:98). Similarly, Mouton (2012:121) considers the idea “*Let woman learn*” to be a major movement from within the cultural context of Judaism in which men were the free orators in any gathering and where it was unheard of for women to learn and interpret the Torah.

Foster (2016:5) argues that while the men were simply told to stop quarrelling, more is required from the women than to simply stop fighting. Since they are maintaining and promoting the heresy, they need to be corrected and must also learn without disputing. This idea presented by Foster supports the idea that women were the main activists in promoting heresy. However, the command for the silence is not only applied to woman, but can apply equally to men. For the names mentioned before in 1 Timothy 1:20 Hymaneus and Alexander are male figures; and these men were causing disruption in the church. Thus, male-female relationships in this section are secondary to the main issue of women listening without interruption or presumption in order that they might be corrected and

harmony might be restored. This will be achieved, not by submission of women to men, but by women submitting to the teaching of the duly authorized overseers as opposed to the heretics (Foster, 2016:6).

12 διδάσκειν δὲ γυναικὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ.

12. a) *But I do not permit a women to teach*

b) *Or to exercise authority over man*

c) *But she is to be in quietness*

The verb διδάσκειν: nominative, participle. active didaskein **root:** διδάσκω.

Διδάσκω is the act of providing instruction to someone on what to do; to provide instruction in formal or informal setting (Bauer, 1957:240). Διδάσκω is to hold discourse with others in order to instruct¹⁵ them, to be a teacher, to discharge the office of a teacher, to impart instruction, inculcate doctrine into someone (Danker, 2009:95).

For Towner (2006:217), the verb διδάσκω as it occurs in this verse can be safely taken as a reference to the authoritative activity of teaching in the worship gathering. The gift of teaching, such as that of an apostle, prophet and evangelist, was held to be limited to certain persons, presumably for men (1 Timothy 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:2).¹⁶ The idea of Ephesians 4:7 says: “*but to each one of us grace has been given as Christ appointed it*”. If Towner is supporting the idea that the women should not teach because it is a gift which is given to men, then I would not recommend this view, since it contradicts the teaching in Ephesus 4:7. In this verse, Paul (who is also claimed to be the author) is encouraging believers to live according to each one’s calling. Also, in one of his authentic letters, Paul appears to disregard gender and biological differences in Galatians 3:28: “*....nor there is male and female, for you are all one in Christ*”. This contrasts the idea that the gift of teaching, being an evangelist and a prophet, are not given according to gender construction.

Wallace (2009:1) points out that the verb presents two grammatical issues: the first is in terms of lexis and it can denote any kind of instruction or else divine teaching. In this case, the main idea would be that either the Pastorals ought to tell the implication of teaching beyond the entire Pauline writings or supplementary to the usage of the διδάσκω word class within the Greek language.

¹⁵ Διδάσκω “learn, be informed of’ teach, instruct Mt 4:23, and frequently of Jesus in the gospels; Acts 1:1. Of apostles and others: 4:2; 5:21; Ro 2:21; 1 Cor 4:17; Col 3:16. 1 Cor 11:14. In wordplay relating to orders given by a superior Mt 28:15 (Danker 2009:95)”.

¹⁶ Lea (1992:100) is of the opinion that the role of the teacher mentioned in this verse is mostly closely linked with the office of the pastor or a senior pastor in contemporary churches. Thus, the normative principle behind the verse is that the women should not carry out the role of senior pastor.

These two grammatical issues in this verse have been at the centre of a debate in scholarship on whether the literary Paul is prohibiting a woman to take a leadership position or to teach just for this context and therefore only for that time, or whether he is giving a universal command to all women neither to teach nor to have an authoritative role as a leader. For Moo (1991:180), Paul's use of the word permits instead of operating as an imperative, and his putting it in the present tense, are often taken as indications that the author views the injunction that follows as limited and temporary. However, nothing definite can be concluded from the use of this word (permit).

As far as the present tense of the verb is used or known, this permits us, Moo (1991:81) argues, to conclude that the literary Paul was at the time of writing insisting on these prohibitions. Whether he means these prohibitions to be in force only at the time of writing, because of a specific situation, or as in Romans 12:1: "*I urge (present tense) you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices*", to be applied to any church at any time, cannot be known from the verb permit, but must be decided by the context in which it occurs (Lea 1992:100). For Kroeger (1986:225), the meaning of *διδάσκω* and *διδάσκαλος* usually refers to the content of the message, whether orthodox or heterodox. Against this background the prevention applies more to the message than to the act of teaching. Kroeger (1986:226) is of the opinion that *διδάσκω* forbids erroneous teaching, while *ἀθέτηνο* denotes both a ritual act and doctrinal ideology promoted by heretical teachers who represented a big problem for the writer of the pastorals.

The conjunction *δέ* can be either contrastive/adversative ('but') or continuative ('and'). If it is contrastive, it is probably contrasting the positive statement in verse 11 that women are to *learn*. Thus, the emphasis in verse 11 would be on this positive aspect (Wallace, 2009).

For Moo (1991:180), the phrase, full submission, is the axis between the command in verse 11: "*A woman should learn in quietness and full submission*" and the prohibitions in verse 12—"I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man." The word that connects these verses is a conjunction (*de*) that usually has a mild antithetical (*but*) force. In the conjunction "*but*" often with this word "*de*", its warm adversative force arises from the shift from one point to another rather than from a contrast in content. In this case, the transition is from one activity that women are to carry out in submission (learning) to two others that are forbidden in order to endorse their submission (teaching and having authority).

Spencer (2013:60) argues that learning and teaching are interconnected actions; those who learn will teach. The rabbis showed that a good learner learns in order to teach and learns in order to practice. Not all Christians will have the gift of teaching consistently. However, they should pass on to others what they have learned. With the conjunction "*but*", indicating contrast, the author does not want women in Ephesus to teach but rather to learn and be silent.

The next verb in the sentence is οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω: first person [?], aorist, indicative active: to allow someone not to do something, not to permit, used with the infinitive (Bauer, 1957:384).¹⁷ Wallace (2009) asks, “Is the verb a progressive present with the power of ‘I am not now permitting’ or (2) a gnomic present with the force of ‘I do not permit as a principle’”? Those who take the progressive view, he argues, suggest that the literary Paul would allow this at a later time. (3) Another issue is whether the expression “I do not permit a woman to teach” is the equivalent of an imperative or whether it has softer power. According to Oden, (1991:97), “I permit” is perhaps a personal¹⁸ opinion as distinguished from a formal apostolic instruction.¹⁹ In this verse, Oden argues, the intent appears to be: I personally do not allow a woman²⁰ to teach or claim inordinate authority over the man.

The word ἐπιτρέπω is used in the first person, with the consequence that the author speaks directly to the audience. The author places himself directly within the discourse through the appeal to his readers. Its power is a strong command as an authoritative person.

Mounce (2000:122) opines that if the semantic force of the word is authoritative, the use of the indicative does not lessen its force. Thus, the imperative in verse.11 has already established the tone of the passage. Therefore, the shift from βούλομαι “I desire” in verse.8, to the stronger ἐπιτρέπω “I permit” marks an intensified sense of authority. Because of the present aspect of the verb, Mounce (2000:123) suggests that it should be translated as “I am not presently allowing a woman to teach or I am not permitting;” thus indicating that, at that time, the literary Paul wanted to restrain the women at Ephesus from teaching the men until they themselves were well-instructed²¹. Then he prefers to indicate that “I do not permit” embodies the apostle’s compulsory command for all churches.

According to Spencer (2013:62) the verb “permit” is not that frequent in the New Testament. Here it refers not to a command but to allowable acts analogous to God’s permissive will as opposed to God’s perfect will. For example: "Jesus said that Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your

¹⁷ Matthew 8:21; 19:8; Mark 10:4; Luke 8:32

¹⁸ Some felt that Paul's use of “I” “represents his personal opinion and not his binding judgement. Comparison is often made to 1 Cor 7 where Paul differentiates between a charge coming from himself and a charge coming from the Lord (vv.10, 12).

¹⁹ For Spencer (2013:61) using the first person singular in present indicative “I am not permitting” denotes direct action. Thus, what is encouraged in this verse is something pertaining to the immediate context. He is giving an order to Timothy to do it at present time. At the same time, Spencer maintains that this restriction of women's teaching will not always be applied, though it might be applied today given the analogous situation.

²⁰ It is not that a woman in general cannot teach but that women cannot teach in such a way as to usurp authority over teachers already duly designated (Oden, 1991:97).

²¹ Wallace (in Mounce, 2000:122) contends that the generic γυνή “woman” specifies that ἐπιτρέπω “I permit” is gnomic and the normal use of the present tense in didactic literature, particularly when introducing an exhortation, is not descriptive, but a general teaching that has gnomic application. If the use of the present tense automatically demanded that the statement be referred to the author’s present time, then this would raise serious problems about the broader reach of many of Paul’s writings.

hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning" (Matthew 19:8). It is not so much that Paul instructs women not to teach but that they do not have his permission to do so at this time.

The verb *ἀθροεντεῖν*: is a verb infinitive form of *ἀθροεντέω*: to assume a stance of independent authority, give orders to, dictates to (Bauer, 1957:150). Here, the verb would have the meaning of: telling a man what to do, or to dictate something; in the connotative sense, one who kills another or himself with his own hands; one who acts on his own authority, autocratic, an absolute master, to govern, exercise dominion over someone, in this case the man.

For Wallace (2009:2), "this is possibly the most disputed element in 1 Timothy 2:12. The two widest views are (1) usurp authority, that is, use authority over a man, which is illegitimate, and (2) exercise authority."

In Towner's view (2006:220), the word *ἀθροεντέω* can express different notions such as to rule/reign, to control/dominate, to act independently, and to be the originator of something; to murder. The negative variety of meanings possible for the verb have a strong meaning. In this case, the verb can express the negative sense of "abuse of authority or to be domineering." Consequently, the final analysis of the text rests on the reading of the context. Concerning the context, Spencer (2013:63) opines that the noun cognate used by a Jewish writer contemporary to Paul has negative connotations. Josephus uses *ἀθροεντέ* to describe assassins. He describes Antipater, Herod's son as an *ἀθροεντέ* because he was accused of killing his family. For Spencer, the word is similar to the negative type of leadership Jesus exposes for the gentile rulers (Matthew 20:25).

Given the word's connotative implications, the prohibition on women's teaching is to indicate that they do not have absolute power over men in such a way as to destroy them. Within the context of the text, Spencer (2013:65) affirms that Artemis as one of the goddess of Ephesus was modelled on the queen bee. After the young queen has stung to death any other competing queen bees, she leaves the nest on a mating flight. The seven or eight males who mate with her die because their reproductive organs are torn out after breeding. Similarly, the cult of Artemis at Ephesus was associated with rituals or actual murder.

Catherine Kroeger (cited in Spencer 2013:65) posits that in Ephesus women also assumed the role of man-slaying Amazons who had founded the cult of Artemis of Ephesus. Evidence of actual human sacrifices have been exposed at the lowest level of the great Artemisium. Consequently, Spencer argues that *ἀθροεντέω*²² might allude to the traditional destructive pagan feminine portrayal at

²² Women in Ephesus were influenced by the cult of Artemis, where the female was exalted and considered superior to the male. Its importance to the citizens of Ephesus in Paul's day is evident from Luke's record of the two-hour-long chant,

Ephesus. In such a case Paul was using *authenteō* figuratively to describe destructive attitudes of women toward men, modelling themselves on Artemis, the slaughter or even on Eve, for when she ate the fruit forbidden by God, it resulted in death (Genesis 3:3-4). Looking at the context in which the text is written, Paul does not want women under such influence to be in position of authority in the church. Women may not teach the gospel authoritatively to men in the public assembly of the church.²³

According to Scholer (1986:203), the injunctions of verse 2:11-12 agree to the commonly-accepted standards of behaviour and expectations for women in both Jewish and Greco-Roman culture. Accordingly, those verses strengthen socially honourable patterns of behaviour in response to false teachings and its obnoxious use of women. For Scholer, the statements in verse 2:11-12 are thus *ad hoc* instructions envisioned for a particular situation in Ephesus, viz. false teaching focused on women. This renders these instruction not universal principles fixed in a suprasituational “church order manual” that prohibits women in ministry in all times and spaces. The commands are focused against women who, having been affected by the false teachings, are abusing the normal opportunities women had within the church to teach and exercise authority.

Foster (2016:6) comprehends that the use of *αὐθεντέω* proposes that the male-female hierarchy is not the issue. Rather, the literary Paul addresses the problem of women advocating heresy by teaching them not to take it upon themselves to teach it to men. The adverse *ἀλλὰ* (“but”), followed by the injunction to take up *ἡσυχία* (“quietness”) demonstrates that the act of women teaching and usurping authority caused a disturbance, and by following this instruction, peace will be restored. Hence, verse 11 is concerned with how the women themselves will be corrected, while the instructions in verse 12 are designed to restrict their activity in spreading and defending the heresy, thereby causing disruption.

2.3.2 1 Timothy 2:13-14

13 Ἀδὰμ γὰρ πρῶτος ἐπλάσθη εἶτα Ἔνα: *For Adam was formed first after that Eve.*

The verb ἐπλάσθη: give shape through moulding process, *form, mold*. eplasthē **root:** πλάσσω to form, (something from clay, wax, etc.) used by a potter (Danker, 2009:286).

With this verb, the author tries to explain his arguments in verses 11-12, alluding to the creation story which he assumes his audience knows. However, the problem with this reference is that the writer

“Great is Artemis of the Ephesians” (Acts 19:28-37). It was believed that Artemis was the child of Zeus and Leto and the sister of Apollo. Instead of seeking fellowship among her own kind, she sought the company of a human male consorts. This made Artemis and all her female adherents superior to men (Belleville, 2003:7).

²³ Moo (1991:183) takes a position that the prohibitions of verse 12 are applicable to all women in the church in their relationships with all men in the church.

recalls the second narrative of creation, in which we encounter the narrator of Genesis 2, explaining the process of creation in which the male Adam comes first and the female Eve afterwards. Scholer (1986:209) affirms that Paul is selective in his use of Genesis material. He uses the conjunction γάρ (gar) to give the reason that he is prohibiting women from teaching and having authority over men. Thus, the narrative that Adam was created prior to Eve is from Genesis 2; but the creation account in Genesis 1 does not set priorities in the creation of the two sexes.

Oden (1989:99) contends that Paul first presents an argument that has traditionally been called the order of creation²⁴. This dominant view among rabbis of the time is evidence that Paul was a man of his time. The rabbinic rationale held that Adam was formed first before Eve. But Calvin (cited in Oden, 1989:99) argues that the author's first reason to mention that woman was second in the order of creation, seems not to be a very strong argument in favour of her subjection; Oden gives the example John the Baptist who was before Christ in the order of time, but was however significantly inferior to him.

For Oden (1989:99) the chronological order which the writer uses in his defence suggests that Eve was the mother of all the living and was created to complete something left incomplete in the male. Accordingly, this does not constitute a statement of inferiority or superiority as often understood, but completion of the spouse's limitation. Mounce (2000:130) reasons that Paul is not stating a general principal concerning the order of creation. Rather, he is advancing his understanding of the relationship between Adam and Eve in Genesis 2.

Moo (1991:185) argues that this verse provides the first reason “γάρ” for the prohibitions in verse 12. Paul emphasizes that man was created “first, then” Eve; the temporal sequence is marked strongly (*πρῶτος* “first,” and *εἶτα* “then”). Both the logic of this passage and the parallel in 1 Corinthians 11:3-10 supports the idea that, the man's priority in the order of creation is indicative of the headship that man is to have over woman.²⁵ The woman being created after man, as his helper, shows the

²⁴ Using the biblical history of creation from Gen 2, Paul argues that Adam was chronologically prior to Eve. The fact of that chronological priority of Adam was stabilised before the fall of humankind and the subsequent entrance of sin (Lea, 1992:100).

²⁵ Moo (1991:186) argues that by quoting creation rather than a local situation or cultural circumstance as his basis for the prohibitions, but Paul makes it clear that, while these local or cultural issues may have provided the context of the issue, they do not provide the reason for his advice. His purpose for the prohibitions of verse 12 is the created role relationship of man and woman; then it might be concluded that these preventions are pertinent as long as this reason remains true. On the other hand, in opposition to this view, even an appeal to creation does not demand that the prohibition involved be perpetual. And this may be established, in the sense that New Testament authors sometimes appeal to creation, or to the Old Testament, to establish a principle on which a specific form of conduct is needed. In 1 Timothy 2:12-18, the principle cannot be separated from the form of behaviour, for a woman to teach a man or to have authority over a man is, by definition, to avoid the principle for which Paul quotes the creation account. Granted this and granted the complete absence of explicit temporal or cultural references in the whole paragraph, the prohibitions of verse 12 can be ignored only by dismissing the theological principle itself. To a language editor this looks like a quotation. If so, remember to reference it.

position of submission that God intended as inherent in the woman's relation to the man, a submission that is violated if a woman teaches doctrine or exercises authority over a man.

According to Lea (1992:1001), what the writer was teaching is that a woman's assumption of the role of the teacher would make her an overseer and would reverse the natural principles of headship in marriage (1 Corinthians 11:1-8), threatening God's ordained basis of husband-wife relationship in marriage. The Pastor's church did not want the practice of the church to weaken marriage in any way. According to Hendriksen (1976:109), it expresses a feeling of affectionate consideration and basic understanding. They mean: "let a women not enter a sphere of activity which is not suited, for of her very creation she is not suited. Let not a bird try to dwell under water. Let not a woman yearn to exercise authority over a man by lecturing him in public worship. For the sake both of herself and the spiritual welfare of the church such unholy tampering with divine authority is forbidden. Let a woman remain a woman"

14 καὶ Ἀδὰμ οὐκ ἠπατήθη ἡ ἢ δὲ γυνὴ ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a sinner. The verb ἐνπαραβάσει: parabasei root: παράβασις: a going over, metaph, violating, of the Mosaic law to create transgressions, i.e. that sins might take on the character of transgressions, and thereby the consciousness of sin be intensified and the desire for redemption be aroused (Danker, 2009:266).

The verb γέγονεν: indicative active: gegonen root: γίνομαι: to become, to come into existence, begin to be, to arise, appear in history.

The appeal to the mind and purpose of the creator shows that the literary Paul is not basing what he says merely on the position assigned to women in the society of that day. He is rather appealing to a guiding principle of universal and abiding application (Guthrie, 1970:1297).

Oden (1989:100) contends that the rabbis generally held the view that although the woman was the second in the order of creation, she was the first to sin (it was hardly an invention of Apostle Paul). The idea was that Adam was not at this primordial stage fooled by the Deceiver, but the woman was, so she caused Adam to sin by her being first deceived. The conclusion which Oden calls pathetic is that "the woman taught once, and ruined all". For Oden there is no suggestion here that Eve was mentally inferior or morally more perverse or spiritually deficient. If anything, Eve is portrayed as being more curious, more eager to experiment with the given world than Adam.²⁶

²⁶ Oden (1989:100) further asks, is the implication here that Eve was so easily deceived that she cannot be trusted to teach? Or is it that woman has extraordinary powers, unique competences that like all good competencies, are subject to abuse?

For the author, since she was the one to be deceived she should not be trusted as a teacher (Gaebelein, 1978:362). The author was teaching that women prove the reality of their salvation when they become model wives and mothers whose good deeds include marriage and raising children (Lea, 1992:102). In this case, if the problem was who is to be trusted, then it is not only women but men as well. The idea of a wife as a model would be best understood if the author had not used “if” as the conditional in the next verse 15.

For Mounce (2000:135) the emphasis of the text is on deception. This represents the second reason in explaining why the pastor is prohibiting women to teach in verse 12. Mounce (2000:136) argues that the major argument of many scholars who counter this interpretation, is that verse 14 represents the true statement supporting verse 12 and that verse 14 does not make any sense as a reason. He provides the following interpretation of this verse. Some interpreters support the idea that generally verse 14 is concerned with the nature of woman. According to this thought, man and woman share equal position before God, but their deferent nature is supported in the different roles they play.²⁷ Other interpretations assumes that verse 14 “makes no ontological statement concerning women²⁸ and yet does support verses 11-12”. Rather, the statement points out the consequences that occur when roles are shifted, or when women assume leadership roles (Mounce 2000:136).

The verse seems to show that Adam was sinless, and this is contradictory to Paul’s teachings since in Rom. 5:12-21 he places the transmission of sin at Adam’s feet and not Eve’s, even though she was the first to sin.²⁹ The situation is more intriguing for the fact that those whom Paul point out as the false teachers are men deceiving women. In this case, men are the cause for deception not women. Thus, to impose that women are prohibited to teach and have leadership positions because they seem to be the way through which heresy is penetrating into the household of God, and like Eve they are deceiving other members, man in particular, is to force the Bible to teach peoples’ ideologies and twist the Bible’s sense for their own purposes. What the text exposes is the environment of some members in the church and this can refer both to male or female who are involved in engaging in

²⁷ According to Mounce (2000:137), there is strong opposition today to this interpretation because Paul is seen as making a theological statement about the essential nature of women. Many classify this statement as to not be true. They argue that if women are more gullible, then they should not be allowed to teach anyone, including children who are the gullible. If Ephesian women are not to teach because they have been deceived, would it not follow that the Ephesian men may not teach because they sinned knowingly without the excuse of deception?

²⁸ Just as Eve listened to the snake and was deceived, so are the Ephesian women who are listening to heretical teaching, being deceived.

²⁹ Foster (2016:8) explains further that the episode in the Garden parallels the experience of the Ephesian church where the women had been deceived, while the men had not. The activity of the false teachers resembles that of the serpent who sought out the woman rather than the man (cf. 2 Tim 3:6) and so led the woman to sin. This is not to suggest that women are generally more susceptible to Satan. Rather, the fact that women are being deceived ought to alert them to the origin of this false teaching. There may also be an implication that the activity of the women in attempting to persuade the men parallels that of Eve tempting her husband.

endless genealogies and myths. And this differs from the apostle Paul views that Christians are new creation in which sin is overcome and there is no male nor female (Newsom, 1998:599).

The women at Ephesus are thus portrayed to resemble the woman in Eden, Eve. The Ephesian women who were learning a form of unorthodox beliefs and teaching it to others, submitted to heretical teachers that brought spiritual death to their listeners. Paul had commenced a process to address the educational limitation on women, particularly in Ephesus, by commanding that women learn the truth so that they could understand fully the Christian message, not to be deceived, and then when they taught they would bring spiritual life and salvation to their listeners (Spencer 2013:73).

2.3.3 1Timothy 2:15

σωθήσεται δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας ἐὰν μείνωσιν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἀγιασμῷ μετὰ σωφροσύνης·

But she will be saved through childbearing if they remain in the truth and love, benevolence and self-control.

The verb σωθήσεται: imperative, future passive third singular, from σῶζω: to save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction, to deliver from the penalties of the Messianic judgment (Danker 2009:345).

The sentence reads δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας, but through childbearing. It is possible to translate δέ as a copulative conjunction “and”, indicating that an additional argument following verses 13-14 supports the command in verse 12. It would be translated as “and she will be saved through childbearing”. Or δέ could also be translated as adversative conjunction “but” expressing contrast between the way women were perceiving salvation and the way the pastor perceived it. The translation would be “but she will be saved through childbearing”. Therefore it is important to understand how scholars have interpreted this sentence.

Vine (1940:47 cited in Earle, 1978:362) understands the meaning of the text in relation to bearing children and so accomplishing the plan appointed for her through acceptance of maternity. She would be saved from becoming a target to the social evils of the time and would take her part in the preservation of the testimony of the local church. For Scholer (1986:197) women treasure their place among the saved through the maternal and domestic roles that were unquestionably assumed to constitute correctness for women in the Greco-Roman culture of Paul’s day.

Newsom (1998:599) argues that in ancient culture a woman obtained honour through being a mother. Thus, here normal cultural values are applied as the means of salvation. Since the verb means rescue from danger, the author means that women in Ephesus were in danger, or were the target of the false teaching which were affecting the women’s responsibility as mother and wife. Salvation in this

context does not relate to eternal life in Jesus, for that we get by faith in Jesus Christ alone and not in what we do. The salvation this is referring to is from the false teachings. The verb is used similarly in 1 Timothy 5:14 “*So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander.*”

The study’s view is in contrast to what Mounce suggests. Mounce (2000:144) advocates spiritual salvation. The example of childbearing is probably because of what the false teachers are doing in restraining the importance of marriage,³⁰ and therefore also of childbearing.

Oden (1989:100) argues that the idea that women will be saved through childbearing is contrary to the central teaching of the New Testament that salvation is obtained by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and not of works. Oden adheres to what Paul says in Galatians that “there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ” Galatians. 3:28.

Belleville (2003:7) contends that the influence of Artemis would serve to elucidate Paul’s correctives in 1 Timothy. 2:13-14. While some may have understood that Artemis appeared first and then her male partner, the true story was the opposite order. For Adam was formed first, then Eve (verse 13), and Eve was deceived (verse 14), hardly forms a basis on which to claim superiority. It would also shed light on Paul’s statement that “women will be saved or ‘kept safe’ through childbirth” (verse 15); for Artemis was the defender of women. Women turned to her for safe travel through the childbearing process.³¹ The text (verse 15) and others (verses 11-14) articulates fear for the reputation of the church within the larger Greco-Roman society (Scholer, 1986:198).

In the phrase, ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἀγιασμῷ μετὰ σωφροσύνης many of the qualities that the author is appealing for women to show, are interconnected to the culture of honour and shame. In this culture, it was always recommended that people should cultivate honourable virtues such as “truth, love, benevolence and self-control”. Harding (1998:138) contends the same, for he states that the author appeals to convention as the basis of commanding customary patterns governing women, both in their dress in vs 8-10 and adornment; in the area of exercising teaching authority over men. Thus, the writer does not appeal only to reigning social conventions but also to arguments constructed in the Bible as well as in the early Jewish tradition.

While Moo (1991:187) sees that the restrictions imposed by Paul in 1 Timothy 2:12 are valid for Christians in all places and all times, Spencer and others (Scholer, Oden, Lea) opine that the

³⁰ Marriage and childbearing were forbidden by certain gnostic groups because they pulled the soul atoms back into material bodies instead of liberating them to ascend to their ultimate source (1 Timothy 2:12) (Mounce, 2000:146).

³¹ More detailed explanation concerning Artemis and her influence will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

prohibition was only to respond to that situation in Ephesus, and that it can only be applied today if an analogous situation to that in Ephesus would emerge (Spencer 2013:62).

Lea (1992:103) observes that Paul faced a problem in Ephesus because some church leaders had lost any appearance of holiness. They were apparently influencing women to follow them in their practices of rebellion and self-seeking endeavours. The women in Ephesus had neglected their home responsibilities and had tried to manipulate their way into positions of dominance in the local church. Another scenario may also prevail, since the text could also suggest that some women had the opportunity to teach and have authority in the church, but they are abusing that power.

Scholer (1986:2018) concludes that 1 Timothy 2:11-15 cannot be legitimately divorced from its immediate context (v. 8-10), or its larger literary context of 1 and 2 Timothy as well as additional significant texts, such as 1 Timothy 5:11-15 and 2 Timothy 3:6-7. Foster (2016:9) holds the opinion that nothing in these verses (11-15) advocates a trans-occasional application of the command to women not to teach or to be silent. Nor is there any obligation in the text that the women in Ephesus or anywhere else submit to men. Rather, they were to submit to the teaching of qualified and accredited teachers inside the church. The recommendation is that the women need to submit to the word of God or else we are prone to false teachers and are at risk of straying.

Penner & Lopez (2012:35) argue that rhetoric will always embed beliefs, assumptions, and ideologies of social action that form the content, procedure and performance of our rhetoric. It is noticeable in the way the verses of 1 Tim. 2:11-15 are constructed, that the writer had skills in the art of persuasion. For in v 11, he brings a positive point of instruction for his audience which does not cause much tension as he is giving his audience (women) the opportunity to learn alongside men, something that was not a common practice in his culture or society. Mouton (2012:121) considers the idea as a key effort from within the cultural context of Judaism and Greco-Roman world.

The point of tension is in verse 12 whereby the writer gives a negative command to his audience and to women in particular. Even though they are allowed to learn as students, they are forbidden to teach and have authority over men. And this instruction is very much embedded in his social context where the role of women was gender-based. The base he gives for his argument is found in vs 13-14, trying to convince his audience to accept what he was arguing as biblical and universal principles in order to achieve his goal (Kittredge, 1996:63).

There are several features demonstrating the hortatory³² quality of the text, specifically the use of imperatival constructions, frequent opposites, and sequences of initial imperatives followed by

³² Green & McDonald (2013:582) defined "hortatory" as "language or literature that urges a particular course of action or behaviour".

supporting indicatives. Thus the rhetorical style of the text is “deliberative exhortation” because the author seeks to convince and move the audience to make the right decision for the future (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1999:112).

2.4 Conclusion

From the arguments above, I conclude that 1 Timothy 2:1-15 is a text written in the context of Greek and Roman elite men’s rhetoric describing their ideal of a virtuous woman. The writer is so engrained in his context that looking at the challenges of the churches, he almost follows the reigning social patterns on the role of women and men to solve the problem in the Household of God. There is a positive side in the instructions, in that women are allowed to be in the sphere of the learning process to acquire knowledge of the Scripture together with men, a practice that was denied for women in Jewish culture. However, the instructions come with the prohibition not to teach and not to have authority over men while learning. For this, the only thing they are asked, is to be quiet, calm and not create disturbances while learning. The simple explanation offered for this appeal is the hierarchical order in which woman and man were created. Man comes first, then woman. Women have to be subordinated to men, they are not to have authority over men and they are to remain silent. In Chapter 2, the focus was primarily on the textual aspects of the study while Chapter 3 will describe, in a broad sense, particular, significant themes within their socio-historical context.

Chapter 3: Social, Historical and Political context of 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 conducted an analysis and investigation of the text 1 Timothy 2:11-15, with a specific focus on *rhetorical textual* aspects, to distinguish initial focal points for discussion in subsequent chapters. In Chapter 3 a few aspects selected for their primary relevance to the topic at hand, will be discussed, within the general and broader socio-historical context of the first century Mediterranean world (Ancient Near Eastern). Although the discussion will be approached from a more *general perspective* of the first century Greek and Roman world, the discussion will focus on how the above-mentioned general aspects contribute to inform the contextual milieu, and are always interconnected to the dominant prevalent prohibition of women in teaching and leadership positions.

Conway (2008:7, cited in Visser, 2015:36) affirms that there is a multifaceted shared connection concerning text as well as in its setting. In this, it is implied that there is a need to understand the world¹ in which the text was written

While rhetorical processes of investigation and interaction analyse the arguments and values that underlie them, and while it recognizes points of tensions within the text, the other task of rhetorical criticism is to reconstruct the possible historical situation and social settings of the text (Kittredge 1996:63). A primary analytical focus in this chapter will be on the social, historical and political setting of 1 Timothy 2:11-15, the addressees, and how the author is influenced by the world around him.²

Tzabedze (1989:84) argues that distortions as well as misconstructions of the Bible are common among interpreters, as some of them consider that the Bible utters one thing, while others are confident that their literal perception stands as the sole truthful one. In that way this interpretation pays no attention to the context in which what it being said is to be understood. It is proposed that it is more important to persuade people to consider the background of biblical texts instead of decontextualizing it (Tzabedze, 1989:85).³

¹ "Texts are worldly, they are events, and, even when they appear to deny it, they are nevertheless a part of the social world, human life, and of course the historical moments in which they are located and interpreted" (Schüssler Fiorenza, (2007:380) cited in Visser, 2015: 36).

² This chapter seeks to consider the socio-historical viewpoints and circumstances under which 1Tim.2:11-15 was written.

³ Tzabedze (1989:85) understands that the context in which the text was written constitutes a vital element in order to understand the factors behind such texts and find a right way of appropriating the text to the reader's context. Therefore, she believes that it is important for people, those who assume that their interpretations are correct, to know that there are other viewpoints expressed in the Bible which do not conform to the ones they assume the Bible says. So those

In relation to the study's subject matter, viz. the role of women in the church, and specifically that of the performance of women, the concept will be debated within the larger first century Roman, Greek and Judaic frameworks. The woman's role will be discussed in combination with the themes that are discussed in 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

The ensuing investigation anticipates revealing prevalent and important themes evident within Chapter 2, and will be used as the inception themes or deliberation. This will comprise a broad discussion with respect to the Greek and Roman context, with special attention to specific groups (women) who are addressed in the demarcated scope of 1 Timothy 2:8-15. The intention is to understand how the text operated within the bigger context of the Greek and Roman world, in order to read this text as a document that operated within the different domains of the Greek and Roman world.

Honour and shame, as fundamental to the cultural and moral script of first century Greek and Roman world, will be examined in particular as they played critical roles for the construction of group behaviour.

3.2 Framing the household code system.

The author of 1 Timothy identifies the leader of the Christian community at Ephesus as the recipient of the letter (1 Tim. 1:3).⁴ The literary imperatives in this letter implores its interpreters to read the text within the whole biblical context using compatible and comparable discourse aligned with the setting of the city's social, cultural and religious traditions (Kroeger and Kroeger, 1994:47). The household code represents an important structure in the Greco-Roman world. It was the place for identity formation, congruent with individuals' statuses in society, religion, and their accompanying, respective roles.

Peter Lampe (1992:2) points out that the domestic cypher embodied in Ephesians 5:22-6:9, is useful to recognise the nature of the households in the Roman social order. More than that, its central focus is directing attention to the central role of the house-churches in the early Christian community. Further, he presents three standards that served to delineate a household in the context of Roman society: "a hierarchical order of obedience structure, economic dependency and marriage" (Peter Lampe, 1992:2 cited in Tanzer, 1993: 328).

interpretations need to be reconsidered equally. The reason is the fact that they do not reflect any consideration of the context of the text, and therefore apply the texts as they are translated literally.

⁴ According to Kroeger & Kroeger (1994:47), scholarly opinion has not been unanimous that the letter was indeed directed to this city.

Wordelman, (1998:484) tells us that the fundamental unity of social organization at the time was the household, which was a structure very different from that of modern families. The household structure reflected the pyramidal figure of the empire's economic structure. The head of the household and immediate family occupied the upper section of the hierarchy pyramid and controlled the slaves of the house. According to the Greek and Roman ideal, the oldest, free-born, male citizen operated as the authoritative head of the household, with the wife fulfilling the tasks of supervising the running of the household, according to (generally) her husband's preferences and orders.

3.2.1 Gender roles in the Household of Greco-Roman society

The view and status of women differed from Roman to Greek and Judaism. In Greek culture there was found mere restriction of women compared to Roman culture. And since the Roman culture was more open to give freedom to women, it facilitated to some extent the spread of Christianity. As the church developed through home meetings, and women were active in the domestic roles, it gave space to women to be more active (Balch, 2003:266).

3.2.1.1 *Women in the household*

Ryrie (2011:8) writes that under the Roman empire⁵ women generally enjoyed a better standing than in Greece. Legally however, wives were still measured purely by the authority of their spouses. On the other hand, in practice, the law was understood otherwise, and women enjoyed considerable autonomy.

Balch (2003:274) informs us that in the ancient times, the assumption was that a man owns the woman. But Musonius⁶ understood the goal of marriage as a space where both man and woman would form a family and share everything, from produce to offspring. The couple was to consider none of their possession as private, including their own bodies (in Balch, 2003:267).

Tanzer (1993:328) explains that in the Roman Empire the "patriarchal household" seems to have accepted emancipation of women. As a result, these emancipatory thoughts contributed to some extent toward the independence of women. After the death of the husband, women had the right to become economically independent, though in general they still had to be represented by men – the father, the brother-in-law, brothers or any other relative.⁷ The idea of coexisting with the liberation

⁵ Roman official policies allowed Jews and other ethnic groups to live according to their own customs and laws without government interferences (Wordelman, 1998:482).

⁶ (frg. 13A, trans. Lutz.)

⁷ This occurred regularly after the death of the spouses of married women. Likewise, for economic status it was conceivable that through inheritance the wife of a head of a household would become economically independent (Tanzer, 1993:328).

of women, exposes some evident differences between the Greeks, Roman and Judaic views of women.

3.2.1.2 Public sphere

According to Wordelman, (1998:482) in the Roman Empire, “women were viewed as intellectually and physically inferior beings. They were regarded as unreasonable and known as superstitious which supported the norm of male political power and authority”. These ideas reinforced the normal policies and practices of affording men positions of political power and authority. When looking at the external Roman territory, a small number of distinct women who did wield political power. It is perceived that the Roman ideal was neither worldwide nor inventible. In the same vein, Balch (2003:267) offers the same idea as Wordelman, that according to the biological contrasts between male and female, women were considered “less spirited than males”, for they were more resentful than men, more blatant and deceitful than men. So it was the responsibility of the male to control his wife and make sure that she was protected in the private sphere of the home.

The public sphere was mostly reserved for males. The social context of Rome indicates that probably all Roman wives at the time were subjected to their husbands’ authority. In some instances, after matrimony, wives were kept away from the public sphere, and they were confined to the submissive private roles, motherhood and home responsibilities (Winter, 2000:286).

Another observation is made by Saller (2006:186) who affirms that what contributed to the recognition of gender as a construction of societal ideologies were the prescriptions of jobs or roles identified as being intended respectively for men and women. Those features served to distinguish man and woman as separate groups with different roles from the home to the public sphere. Thus, the private space was specifically reserved for the female.

3.2.1.3 Private sphere

Malina & Neyrey, (1996:104) point out that the modern worldwide contention regarding gender disproportion and allied problems displays that such categories still exist and that they carry on to impact on current views of role divisions and function powerfully. It is noticeable that the values given to gender, and to male and female roles, are cultural understandings of biological⁸ differences, but also that these cultural interpretations derive from specific social systems.

⁸ Biological differences refers to how a person is assessed in terms of their physical appearance, and this same physical appearance determined what kind of role a person would be allowed to exercise. It was considered easy to determine what kind of gender was suited for certain activities due to their physical traits. Therefore, ancient Mediterranean society established strong notions of what it means to be male or female, and these concepts extended to every place, object, task, and time (Malina, & Neyrey, 1996:104).

According to Malina & Neyrey (1996:104) space is gender-divided; males operate in the public areas as their dominant arena, including the marketplaces, whereas females occupy the private world of houses, and spaces around wells, common ovens, and the like.⁹ In addition, responsibilities or jobs too are gender-specific: “males attend to open-air tasks, such as farming and hunting, whereas females attend to ‘covered-space’ tasks, such as clothing production, food preparation and child rearing”.

Wordelman (1998:483) says that Greco-Roman portrayals of a perfect wife often speak of a woman’s caring for her family. This included children, husband and her diligence in managing the work of domestic slaves, as well as her skills in spinning and weaving.¹⁰

MacHaffie (1992:10) describes the role of women as it is stated in Ketuboth 5.5:

“The work of the woman for her husband was: grinding flour, baking bread, washing clothes, cooking food, breastfeeding her child, preparing the husband’s bed for him to retire and working on wool. If she brought him one bondwoman, she did not need to grind or bake or wash; if two, she does not need to cook or give her child suck; if three she does not need to prepare his bed or work in wool; if four she may sit in a chair. But even if she brought five or a hundred bondwomen, she is compelled to work in wool, for idleness leads to unchastity”.

This description shows a paramount of activities that a woman was to perform in the house. The aims were always to satisfy the male and the others in the house. It creates the idea that women almost worked as servants, cooking for the family, graining, doing laundry, etc. She was so active that it may be difficult to infer whether she was allowed time to rest. The Ketuboth 5.5 even affirms that it did not matter what number of assistants a woman had in the house, she was always to be doing something, and otherwise she would have been regarded as lazy.

Punt (2010:156) notes that “the role of women was mostly one of subservience, yet within the balance of power between men and women, husband and wives the notion of *obsequium* as the obedience or compliance to the will of the other was important”. So the role of women was much related to their attitude of being obedient to the husband who held the legal power to control all those in the house.

⁹Xenophon (cited in Malina, & Neyrey, (1996:104-105) noted that “Human beings live not in the open air, like beasts, but obviously need shelter. Nevertheless, those who mean to win store to fill the covered place, have need of someone to work at the open-air occupations; since plowing, sowing, planting and grazing are all such open-air employments; and these supply the needful food. Then again, as soon as this is stored in the covered place, then there is need for someone to keep it and to work at the things that must be done under cover. Cover is needed for the nursing of the infants; cover is needed for the making of corn into bread, and likewise for the manufacture of clothing from the wool. And since both the indoor and the outdoor tasks demand labour and attention, God from the first adapted the woman’s nature, I think, to the indoor and man’s to the outdoor tasks and cares” (*Oeconomicus* 7.1922, Loeb).

¹⁰ Wool working was one household tasks that occupied the time of all women, except for the wealthiest women. Both literary and artistic portrayals of women of all ranks often show them with spinning in hand or working back and forth before the loom (Wordelman, (1998:483).

In terms of household structures, Bach (2003:274) contends that it is not inaccurate to affirm that in Greek context the house structures were built in such a way that they would provide a clear division to the houses in order to segregate the family's females from deeds ascribed to males, such as commerce and entertainment. By contrast the Roman houses were constructed to avoid the segregation of women, in that way to show the public status in which women contributed.¹¹

3.2.1.4 Education

A traditional official practice was recognized at the birth of a female child, where the Jewish customs required a double period of purification after the birth of a girl. When the time came for the child's education, she would discover that the rabbi disapproved of her receiving equal instruction as that afforded to a boy (Ryrie, 2011:14). Certain branches of learning such as legal studies, were entirely forbidden to women, simply because many rabbis felt that a women's mind was incapable of grasping juridical investigations.

Grammarians educated adolescent children from their homes. The lessons were constructed on philosophy, which was considered as theology and ethics. And the system of education that characterized Greco and Roma world was home education (Balch, 2003:268-269).

The processes of education were very distinct. Silence and subordination were apparently required by the rabbis in order that the teaching would be effective. The practice of silence had two aspects: learners were to be silent; teachers and all wise persons were to be silent as well. According to Spencer (1985:79), in the time of Paul, the rabbis agreed that silence was an admirable attribute for the pious scholar.

3.2.1.5 Kinship and marriage

Women citizens had one primary responsibility, viz. to marry and produce a (preferably) male heir. It was an obligation to marry, specifically a male citizen. Fathers and potential husbands arranged a marriage contract, which was an economic contract, a venture designated to produce heirs and to establish family alliances. A man was legally allowed to marry women who were not citizens, slaves or freewomen (Wordelman, 1998:483).

¹¹ Those different ways of house structures influenced in positive or negative way that the church then and now divides the space and positions for woman; for the church was seen as the House of God, with house codes borrowed from those codes that guided every household in the Greco-Roman World. Whereas in one culture (Greek) women were segregated by the design of their house in a such a way that they could avoid male activities, which included business and enjoyment or have fun alongside with men, in other (Roman) houses women would enjoy life alongside with their husbands, including participating in banquets (Valerius Maximus, 2.1.2. C.E., cited in Balch, 3003:74). Today as many household codes varies from culture to culture and families, there is still a conflict within the church when the patterns of the church in the New Testament are reinforced in relation to women's roles in the church.

In terms of definition, Malina (2001:147) describes marriage in the ancient world as strategies practiced in Israel and the Christian communities, correlating these with socio-political situations. It took place within the group and was meant to reinforce the fusion of the honour of two extended families.

Osiek and Balch (1997:38) point out that marriage was defined as “a legal and social contract between two families, and not two individuals, and the main purpose was the promotion and status of each of the families” (cited in Thatcher, 2007:26). The marriage could be dissolved by the husband without any compunction, reason, or legal process by simply producing a divorce letter, for whatever reason (Ryrie, 2011:6). The ideas above shows that it was a polygamous context, where women’s worth were so low that divorce was a normal thing that a man would ask for. Therefore if the primary goal of women in the marriage was to reproduce, one realizes how barren women were seen by their husbands and families. Women who only bore girls were equally discriminated against for they were seen as putting at risk the inheritance of the family which was to be inherited primarily by a male heir.

Analysing the right period or aged for marriage, Wordelman (1998:485) notes that regardless of a girl’s class, early motherhood was often a signification of the end of her childhood or adolescence. Throughout the empire, marriage often took place in the mid-teens in spite of physicians’ warnings about the dangers of early pregnancy. Women often died from either childbirth or diseases. High infant and maternal mortality rates made childbirth a constant experience of risk, danger and a source of grief in women’s lives.

Since the first objective of marriage was to bear heirs, Sander (2002:118) informs us that when a woman was barren, the husband had the right to divorce her, whereas the woman who bore children, especially males, attained a considerable status of nobility in the family. Female slaves were at the complete disposal of their masters. Therefore one also considers that since the slaves could serve the master sexually, if she bore children for the master, this woman would be regarded with high esteem, even more than the wife.

Ryrie (2011:14) mentions that the dignity of women was to be found in matrimonial matters. Subordination was considered to be a woman’s legal duty, and dignity evidenced by her position and activities in the home. Legally, the status of Jewish women was very low.

3.3 Church as Household in Ephesians 5:22-6:9 and in 1 Timothy 2

In this section the focus is on how the church as the household pictures the same ideals of the normal social pattern for the household, and since 1 Timothy 2 is addressing issues of church order and roles

within the church as the household of God, and the pastor being addressed in the church of Ephesus, it is important to look at the household codes addressed in Ephesians 5:22-6:9. In this text members of the household are addressed differently than in 1 Timothy 2:8-15. The instruction in Ephesians 5:21-6:9 involves all the members in the household, and it constitutes one of the texts (a part from Col. 3:18-4:1) in the New Testament that provides instructions to Christian wives in relation to their husbands, children and parents, slaves and their masters. Tanzer (1993:328) affirms that the home constituted a significant space that contributed greatly to the formation of Christianity, which began as a family focused group. Additionally, she argues that in the first century the followers of the new movement “Christianity” relied exclusively on secluded houses to organize their meetings as Christian communities, thus, house-churches. Consequently, the household operated as prototype place of worship and only later became the widespread church.¹²

MacHaffie (1992:27) points out that the early church in the Greco-Roman world had inherited the institutional structure of the Jewish synagogue, where those leading were the elders who were men, reflecting the patriarchal character of first century Judaism. Further, MacHaffie argues that women had no role in the public affairs of the synagogue, and attended worship in separate places. Living within such turbulent and volatile times, Christians may have wished to draw as little attention as possible to themselves. Therefore they adopted the reigning traditional cultural views on the expressed and assumed appropriate behaviour for women and in doing so successfully, subdued female leadership in the churches.¹³

Browning (1997:141) affirms that in the Greek and Roman world, the idea of women being under the protection of the husband, was related to the honour for man. Man held the power to control, to lead and define the life of women in order to avoid dishonour in the household. Therefore, the house codes found in Ephesians 5:21-6:9 were established to modify those pagans’ ideas. Browning understands that “be subjected to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph.5:21) constitutes the major factor to contrast the cultural idea of submission (Browning, 1997:141-142), cited in Thatcher, [2017:34]).

¹² Those domestic spaces conveyed not only physical gathering space for the church; it carried also the spiritual foundation for believers as well as the household code for the church (Tanzer, 1993:329).

¹³ The Roman imperialist society was frequently antagonistic toward Christianity, indicting it with accusations about secret cannibalism and disloyalty to the Roman Emperor, and imposing heavy punishments upon its followers. The prevailing culture was also experiencing commotion as the patriarchal patterns of Rome and Greece were being confronted by new legislation which gave women certain social rights (MacHaffie (1992:27). According to Winter (2003:280) in the first century AD, there emerged a different category of women which he calls the “new woman” through the Roman Empire. This sort of woman was distinguished by her provocative clothes and loose lifestyle. They greatly contrasted with the virtuous and shy old classical spouses. Those women followed their personal choices, social life, and sexual relationships outside marriage. Thus, this change from the ‘traditional’ conduct of wives was related by means of processes that gave females better economic freedom from their partners. Since they were also able to pay the dowry, the “new women” were enabled to finish the marriage and request the dowry back. In response in contradiction of this there arose an effort to endorse ‘Roman’ values (Winter, 2003:290).

Tzabedze (1986:86) points out that household codes seem to be making universal ethical exhortations which were suitable to respond and bring solution to problems of the time. The author of Ephesians wanted to serve the interests of disadvantaged groups (women, children, slaves) who might lay claim to freedom. The instruction is mostly a spiritual underlying principle for humility and compliance to husbands, fathers and masters. Since the marriage was an economic contract in which the couple had no say, but only to be submissive and obey the parents, there was no emotional affection.¹⁴ So, the author of Ephesians instructs the wives to be submissive or respectful to their husband, but the husbands are instructed to love their wives as they love themselves. It was not just an erotic love, but a sacrificial love as that of Christ toward the church, to the extent of giving their lives to save their wives' lives.¹⁵ This constitutes the love that Paul described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

By implication, husbands in Ephesus are instructed to be patient and kind to their wives, not to dishonour them, but rather to avoid being selfish by looking only at their own interests. They are also urged not to be easily angered with their wives, they are not supposed to keep record of wrongdoing of the wives.¹⁶ By loving their wives as their own bodies, husbands were to protect their wives and always trust them.

In relation to the children as in the Ten Commandments, they are to honour and respect the parents (mother and father).¹⁷ But the parents were bringing up the children in a manner that showed love and care for them. According to Harris (1986:81) the father, as the supreme authority in the house, was not to be as harsh on their children as some were, to the extent of putting their children to death (cited in Winter 2000:286). It was expected that the father would be patient in preparing their children in the teachings of the Lord.

In relation to masters-slaves relationship, masters were to be just with their slaves because they were both under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were not to mistreat their slaves or threaten them. For they would be accountable for that. The slaves would have found some comfort or hope in this passage as before Jesus Christ the supreme master both slave and master are equal and would be equally judged without favouritism (McGinn, 2004:52).

In terms of the function of the household code in the Early Christian community, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (cited in Tanzer, 1993:331) affirms that "there was a component of the discipleship of

¹⁴Wordelman (1998:483), Malina (2001:147).

¹⁵ Browning (1997:142) explains that the idea that husbands should love their wives, is believed to be influenced by the great commandment of Jesus, to love our neighbours as ourselves. But Browning criticises the letter to the Ephesians for "it failed to explain to the next generations that the woman can be an equal and transformative Christ figure to her husband and children" (cited in Thatcher, 2007:34).

¹⁶ Winter (2000:286) infers that there were cases in ancient times where, when the wife had done something wrong she was to be exposed to her spouse's judgment, in some cases to the family as well. Therefore, it led to her punishment.

¹⁷ Deuteronomy 5:16.

equals". And Tanzer (1993:331) believes that women were able to hold affiliation and gain leadership positions in the Christian missionary movement. As for slaves of both sexes, it was expected that they would acquire their independence by means of the Christian community. For example Philemon 1:16, where Paul pleads with Philemon to receive Onesimus, his former slave: "no longer as slave but better than slave as brother" (*NIV*). Within the household of God there was no social division among believers. They were all one in Christ, brother and sister, members of the same family, and they are all "fellow citizens in with God's people and also members of the household" (*NIV*).¹⁸

This inclusivism which characterized the Christian movement contrasted with the existing order of the Roman patriarchal household code. Whereas the Roman household code was a system that marked the different members of the house by their social status, in the Christian movement the new "household of God," there were no such distinctions; all were equal and had equal privilege before God through their Master Jesus Christ.¹⁹ This was the basis for pagan censure of the early Christian communities, claiming that they were destabilizing and destructive of the patriarchal household. For Tanzer (1993:331) the household codes were an attempt to ameliorate this subversion by demonstrating that a common framework in communities existed for both Christian ethics and those of the Greco-Roman households and status.

3.3.1 Christ the head of the household of God

The household as a social system existed under the authority of the father. So, the church as the household of God followed the same patterns as the Greek and Roman systems. In the church, Christ is placed at the head. The members are to be subjected to one another as required by Ephesians 5:21 (Finlan, 2008:163-164).²⁰

There were three dichotomies for analysing women: "Patriarchal versus the disciples of equal, public versus the private, and ascetic versus domestic life" (Nasrallah, 2006:618). The church as a movement had its beginning in the houses where they gathered, and since women were responsible for the house duties, this settlement of the church facilitated the involvement of women as leaders. But Oseik and Macdonald set the position of Christian women in leadership in the wider setting of female leadership in ancient times (Nasrallah, 2006:618).²¹

¹⁸ Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:19b.

¹⁹ The household of God converted individuals by distinction; separate and free their status that might have been restrictive, especially in relation to a household without necessarily adapting to the paterfamilias.

²⁰ (cf. McGinn, 2004:50, and Thatcher, 2017:34).

²¹ Oseik and Macdonald assume that there is need for cautious understanding of the church as secluded space open for women leadership, because according to them, the organisations of the domestic sphere in Roman settings were complex. Oseik and MacDonald argue that women leaders were not only abstemious, but were married and widows. Therefore, in

Arnold (1989:144) narrates that the household codes of Ephesians 5:21-6:9 demonstrate that the sovereign rule of Christ is relevant, and essential to every area of the life of the believer in western Asia Minor. The power of God had not come only to remove the hostile power prevalent among competing individuals, but to enable them to conduct themselves according to proper Christian ethics in the households. The Ephesians' household distinguished itself from others (e.g. Colossians and 1 Peter) by an extended section on the relationship between husband and wife in marriage (Eph. 5:21-33) (Arnold 1989:144). For Pervo (2010:86) the church should follow the model of the well-managed Greco-Roman household,²² envisioned as a healthy organism which functions soundly when each member performs its obligations in relation to each other in the same house (masters, slaves, children, father, husbands and wives).

In this regard, as with any household code during the Greco-Roman era regarding women, the husband is expected to be the highest authority, and the woman is meant to be subjected to him. Polaski (2005:99-100) argues that the Ephesian version of the household code elaborates the basic structure. It emphasises the mutuality implied elsewhere in the code by an opening statement, “be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph.5:21). The relationship between husband and wife is considered to be a metaphor for Christ and the Church. The direction of the comparison is reversed, making the relationship between Christ and the church a model for human marital relationships. This competes against the idea of subordination of the wife to the husband and shows that they are to be mutually subordinate to one another as partners, that they should work together and respect one another, for Christ is the highest authority over them, both wife and the husband.

Kroeger (1986:226) notes that Timothy was told to stop the heresy of false teachers and in 2:12 the literary Paul takes the responsibility to prohibit the teaching by women. This may indicate that these problems and the need for their resolution were critical. The opponents seem to be members of the Christian community. For Kroeger the religious power in Ephesus and its environment may have played a part in the heretical attacks on the pastorate and its associated practices, and specifically on the prohibition against women with respect to teaching.²³ The history of Anatolia (Asia Minors) and

that context, masculine language should be understood to include females. Their conclusion is that women played a part in all activities of the Christian house church (Nasrallah, 2006:618).

²² Meyers, Kraemer, & Craven (2001:487) have the view that 1 Timothy 2:9-15 presents a customary rule that governed the life of an early Christian community, just as the church at the Ephesus, a multicultural city in Asia Minor, in which variety of religious group were active. Thus, as these rules change easily from an initial focus on worship to more general conduct, it is possible that they are the result of first century household codes, which was a general regulation that governed female behaviour.

²³ Kroeger (1994:50) affirms that in terms of religion, there is a pivotal element from the interior of Asia Minor to consider, namely mother goddess cults. Thus, the maternal aspect was glorified in a manner almost unknown further west. It was believed that from a mother goddess came all life and the dead were gathered again to her womb (Kroeger 1994:51). One can start to understand the rhetorical situation of (1 Tim. 2:13-14) where a man was formed first, then the women and not the other way around as in some of the religious cults of the city. The worship of Artemis at Ephesus was part of the religious life in Greco-Roman world where each city had its own deity whom they honoured in public worship (cf

of Ephesus indicates that religion had a great influence in Ephesus. And this is important for the Pastoral Epistles, for it is concerned with similar religious problems as those shown in Ephesus (Kroeger, 1986:228).²⁴

Within the larger context of the letter, it is considered to refer to false teaching, which identified women as the main participants and the tools to increase those heretical teachings. Therefore, the false teachers persuaded women in particular to violate the norms by means of approved traditional practices in direct defiance of the honourable behavioural patterns of women (Scholer, 1986:203). The context of 1 and 2 Timothy suggests that the women involved were a special target of male heretics and were probably being used by them as a means for infiltration into the immediate religious circles. The objection in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 is a part of paragraph (9-15) that is devoted exclusively to the issue of women in the Ephesian church.

So, the desire for intellectual knowledge was a privilege that women were getting from the new group of teachers. It created a radical change in the early church and Christian history for women. For the pastorate, there was requirement for women to acquire solid doctrine if they were to teach.

3.3.1.1 *Responsibility of the husband*

The household codes in Ephesus instructs husbands and wives on how to live as a couple under the model of Jesus Christ and the Church. The writer in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 reinforces the instruction but in terms of gender role division. The instruction becomes more specific and focuses on the gathering of worshippers in 1 Timothy 2:8-9, urging the congregants, male and female, on how to conduct themselves in their meetings. In the early days of Christianity, there were probably wives who, in exercising prophetic or other gifts, were seen to be teaching or exhorting their husbands (1 Corinthians 14:29-36). This might conceivably have been acceptable to the church, but since the church was also one more form of the household, the practice was too easily understood to be subversive of the good order of the household, and therefore against the authority of the paterfamilias. For a church concerned to be seen as supportive of what was good for society, the only solution was to have the church order conform to that of the well-ordered households, providing and deriving

Wordelman, 1998:485). According to Kroeger (1994:52) there was a shrine to the Ephesian Artemis in every Greek city throughout the Mediterranean world; and in private devotion she was the most worshiped of all the gods.

²⁴ Arnod (1989:21) affirms that the cult of Artemis was so powerful that it did not only influence the social life but also the culture in Ephesus. An unsurpassed cosmic power was attributed to the goddess. Her power was symbolically represented to her worshippers by certain ornaments of her dress and necklaces.

support from the Roman pattern for households (1 Timothy.3:4-5, 12) and then subsequent to that, to forbid wives to teach and exercise authority over their husbands (Gaventa & Petersen, 2010: 393).²⁵

3.3.1.2 Responsibility of the wife

Women are to be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the household as Christ is (Finlan, 2008:163-164).

For Tanzer (1993:329) Ephesians 5:22-6:9 illustrates the place of women in the first century church context as subordinate to the male/husband. Thus, she suggests that this portrayal of early Jewish women should be viewed with suspicion from the outset.

In the ancient households the male head of the family, the paterfamilias, had all the authority and power, and this was to be considered as essential for the good order of the household, which was in and of itself the basic unit of the city and the state. Consequently the proper relation of the wife to her husband was one of submission, and the same word “ὑποταγή” is introduced in Ephesians 5:5:22. The reason might have been that the first churches all met in private homes (Gaventa & Petersen, 2010: 393).

3.3.2 Women in church 1 Timothy 2:11-12

The household as a social structure, including women subjected to the male (her husband) by being required to remain inside the domestic space, to look after their homes and give birth must be considered as problematic from the perspective of the reader. For the church did not contradict these patterns. Women are told by Paul in Ephesians 5:21-29 and Colossians 3:20-23 to be submissive to their husbands, as the children are to submit to the father’s authority in the house.²⁶

For MacDonald (1996:30), women in Greco-Roman society were associated with the private domain of the home. Very early therefore in church history, Christians articulated specific ideas about gender arrangements within the home, and about the model behaviour of women in the home. Within the church community, marriage sometimes went beyond the immediate community: once a household of non-believers had been infiltrated by one Christian, there was hope for the further expansion of the group as whole.

Scholer (1986:202) argues that the progression of thought in 1 Timothy 2:9-15 moves from concern for women’s adornment, (verses 9-10) to concern for the submission of women and their subjection

²⁵ Christians were concerned that outsiders might perceive Christianity as a threat to the social fabric of the Roman Empire by corrupting the household order as arranged through these codes. Thus, the adoption of the household code by early Christianity was a defence against that objection.

²⁶ According to Ryrie (2011:13) the distinctiveness and dignity of women are well-illustrated in the private sphere. Those are expressed on remarkable women such as Sarah, Rebekka, Leah, Rachel and others in Jewish history.

to silence in public worship (verses 11-12). According to the researcher these concerns constitute two sides of the same coin within the cultural inequalities of the first century CE, that reveal male dominance and the belief that women's subordination and their subjection to inferiority were legitimate. MacDonald (1996:30) notes that scholars now recognize that because many important activities took place in a sphere traditionally associated with women, it implies that the possibility emerged there for women's involvement in other male-dominated activities, including leadership. During the first century CE, gender roles started to change in many ways. The merging of the public and private sphere in early Christianity heightened the possibility of women assuming leadership roles in these communities of faith (MacDonald, 1996:36.)

There used to be two types of worship: private and public. Private worship was done by a group of people belonging to the same society, social class, jobs or economic functions. In this worship, women often participated alongside men and sometimes acted as benefactors or leaders. In contrast, during public worship it was appropriate for men to participate in such services, since it involved public space, but also money and other prerequisites for festival and sacrifices. Nevertheless some wealthy women could participate even though facing some resistance (Polaski: 2005:39-40).²⁷

The commandments of verse 2:11-12 agree with the commonly accepted standards of behaviour and expectations for women in both Jewish and Greco-Roman culture (see. Fee & Robert, 2011:687).²⁸ Accordingly, these verses (1 Timothy 2:11-12) strengthen honourable patterns of behaviour in response to false teachings and its intolerance of women's leadership roles. For Scholer, the statements in verse 2:11-12 are in consequence to the instructions envisioned for a particular situation in Ephesus where false teaching was associated with women. The commandments are trained against women, who have been affected adversely by the false teachings.

Polaski (2005:34) argues that formal education for women was generally seen as unnecessary. It was accepted that the girl learned from her mother or other females in the household what the tasks essential to the running of a home were. More formal education was reserved for males.

For Lea and Griffin, (1992:97) the church life that this section presupposes allows more congregational involvement than that of most 20th century churches. It is probable that various

²⁷ Women served as religious employees in some Greco-Roman temples in unskilled or sexual tasks. But it would be incorrect to classify women's public roles in religious practice as primarily or even largely cultic prostitution. Women engaged in a wide-ranging selection of positions ranging from forced service and outright abuse to positions of considerable respect, honour and influence (Polaski, 2005:39).

²⁸ Fee and Robert (2011:687) contend that verse 9-15 adequate the cultural standards of the first century A.D. but they suggest that modern readers must not terminate this teaching as culturally irrelevant.

speakers arose to teach, to exhort and to prophesy; and in this situation Paul recommended that the women learn rather than teach.

3.4 Adam and Eve analogies: Genealogies 1 Timothy 2:13-14

The question of origins and first causes was active throughout the ancient world. False teachers of the Pastorals were deeply involved in divisive controversies over genealogy (1 Timothy 1:4). Kroeger (1986:232) notes that some of the questions concerning genealogies in those days were similar to contemporary ones; who we are and where we come from, and so forth. These were concerns not only for the Gnostics but those of other philosophic systems. Prominent in such thinking was the “the feminine spiritual principles”. The Goddess Isis was represented as proclaiming herself as being “the one who was in the beginning, the one who first came into existence on earth” (Kroeger, 1986:232). Therefore, this female goddess challenged the concept that God is a female and not male as it understood traditionally by Christians. And this idea led the pastor to affirm that “there is only one God and one Mediator between mankind, the man Christ Jesus” (NIV).²⁹ The other claim by Isis the goddess was “I am all that has been and is and will be and my robe no mortal has yet uncovered”. She was said to have generated a son without male support and declared “I have played the part of man though I am a woman” (Kroeger, 1986:232).³⁰

The concept of the woman and her seed as first cause was in harmony with many religious views of Asia Minor and especially of Ephesus, where the maternal principle reigned supreme, but other religions such as the Mithras cult, disregarded these ideas (Kroeger, 1986:233). Ramsay (1906:125) argued that “it was not by accident that Virgin Mary was declared Theotokos (bearer of God) at Ephesus, where Artemis herself bore the same title” (cited in Kroeger 1986:233). The rationale for this belief probably stemmed from a time when the generational masculine role was not simply assumed, and the great mother was considered the all sufficient source of life and being (Kroeger, 1986:234).

According to Kroeger (1986:234), in Gnostic cosmology, female activities were often responsible for the creation of the material universe, and Eve was a potent force. She was said to possess abilities to procreate without a man. She was the one who impaled her own doctor. Eve also found a place among the celestial beings in the gnostic world. She was identified as both power and the daughter of power.

²⁹ 1 Timothy 2:5.

³⁰ The claim that she might have been eternal, reinforces the pastor’s arguments in 1 Timothy 2:5-6 that the man Christ Jesus is the Mediator of mankind before God, and this same man Christ Jesus, offered himself as ransom for every people. The author argues that “this has now been witnessed to at the proper time” (NIV). The author is trying to persuade the audience that what is saying is not a myth, but a true fact that has happened. has it footprint on history and it has been witnessed by people.

She was said to have pre-existed before Adam and gained knowledge that she would later impart to him.³¹

In another account, Eve was involved in the creation activities of John 1:1-3 and became the mother of everything.³² And in the tradition of the great mother-goddess her maternity expanded to both gods and men (Kroeger, 1986:235).

In Jewish genealogies, Adam and Eve would hold an important place; and Eve as the one through whom Adam appeared could not fail to be an inflammatory topic. For the theological system of the Ephesian opponents included direct contradictions of the orthodox Scriptures and it is termed “opposition of falsely called Gnosis” (Kroeger, 1986:236).

Kroeger’s (1986:237) position is that 1 Timothy 2:12 prohibits false teachings and the propagation of the feminine genealogical myth in which the woman was the originator of man. Verses 13-14 being the reason of prohibition, it also represents a refutation of a myth that directly contradicted a biblical account. According to the biblical or traditional narrative, Adam came first, then Eve afterwards. This argument refutes any propagation of false knowledge that Eve came first and not Adam, therefore challenging the submission of female to male. For the pastorate since Adam as representative of male was made first, therefore Eve owes respect to Adam. Thus wife must submit to the husband and not rule over him.

Scholer (1986:210) informs us that in the Jewish tradition Genesis 3 was usually understood to emphasise Eve’s culpability for sin and death. One of the better-known texts was Sirach 25:24, which asserts that “from woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die”.³³

Scholer (1986:211) claims that, in terms of rhetoric, Paul used 1 Timothy 2:13-14 as argument to suit the point he wished to make, namely “let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit woman to teach or to have authority over a man but to be in silence” (*NKJV*).³⁴ And from this came numerous inferences about the inferiority and subordination of women.

³¹ According to the Gnostic writings in the first century CE Eve was labelled as the inventor of Adam and that she transferred onto him the gift of life. “Sophia sent her descendant Zoe, who is named Eve as a mentor to raise up Adam in whom there was no soul, so that those whom he would produce might become vessels of light. When Eve saw her co-likeness downcast, she empathised him and she said, 'Adam live, rise up upon the earth.' And her word became a deed straightaway. For Adam rose up, and as soon as he opened his eyes, he saw her, and said “you will be called “the mother of the living” because you are the one who gave me life” (cited in Kroeger, 1986:235).

³² Seduced by Yabaoth, she gave birth to Jave and Elohim - all three names for the deity of the OT.

³³ Philo supports the idea that the serpent communicates to the woman because she is more customized to be tricked than man; for she easily gives space and is taken in by credible myths which resemble the truth (Scholer, 1986:210).

³⁴ 1 Timothy 2:11-12.

3.5 Honour and shame in the households 1 Timothy 2:8-15

Moxnes (1996:19) states that in both past and present Mediterranean societies, honour and shame have played a dominant role in public life. Honour and shame are not fixed, unchangeable concepts, but rather expressions of social and cultural relations. Thus, different groups and classes struggle over the definition of honour and shame (Moxnes, 1996:26).

MacDonald (1996:27) argues that in recent years biblical academics have turned to anthropological readings on honour and shame and have found these concepts enlightening. As a result, this led “one commentator to declare confidently that honour and shame are the core values of the Mediterranean world” MacDonald (1996:27). Thus, honour and shame as vital features of the social system will be analysed in relation to the structure and stratification, gender differentiation, masculine embodiment of honour, and gender division of space into male and female areas within 1 Timothy 2:8-15.

3.5.1 Brief definitions

According to Barton, (2001:273) the ancient idea of honour was fixed in the Roman social system, where no-one’s position was fixed, excepting those of the enslaved and defeated. The best word that Greek villagers, regarding themselves and the world, could find in discussing honour and shame-related matters, was “tension”.

DeSilva (2000:25) understands honour, within the first century Mediterranean societies, as an active and social concept that encompasses the individual’s self-perception as well as the way a person is perceived by the group. The ancients considered honour as being the core and definition of being. For Malina (2001:30) honour could be defined as publicly standard behaviour that was distinct according to gender status.

The male reputation was linked to female sexual conduct.³⁵ Distinctive to the Mediterranean world in which 1 Timothy was written, women were valued especially for their chastity, an immaterial resource (MacDonald, 1996:28). These values served as fundamental standards concerning the manner in which the first century social and cultural spheres and values were interrelated. These were social and cultural values that were “determinative of a person’s identity and social status” (Simkins, 2000:603, cited in Visser 2015:47).³⁶ According to MacDonald, (1996:28) those values were embodied in both male and female bodies. Honour was embodied in the male, and shame in the

³⁵ When male are not successful in maintaining the chastity of females, their honour is distinguished negatively in relation to other males.

³⁶ “The honour and shame value system was the key league that determined what was considered as honourable or dishonourable”. Reference?

female. The male honour is to preserve the shame of kinswomen; while that of the female is demonstrated through sexual chastity. This idea is supported by Plevnik (1998:107) who affirms that honour is primarily a group value. Within the framework of kinship groups and gender-based society, honour is a value exemplified by adult men. Individual men must attain honour in public competitions and consequently it must be claimed, gained and defended over against one's contemporaries.

According to Moxnes (1996:20), honour can be ascribed or acquired. Ascribed honour is inherited by birth. The acknowledgement of honour is consequently accompanied by a person's lineage or parentage. A person receives honour just by being born into a certain family. DeSilva (2000:28) argues that acquired honour is afforded when a person is firmly "virtuous" in their relations. For example, in 1 Timothy 2:10, 15b this can be seen by the manner in which the text exhorts women to conduct themselves in the household codes with good deeds, as appropriate behaviour for them. Secondly, honour can be won and lost in the social game of challenge and riposte. MacDonald (1996:164) argues that the prohibition of women in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is concerned with the public visibility of women which are intertwined with definitions of what constituted women and their piety (religiosity). Men and women are assigned appropriate roles for ritual settings involving prayers and teaching.

3.5.2 Appeal for cultural expectation for woman in 1 Timothy 2:9-10, 15

According to MacDonald (1996:29) church women could be accused of neglecting their homes by being absent too frequently from the home, negligent in domestic affairs, and of being sexually immoral.

In 1 Tim 2:12, the instruction against women teaching indicates the differences between public and private spaces for women. The silence and modest attire of women act as an appropriate barrier between honourable men and chaste women during attention-drawing acts of worship (MacDonald, 1996:164). The worshiping woman's reverence is defined by her subordinate status in the household and the role as a child bearer.

3.5.2.1 *Childbearing as appropriate virtue for women*

Polaski (2005:34) informs us that a woman usually became pregnant with her first child while still in her mid-teens, with a body still in childhood with related effects, and little or no knowledge of prenatal self-care. Thus, childbearing was the greatest threat to the life of a woman who survived her own childhood. Furthermore, it is little wonder in this context that many children were nurtured by stepmothers and many young brides entered a household in which children were already present. Kroeger & Kroeger (1998:171) explain that childbirth was sometimes a hazardous event in the life of women and many succumbed, both Christians and non-Christians.

Childbearing was considered to be the major threat to the life of a woman once had survived adulthood and therefore an experience that many women were afraid of (Polaski, 2005:104).³⁷

Kroeger & Kroeger (1998:172-173) believe that the call for childbearing was however related to the repudiation of the false teachers, for some teaching of the Gnostics was that “a women who retains her identity as a woman, being capable of bearing children, simply cannot be saved and has no part in the realm of light”. Since in the Gnostic³⁸ teaching salvation was achieved through masculinity or at least portraying masculine attributes, the literary Paul is trying to disprove this teaching by affirming that women can be saved by keeping their femininity and motherhood.

Farmer, McEvenue, & Levoratti, (1998:1738) suggest that when we take the verse out of the immediate context we find that the customary rules that applied to the behaviour of the women generally, and not only to Christian women, are evident. Thus it is important to know whether the author is relying on fixed traditions (see 1 Peter 3:3-4), taking the viewpoint of Hellenistic-Roman ethics, which contrasted virtuous women with those who were simply concerned about their appearance (see 1 Timothy.2:10). Church was considered as a public space, hence the reason that those universal regulations were to be taken seriously.

For Scholer (1986:2001) the instruction regarding women’s dress and adornment are given without qualification (1 Timothy 2:9-10), and it is parallel to 1 Timothy 2:15 in affirming high standards of cultural decency so that the church will be above reproach. By implication these standards are in contrast to the opposing heretical teachings. In terms of rhetoric, the writer used this language in alignment with the way in which the recipients were expected to act within the honour and shame value system. Thus, the orator indicated the most honourable, desired and virtuous ways to behave and also the manner in which women could achieve such honour. The author clearly indicated which kind of behaviour could lead to honour and which to shame.

This commandment in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 is confirmed when the injunctions about women’s ornamentation and clothing are understood in the broader situation of the church in terms of both Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures. Scholer (1986:201) helps us to understand that the extra-biblical literature within this cultural context also favoured modesty and rejected expensive clothes, hairstyling, gold jewellery and pearls. Furthermore, these Jewish and pagan passages regularly judged such external adornment and argued that the women’s inner beauty and chastity should be her real adornment. The basis for rejection of the external adornment was part of woman’s submission to her

³⁷In Jewish tradition, for instance, women were threatened with death in childbirth if they failed to observe certain religious obligations (Kroeger & Kroeger, 1998:171).

³⁸ To bring a child into the world was to create a serious spiritual impediment (Kroeger & Kroeger, 1998:175)

husband and a recognition of her place among the men in general. Women were prescribed the conduct that agreed with their status in family and society. And in the context of the church this conduct had to agree with their salvation. This consists of continually living in faith, love, and holiness with modesty.

3.5.2.2 *Understanding modesty and self-control verse 9, 15*

Meyers, Kraemer, & Craven (2001:487) inform us that the instruction that a women maintain a modest physical appearance during worship was not unusual for the time. Winter (2003:101) tells us that modesty with its equivalent Latin “pudor” was used in relation to those parts of the female body that must be covered in the respectable Roman society. The call for modesty in this passage would have been well-understood in the first century in the way it was expressed in terms of both respectable apparel³⁹ and adornment achieved by means of good deeds (1 Tim. 2:10).

Winter (2003:102) argues that modesty represented the cardinal virtue for women in the ancient world. Phinty⁴⁰ (in Winter, 2003:102) confirms that the virtue most appropriate to a women is self-control; for it enabled her to love and honour her husband,⁴¹ so 1 Timothy 2:15 specifically highlights the cardinal virtues of self-control. Verse 9 emphasises the modest adornment and restraint reflected in the dress code of the respectable Roman wife; and verse 15 concludes with an instruction to continue to live with “self-control”, as the acknowledged virtue in the first century societies of Rome and the East.

Pervo (2010:91) argues that major efforts were required to control women’s labile nature, including substantial exercise in self-control, in any case a general virtue. For women, self-control however often came down to modesty and chastity. Bruce Winter’s argument is that Paul (and the Empire) was challenged by the emergence of “new women,” who countered the traditional roles by actively participating in the public life. In response to the emergence of these new women, the Pastor and the Empire were forced to respond by imposing firmer regulations that really reinscribed older patterns

³⁹ Winter (2003:99) additionally elucidates that first century wives, both in figure type and literature, are documented as having worn unique outfits demanding a considerable amount of fabric. This type of clothing envisioned to signal modesty which was the mark of married women. Therefore, married women had a special form of dress which indicated the new spirit of morality in Rome. The dress was the *stola*, a large sleeveless over garment with fine shoulders, which possibly hid women’s arms indicating the mature woman in that social status. Thus, in the context of social legislation the *stola* became a symbol of female virtue and modesty. For the honouring matron, wearing the *stola* was not merely an honour but a protection from unwanted attention.

⁴⁰ Phinty, “On Woman’s Moderation,” in Thesleff, Texts, 151ff.

⁴¹ Meyers, Kraemer, & Craven (2001:487) both Christian and Roman writers commended modesty as a typical female quality in the Greco-Roman world. It was furthermore emphasised as feminine virtue in the honorary inscriptions of the period.

and norms (2003:204). The Christian matron's modesty was set against the antithetical behaviour of the promiscuous wife in the public life (Winter 2003:203).

3.6. Conclusion

In this line of social, historical and political context of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 reasoning and understanding of texts, the construction of women should be regarded as one particular aspect of such textually constructed power relations. In the first chapter the text was read in terms of its textual context or exegetical analyses. In this chapter the analysis focused on the socio-historical context of the text. The chapter concludes that the writer is fully ingrained in his context of looking at the challenges of the churches, that he virtually follows the prevailing social patterns regarding the role of women and men to address the situation in the household of God. There are many instances that the reader would notice that the author is correcting certain patterns of behaviour and teachings which are opposite to sound doctrine. Thus, the writer deliberately adjusts the behaviour of women in the church in accordance with the household codes of Roman Empire. Women are exhorted to behave in a manner that does not bring shame to the household of God. The writer also appeals for honourable behaviour expected from women in public and the private sphere. With the socio-historical context of the text in mind, Chapter 4 will focus on gender rhetorics of 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

Chapter 4: Gendered rhetoric in 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3 the aim was to indicate that the text in 1 Timothy entails a broad scale of division based on gender identities. To achieve that purpose, it analyzed the social construction of the household code within the Greco-Roman world, and its significance for the well-ordered society in which each one knew and played their roles. In comparison with the church as the household of God, the research demonstrated a number of similarities in terms of gender roles, especially those that a woman was supposed to play. The text tends to certify the idea that women must have different roles to play than men and that women were made differently.

In order to address this complex issue of conceptualizing the manner in which the gender roles were performed in the first century world as it is rhetorically constructed by the text in 1 Timothy 2, the gendered rhetoric of the text will be discussed regarding the manner of lifestyles or lived realities of the first century Greek and Roman worldview.

Chapter 4 seeks to explore the implicitly gendered rhetoric in the text and discuss the diverse issues involved in interpretation as they relate to gender roles in that context. According to Vander Stichele and Penner (2009:3) examining ancient and early Christian discourse and “identity formation” helps us understand the ways and methods in which people both past and present have framed and expressed gender as part of cultural identity. Vander Stichele and Penner believe that the socio-historical context of a work contributes much toward understanding its meaning.

Scholer (1986:215) affirms that all interpretation is socially located, individually skewed, and ecclesiastically and theologically conditioned. Thus, all biblical interpreters, regardless of where they stand on the issue of women in ministry, have been deeply influenced by both sexism and misogyny of the past (and often, present) culture. The authors of biblical texts lived and thought within particular historical social settings; but the biblical texts themselves are addressed to various historical settings with many different purposes.

While rhetoric is defined as the art of persuasion, it uses gender language to refer to the cultural constructs of masculinity and femininity imposed upon biological sex in a particular culture.

In the text of 1 Timothy 2 one encounters a range of social and cultural expectations regarding gender and in particular, regarding women. These cultural and social expectations are important within the discourse analysis of the text within the Greco-Roman views of gender, with specific emphasis given to the rhetorical inflections of gendered discourses, and the significance of gender within the social

body of the empire, and how gender informs disciplinary, individual and communal Christian bodies. Boundaries regarding cultural, political and social aspects are critical elements in the formation of early Christian concepts and language, and these boundaries can be perceived to function in multiple ways in early Christian discourse (Vander Stichele & Penner, 2009:45- 48).

4.2 Greco-Roman views of gender

Schüssler Fiorenza (1994:3) proposes a fundamental change in how we understand and employ the biblical texts, based on a critical understanding of language as a form of power. Gendered images have been effective in perpetuating both the positive and negative connotations that we associate with gender. It also indicates how the constructs of masculinity and femininity contextualize constructions of social roles, power, status and sexual allure. The authors of the New Testament portray women and men differently, with specific roles and purposes. Traditionally, women have been seen and judged as people worth seeing in a particular place, while men act as spectators, and those views affect relations between men and women and also the relations between women among themselves.

Thurston (1998:8) believes that women in the New Testament period lived in the Greco-Roman world, and their culture was deeply influenced by Hellenism. In the same way, in the early Christian community women were mostly Jewish. So as the NT writers composed their literature, they drew on their social, cultural and political background.

It has been the main interest of numerous studies in modern linguistics, particularly since the 1980s, to analyse gender-specific language and modes of communication. To this end, it is the aim of this study to bring together relevant metalinguistic passages and provide a close reading in order to obtain a more differentiated impression of the ancients' views on gender-specific language. Vander Stichele & Penner (2009:49) argue that it is important to understand the two issues in Greco-Roman world. Firstly, it is imperative to define how people in that context read and viewed the body as well as how they interpreted human performative acts. And secondly, there is also a need to participate in the depiction of bodies in narrative and visual display.

4.2.1 What it means to be masculine or feminine

Conway (2008:6) believes that the examination of the power of ancient gender ideologies in the Greco-Roman era, will make it easier for the reader to recognize the multiple ways in which the present gender principles function in our own lives. Consequently, an enquiry of the construction of masculinity in the New Testament opens new perceptions on the familiar question of masculinity in connection with culture.

Malina (1996:100) informs us from physiognômonia (physiognomics), those documents containing sources of information on of how persons were understood in antiquity, that the ancients believed that behaviour depended upon how a living being was physically constituted; that is, function followed form. To know a person would have meant to get to know his or her generation, geography, and gender.

4.2.1.1 Masculinity

Payne (2009:32) affirms that in line with Plato, Aristotle affirms that the male is by nature superior and the female inferior; the male rules the female subjects; for the male is by nature better fitted to command than the female since the male is rational and the female is irrational. In terms of their virtues, they are also qualified differently; for man has cause to command and woman's path is one of subordination, and Plato goes so far as to describe a female as a deformed male.

Conway (2008:15) argues that to be a man in the Greco-Roman world meant understanding one's place in a logically-ordered, hierarchical cosmos in which free men were placed at the top and what fell beneath could all be classified as "un-men". She argues that the New Testament writers inevitably involved and even invoked the predominant gender ideology of the Roman Empire, whether consciously or unconsciously. Manliness, in these accounts, was achieved by self-control over passions such as lust, anger, and greed. It was also gained through manly displays of courage, the endurance of pain, and death on behalf of others.

The hegemonic¹ masculinity that is evident in the Greco-Roman period was a masculinity largely defined by the elite men of the empire, exemplified by especially Caesar Augustus. As the first emperor, Augustus built on longstanding Greco-Roman traditions of the ideal ruler to build an image of himself as the ideal man.² The writers of the New Testament could hardly hope to compete against the imperial machinery in presenting their own manly depiction of Jesus. Still, their convictions about the power and authority of Jesus led to a body of literature that resisted the emperor while promoting its own version of an imperial ruler (Conway 2008:177-178).

¹ Hegemonic masculinity is understood as the practice that promotes the dominant social position of men and subordinates the social position of women, how and why men maintain dominant social roles over women and other gender identities which are perceived as feminine in society. It is criticized for being framed within a heteronormative conception of gender that essentializes male-female gender difference (Connell, and Messerschmidt, 2005:832-834).

² Conway (2008:177-178) explains that Augustus needed the means to exhibit this image across the empire, and those exhibitions were validated through indigenous elite men expecting to increase their individual prestige *vis-à-vis* acknowledgement of the ideal manliness of Augustus and other imperial leaders.

In his pursuit of being portrayed as the ideal, typical man, Augustus emulated the sentiments expressed by Aristotle many centuries earlier. Aristotle's (cited in Vander Stichele & Penner, 2009:72) says that:

Since every household is part of the state, and these relationships are part of the household, and the excellence of the past must have regard for that of the whole, it is necessary for education of both children and women to be carried on with regards to the form of constitution. And it must necessarily make a difference; for the women are half of the free population, and the children grow up to be the partners in the government of the state. (*Politics* 1 260b 12-21).

It is explained from these arguments that male citizens, characterized the group in positions of power; in the homes they were the heads, masters, superiors, husbands; and in the state they were the ones to participate in positions of leadership and outdoor activities.

Connell³ describes masculinities as not static, but rather singularities that are subjected to changes over the times in different social and cultural contexts.⁴ She notes that masculinity is “inherently relational” and does not exist except in relation to femininity. For Connell, “masculinity” is not a singular concept, but one embedded in cultural settings; and it needs to be studied in relations to hegemony, subordination, complicity and marginalisation (cited in Visser, 2015:5).

4.2.1.2 Femininity

Thurston (1998:21) affirms that the Roman legal system regarding women, rested on “*infirmitas sexus*”, the weakness of the sex, and mandated that women be under the custody of males. Payne (2009:32-33) informs us that Hellenism had a broad misogynist shadow. Plato⁵ calls men superior to women. Women are measured as being weaker than men. Malina (1996:103) argues that first century Mediterranean people assumed that some species were deliberately and inevitably of a lower order; and this was deemed to be the case for slaves, females and barbarians, while others were superior, into which category fell those who were free, male and Greek. This was the way nature had determined it to be, as they believed.⁶ For that, these ideologies were much patent for almost every

³ Connell (1995:71), states that “actions are configured in larger units and when one thinks about “masculinity” and “femininity”, configurations of gender practice are designated. Masculinities can therefore be understood as “gender projects, dynamic arrangements of social practice through time wherewith individuals and societies are constructed. Thus, gender shapes patterns of behaviour and lifestyles.” (cited in Visser, 2015:83)

⁴ Vander Stichele & Penner (2009:67) explain that in terms of performance, both man and woman could display masculine and feminine characteristics and the balance between the two determined where one ended up on the male or female scale. In this case discipline and self-control were ultimately important as one's identity was scrutinized and could always be questioned on the basis of one's appearance and behaviour.

⁵ Ask the question “do you know of anything practiced by mankind in which the masculine sex does not surpass the female on all positions” (Payne, 2009:32).

⁶ Nature always supports the existence of the group, not the individual. Mediterraneans developed clear notions of what it meant to be male or female, and these notions extended to every place, object, task, and time (Malina 1996:100-104)

citizen living in that world. Everyone knew who they were because nature provided that way, and everyone was expected to live according to those patterns.

Woman was qualified by the same categories as slaves and Gentiles, for they were all considered inferior, strangers, and subordinated to someone. The woman was a wife to the man/husband and thus considered as a stranger since she belonged to a different family; the slaves to their masters, and the foreigner as inferior to the citizens (Vander Stichele & Penner 2009:70).

When discussing the nature of women, Jones (2000:23) finds two crucial questions: is being a woman the product of nature? Does womanhood express an inborn, natural female disposition or follow from socially learned behaviour? Essentialism believes in an unchanging core of womanhood which signals two features of essentialism, that is, its naturalism and determinism. An essentialist view of women historically appeals to a natural state of affairs as the basis for claims about universal features. It was believed that women are not the product of cultural training, learned conventions or social expression but rather naturally the different way they are. Determinism assumes that the essential or true woman is not an abstract ideal that woman should try to emulate. The essences or universals describe what women are inherently, whether or not they choose to acknowledge these aspects (Jones, 2000:27).

Schüssler Fiorenza (1994:4) opines that woman is not a unitary classification but rather ambiguously and ideologically constructed. For her the category of woman/women as paralleled to those of gender, race, or class is rhetorically-politically shaped in the interest of relationships of dominations and subordination.

These arguments agrees with Malina's (1996:105) description of the female in the first century Mediterranean world, which held that creation itself indicates that humans, likewise,⁷ are created in vertical arrangements or hierarchies that account for the qualitative difference among them. Every significant status clearly consists of a different type of human nature, with different endowments, capabilities, natural functions, and attributes. Now because human males and human females are two species, even if they are of the same genus, they naturally have to be ranked vertically. Feminists see these forms of thinking as sex-gender scheme, and critique these views because it makes women's historical subordination to men appear like a natural fact rather than a cultural product (Jones, 2000:29).

Karant-Nunn, and Wiesner-Hanks, (2003:15) point out that in his formal theses, Martin Luther expressed the traditional view that women by their nature were inferior to men. Luther's few commentaries on the first three chapters of Genesis show his opinion that "through their participation

⁷ In comparison to the animals.

in the fall women became subordinate to their husbands;" and he was convinced that "from the moment of Creation, Eve was a lesser being than Adam".

Schüssler Fiorenza (2007:253, cited in Penner & Lopez, 2012:42) demands that readers of rhetoric engage the ethics engendered by the biblical text. This means that there is a need to understand the implications of those instances of gendered language in the text which were mostly the tools used to inscribe biblical truth concerning groups or the community of believers.

Thurston (1998:20) informs us that under the rule of Demetrius of Phalerum (317-307 B.C.), a board of regulators of women was established in Athens to censor women's conduct. Stoicism, the most popular philosophy at the time, encouraged traditional roles for women and because of its influence, the Romans came to regard marriage and bearing children as a moral and patriotic duty.

So, in terms of the body politic, women represented the group that was to be ruled over. Vander Stichele & Penner (2009:71)⁸ argue that "women, children and slaves belonged to the categories of the ruled in the context of the household", and as the household illustrates the model for every balanced society, it is perceivable that in the public sphere, women still belonged to ruled groups, who were to be passive, submissive, subjugated by their rulers.

4.2.2 Rhetorical inflections of gendered discourses

Vander Stichele & Penner (2009:101) suggest that it is important to understand how groups such as Christians shaped and constructed their ideas. Early Christian discourse included cultural, political and social boundaries, upon which they would draw their perspectives on gender, sex, and sexuality; and culture was one of the bases on which first century Mediterranean world and NT writers constructed their rhetoric in order to be convincing to their audience. Vander Stichele & Penner (2009:103) argue that discourse on gender and sexuality arises from a larger cultural assemblage, and their perceptions filter through the entire culture. The modern reader should read a more nuanced understanding for many categories that are being presented.

Since boundary elements were very important in the formation of Christian concepts and language, the study argues that it is important to read biblical texts such as 1 Timothy 2:11-15 with a gender critical approach in order to understand the early Christian discourse dynamic.

⁸ The idea that there are two groups of people ruler and ruled was very consistent in Greco-Roman world. Plato measured these divisions to be the rudimentary features of life, present on both the micro-level of the household and the macro-level of the city.

4.3 Gender conflicts in 1 Timothy 2:11-15

1 Timothy 2:11-15 may allude to a problem in the community which the author of the text wanted to address and for which reason, he wrote to persuade his audience, as the community of believers representing the household of God, and basing his arguments and appeals on the common values that he shared with his reader (Kittredge 1996:63). So, it is important to explore those arguments and values that underline the conflicts of silence, subordination, creation order, and childbearing) in the household of God which consequently analyses the point of tension between the author's symbolic universe and that of his audience.

For Mouton (2012:121) the argument in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 can be divided as follows: a positive statement in verse 11 regarding education for women; a negative statement in verse 12 in which females are being denied the role of a teacher or leader over men. Then in verses 13-14 the rationale behind the denial, where Adam and Eve serve as illustration. And a closing statement promising salvation for women "through childbearing" (1 Timothy 2:15-3:1)" (2:15-3:1).

4.3.1 Male and female in 1 Timothy 2:11-15

The tone in which the author gives the instruction to women in verse 11 is a positive instruction, and may even suggest that women were allowed to be in the same gathering or forum of learning as men. However, Barnett (1989:229) affirms that "In the Talmud it is written: May the words of the Torah be burned rather than be handed over to a woman. Women were not even permitted to say the Benediction after a meal". Therefore that Christian women were encouraged to learn constitutes a new privilege for them (cited in Mouton & Wolde, 2012:588).⁹

Women are instructed to learn the sound doctrine which is the main issue that the author wants to address. However, this allows a woman to be in the position of a passive learner instead of active, for the manner in which she is to learn is in quietness and full submission (Mbamalu, 2014:5).

On one hand, this submission might be directing the teaching – they are to accept the teaching, so that their submissiveness toward men may not be ingrained in their minds. On the other hand, the submission might refer as well to the teacher, which conveys the idea that both male and female were teachers of the law. It is very likely that there were women in the Ephesian church who were voicing

⁹ According to Payne (2009:314) the command for women to learn contrasts with the non-appearance of women in any list of pupils in Ephesian schools of that time. At the same time, it contrasts with the Jewish tradition that women are not encouraged to study the law, but are to encourage their sons and husbands to study it.

false teachings.¹⁰ They are being instructed to be quiet and listen to the authoritative teaching of the church and its gospel.

Some might suggest that the submission relates to the husband as in 1 Timothy. 2:12, but that 1 Timothy. 2:11 should not be interpreted in that context of husband and wife, but rather in a teaching context, i.e. between student and the teacher. Payne (2009:316) agrees that it is appropriate to think that the submission should be toward the truth that students are learning, and not a wife's submissiveness toward the husband. Keir Howard (1983:40) suggests that the submission is comparable to the submission to Christ (cited in Neufeld Redekop, 1990:241-242), but Neufeld Redekop, disagrees with this position. He understands that the submission of women to either husbands or male leaders in the church has been assumed when read together with verse. 12. Consequently, Neufeld Redekop (1990:242) agrees with Padgett (1987:24), that submission in 1 Timothy 2 refers to the true teachers of the women, namely Timothy and Paul.

If the context assumes that women were denied the right to learn the Torah or the Scriptures, then giving them space to be learners, even if passively, did not only allow women to celebrate this opportunity of learning, but also gives hope, so that after being instructed to participate in the commission of teaching others, they can become teachers, as commanded in Matthew 28:18-20. This text is used to compare the idea viewed in 1 Timothy 2:12 as a principle for all women that they can learn but are not to be involved in teaching and leadership. However, Mathew 28:18-20 teaches that the commission of the disciples was to make other disciples, so that other disciples may also make others disciples. One is taught to grow so that one day one may also impart those teachings to other generations. So, in this regard the great commission is an assignment for every member in the church not only men.

By contrast, Long (2005:34) argues that by describing the *γυνή* in 2:11 as needing to act "in all submission" (*ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ*), Timothy (and the audience) would have readily understood the husband-wife relationship¹¹ to be meant here, since discussing *γυνή* and "submission" typically evokes a husband-wife relationship under the standardized socially-ubiquitous house code regulations. Furthermore, in the Pastoral Epistles submission language signals house code regulations.

¹⁰ 1 Tim.1:4a, 5-7.

¹¹ It must be said again, too, that the submission language speaks to social respectability. "Submission is used to characterize relationships when there is a concern about ensuring that the church not be discredited with people in the wider society (1 Tim. 3:4; Titus 2:5, 9-10; 3:1-2)." Other biblical texts of submission from wives refer only to their the situation toward their own husbands. Col 3:18; Eph. 5:24; 1 Pet 3:1, 5 and Titus 2:5.

4.3.2 Husband and wife relationship verse 12

After the positive instruction, a negative command follows, still directed at women but now in the context of household codes language. Previously they were allowed to be learners, but they were forbidden to teach or to have authority over the husband. The NT writers mostly regarded the role of the wives as submissive to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1-2). In this text there is a concern of power and authority, i.e. the gender conflict roles.

Foster (2016:6) suggests that “teaching” and “usurping authority” are strictly interconnected ideas in this interpretation, for it is assumed that teaching heresy in the congregation is to take illegal authority allowed only to the elders or apostles. For Foster, this interpretation makes better sense of the way the letter develops into the next chapter, where Paul affirms those who aspire to positions of authority and discusses the proper qualifications and due authorization of elders. Thus, the use of ἀθεντεῖνo suggests that male-female hierarchy is not the issue; rather, Paul addresses the problem of women championing the heresy by instructing them not to take it upon themselves to teach it to men.

This research would agree to some extent with Foster, for it does suggest that some of the heresies are being taught by women. However, I disagree with the idea that denies the fact that the male-female relationship is not the issue in 1 Tim. 2:12. If it were the case, the prohibition would not have included the object towards which the authority or teaching is to be exercised.

The main issue in the verse is not so much about women teaching males in general, but teaching or exercising authority over the husband, since that was the domain given to men who represented the head of the house (Ephesians 5:23). A husband was entitled to the role of teacher to instruct his own wife regarding her duties. But in this verse, there is a change of the traditional perceptions on what feminine or male roles were. Schottroff (1995:69) argues that these texts speak intentionally in the language of the overlord’s laws and decrees: “I want” “I do not permit”. It pronounces a law to govern all women. Seeking to direct Christian communities, with the borrowed authority of Paul, the authoritarian laws are addressed to Christian women. The text is marked by the notion that by nature all women are the same and that there is only one correct way to live.

Very likely there is conflict between positions informed by masculinity and femininity in 1 Tim. 2:12. In terms of woman’s nature, Malina (1996), Jone (2000), Payney (2009) and Marthin Luther in Karant and Wiesner-Hanks 2003, are in agreement that women “should be silent” for it is against their nature to teach or lead over the husband. The pattern for the role of male and female was given by the nature with which each human being is born. Some scholars, namely Jone (2000), Payney (2009) and Karant and Wiesner-Hanks 2003, all agree that by nature women are inferior to man. Consequently the role that women are required to play was the one that placed the women in the sphere for which they had

been created, which was caring for the household duties, serving the husband and bearing children, as well as being taught by the husband.

Since they believed that females were made naturally to be submissive and obey the males to command and authority, the text exposes the sense of masculinity being threatened by some female assuming the role of authoritative teacher. In the household according to the first century Mediterranean world, the role of authority as head of the family is given to males; so for some Evangelical pastors church women are not allowed to teach their husbands nor to have authority over them. Long (2005:32)¹² affirms that “In the more traditional Greek understanding, the husband was to be the teacher of his wife, not vice versa.”¹³

If the prohibition is related to 1 Timothy. 1:7 where false teachers are teaching what they do not know but doing so confidently, and if women were among those false teachers, the prohibition suggests that the wife who does not know what she is talking about, should not teach the husband neither have authority over him. So until women/wives have learned what they need in order to get a full grasp of the true teaching, they are not to teach or have authority over men. There is no reason these women might not later be allowed to teach and have authority (like Phoebe, Prisca and Junia) if they will learn the true teaching, submitting to Timothy for instruction. (Neufeld Redekop, 1990:242)

According to Payne (2009:32), in Paul’s day other authors like Musonius Rufus (Frag.13A and 14.94.2-19) praised marital love and the deep union between husband and wife. Women were encouraged to study Stoic philosophy, which emphasized self-control. But Thurston (1998:17) argues that rabbis taught that women were subject to three precepts; and specifically prohibited from studying the Torah. The rabbis sometimes saw women as sex objects and a potential source of danger, social disruption, and temptation. Furthermore, the Mishnah not only excluded a woman from a leadership position in the community, but suggested that she has no capacity for it.

¹² Long, (2015:27-30) briefly describes six aspects of gender expectations, customs, and practices that would enforce and perpetuate them. First, the household was generally understood as the foundational political unit of the society; thus safeguards existed for proper maintenance of it (see also further below). This same movement is observed in 1 Tim 2 and then in its latter chapters. Second, persons were generally zealous to maintain decorum and proper distinctions among inhabitants of cities. So, genders and ages (men, boys, women, and girls) were distinct in public. Third, *gynaikonomoi* “controllers of women” and similar magistracies were ubiquitous in Greek Mediterranean cities. Aristotle described the existence of various magistrate positions to help retain gender and social distinctions. The fourth aspect of gender expectation and custom in the first century (BC and AD), in spite of carefully watching women and wives and attempting to control their behaviour as described just above, was “a feminist movement” of the new woman. There were various social and/or legal responses to this phenomenon. Fifth, the influence of the Artemis Cult likely affected women’s attitudes and conduct towards apparel, marriage, and childbearing.

¹³ “Although daughters were encouraged to learn, ancient philosophers expressed concern that women/wives would be uncontrolled in their speech.” (Payne 2009:32).

The prescriptions against women were apparently a response to their attempts to gain autonomy and authority. Thurston (1998:18) agrees with Ross Kraemer, that the Greco-Roman world, especially in the Asia Minor, was more open women's occupying leadership positions in public life, especially in the spheres in which civic and religious responsibilities intersected.

4.3.3 Authority and gender roles

According to Thurston (1998:14),¹⁴ a husband was required to support his wife, to provide food and clothing for her, to fulfill his conjugal duty and to redeem her in case of captivity. The wife was supposed to fulfill domestic roles: to wash, cook, care for children, tend the home, spin and weave, and provide for her husband's needs including washing his face, hands and feet. The wife was obligated to obey her husband as master, and anything she found as well as any money she earned belonged to him. So 1 Timothy 2:12 is emphasizing the roles according to gender division in the households as constructed traditionally by the socio-political and cultural setting of Greco-Roman World.

Solevåg (2012:7) argues that women's lives and their virtue as believers are repeatedly described in the language of domesticity and subordination: women are to be submissive and silent and should take care of children and the household. Stitzinger (1988:30) states that what can be established from the text is that women were not to teach men in public worship without any qualifications. It was insubordination, regardless of what kind of teaching was occurring when women assumed this role towards men. If this is the case, then the real issue at stake is that women who possessed spiritual equality with men thought there was no longer any need to retain a functional distinction.

Mouton (2012:9) poses two crucial statements: for later readers this text could have been persuasive, but at the same time problematic since it makes a distinction of the dualistic male-controlled views of women on which the social order of the first and second century Mediterranean world were based. Consequently, the hermeneutical question according to Mouton (2012:9) would be:

¹⁴ Rabbinic literature viewed women as inferior to men. Women were mostly valued for their fertility and for the production of sons. Thus their primary spheres of activity were domestic, reproductive, and nurturing, caring for her husband, household and children. In first century Hellenism, women were generally treated as being at their husbands' disposal. In order not to dishonour their husbands, faithful observance of social conventions was expected from wives. But in the time of Paul, new roles were appearing for women, for various philosophical, political, financial, religious, and other factors promoted equal rights or greater equalities for women (Payne, 2009:34). Winter (2003:262) explains that these "new women" were distinguished by their way of dressing and inappropriate lifestyle, which contrasted with the patterns of most women (wives and widows) in the Roman Empire. Those "new women" used their freedom to live a different life, not bound to traditional ways in which they were to be submissive to their husbands or male figures. Furthermore, those women sought to satisfy their own desires, social life, and extra-marital sexual relationships at the cost of their own family and home. Therefore this move from the traditional conduct of wives was associated by actions that contributed to the greater economic independence of women from their husbands. One example was the fact that some women's possessions were no longer habitually conveyed to their husbands when married. These "new women", had the freedom to terminate their marriage and claim back part of their wedding gift.

Were the general and specific positions of men, women, children and slaves thought to be remodelled by early Christian rhetoric?¹⁵ Or was its rhetoric (and particularly that of I Timothy) a mere depiction of the status quo at the time, and a further legitimation of women's silent and submissive roles? If not, how would the author of I Timothy have anticipated to transcend the socio-cultural boundaries of his audience?

This study argues that the positions of men, women, slaves and children who were to be remodelled as Christians, as it was a reformed movement within Judaism. Being the followers of Christ the Christian movement was to bring about change in their society, and challenge those cultural, social and political boundaries which were oppressive and male-dominated. Schüssler Fiorenza (1993:222) states that "while one is born into Judaism, the Christian movement is based solely on conversion, which does not continue the national, racial, or social status prerogatives derived from the patriarchal household."¹⁶ Being a new movement with new paradigms the Christian community ought to bring new ways of life, new perceptions of its believers, and new roles division instead of those based on cultural, social, political and economic boundaries but based on the will of Christ through the Holy Spirit who equips its members with the right gifts to build up his body.

Mouton (2012:9) maintains that while the condition that women be silent and submissive originates from Hellenistic household organisation traditions, it is reconfigured and reappropriated here within the rhetoric of the household of God. In response to her second question above, Mouton (2012:9) asserts that "Through his profoundly theological orientation, the author of 1 Timothy creates a particular frame of reference, of new significance, with glimpses of an alternative moral world to be inhabited by his audience".

1 Timothy 2:12 is a text that prevents women from being visible in the household of God as well as in the home; and this is drawn from the author's social and cultural background.¹⁷ I would agree with Mbamalu, (2014:4) and Kostenberger (2005:61), then, that the author of 1 Timothy wanted women to be silent in the church and not to teach for fear of exercising authority over men.

These arrangements were not regarded simply as social in nature, but as ordained by God (Bassler 1996:24; Castelli 1999:229). The writer's instruction on prohibiting women needs to be understood in this context. Therefore, when reading the Pastoral letters, one ought to consider that they were written by a male, who wrote about women from a male perspective within the context of

¹⁵ As a portrayal of patriarchal traditions from a Christian perspective.

¹⁶ "In baptism converters enter into a new kinship relationship with people coming from very different religious, cultural and social backgrounds and patriarchal relationships. These former status differences are not to be determined by the social and religious structures of the new community" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1993:222).

¹⁷ I Corinthians 11:4-13; 14:34-35 and I Timothy 2:8-14. All of them prevent women from exercising authority over males in public worship either by teaching, praying, or prophesying (Stützinger, 1988:33).

communities where power belonged to men and where men's knowledge and assessments were held to be the norm (Jacobs, 2005:90).

4.3.3.1 *Adam and Eve's significance, verse. 13-14*

Mbamalu (2014:5) suggests a structure that would make sense to understand the prohibition in v.12 easily:

Premise 1: Adam was first created, then Eve (v. 13). Premise 2: Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and who became a sinner. Conclusion: A woman should not teach or have authority over a man, she should learn in quietness and full submission (v. 12).

This arrangement suggested by Mbamalu, proposes a set of hierarchical positions and gender roles from the beginning, which leads one to understand the prohibition of v. 12 to be absolute and normative for all women.

Neufeld Redekop, (1990:243) affirms that this verse has given rise to many problems. The reference to creation has led to the conviction that the prohibition as expressed there is permanent and normative. Further he urges the reader to think of the kind of exegesis the author of 1 Timothy was using here. Some interpretive approaches of the day included Targum, Midrash, Peshar, Halakah, Haggadah and typology (Neufeld Redekop, 1990:243). Therefore, if one would understand the approach of 1 Timothy 2 to be typological, then Eve serves as a model for those women whom the author of 1 Timothy addresses. The typological interpretation would suggest that only wealthy women in 1 Timothy 2 have listened to the snake, which symbolises the false teachers. These women have been led astray completely from the good, sound teaching. The men, who were first teachers are considered as Adam. Therefore, the reference to Adam and Eve serves as a warning to the women of what might happen if they are led astray by false teachers.

This study would agree with the typological interpretation; but it rather argues that vs13-14 work as refutation of false teaching that had been spread in Ephesus. This deals with genealogies. Since 1 Timothy 1:4 supports that some people in the household are devoted to endless genealogies and myths, this research understands these verses as the refutation of false mythologies and genealogies which promote controversial speculation and thus impede the advance of God's work (1 Timothy 1:3-4, 6-7). After giving the prohibition, the author refutes the idea that women come first before men, and that men come from women (cf. Kroeger, 1994:118-123).

The Septuagint uses this word "ἐπλασεν" in Genesis 2:7, 15 with regard to Adam's physical creation. The literary Paul seems to be suggesting in this text as well as in I Corinthians 11:8-9 that priority of

physical derivation forms the real basis of role relationship at Corinth and Ephesus (Stitzinger, 1988:33).

Michaelis (1968:865) notes that order based upon an argument by nature proposes a related sense of value. So, the fact that Adam was made first suggests that he is more valuable or more important (cited in Mbamalu 2014:5). The prominence of Adam, according to this interpretation, is then passed on to all males. Consequently, any male is more important than any female. It is for this reason that no woman must teach men. Mbamalu (2014:5) concludes that, given the background of church instruction, it is safe to accept that a contextual element has informed the author's interpretation. His apprehension for order amid supplementary things is informed by the desire for the church to gain or preserve uprightness in the society (Scholer 2003:103).

This argument would respond to the second question Mouton (2012:9) asked: "Or was its rhetoric (and in particular that of 1 Timothy) a mere depiction of the status quo at the time, and a further legitimation of women's silence and submissive roles?" This research argues that, with the use of the creation story, the author legitimises the women's silence and submissive roles, for it is this very text that is frequently quoted during arguments about the role or silence of women in church.

Schottroff (1995:71) supports the same idea by arguing that 1 Timothy is part of the history of this specific form of female oppression. Women must be disciplined by strong measures or they will not know their place as pre-determined and well-defined by a male-controlled society which claims to speak the order given by nature. Accordingly, the text not only broadcasts a patriarchal order but similarly seeks to impose a patriarchal order over against the resistance of women.

Moo (1980:70) assumes that Eve's failure is "exemplary of the nature of women in general and that this susceptibility to deception blocks them from effectively participating in public teaching" (cited in Stitzinger, 1988:34). It also means the literary Paul is using a natural argument to support a difference in role relationship. Be that as it may, women are prevented from teaching men because they are emotionally unfit for the retention and propagation of the truth.

The author's biological argument to validate the submission of women to men, contradicts what women were engaged to regarding to false teachings. They are being taught that Eve came first, and then Adam, and by her giving the fruit after eating she was opening him (Adam) to wisdom (Kroeger, 1994:124). But the author's account of Genesis 2-3 is the true and sound teaching, and since the pastor's account is reliable, women ought not to take teaching roles authoritatively based on the

mythologies of Eve and Adam because it was not sound teaching, but controversial to the creation history according to the Pastor's point of view.

Ellen van Wolde (2006) argues that the author of I Timothy 2:13-15 supports his prohibition and silence of women by using a familiar story in ways that accentuate a solid cause and effect relation between a particular event in the story of the garden of Eden, and the contemporary relation between men and women. As a result, by a partial choice of only two elements and a new embedding in his letter, the literary Paul is able to deliver a new implication (cited in Mouton, 2012:10). Van Wolde (2006) affirms that "... through this he is able to change the way of thinking of [his] contemporary and later audiences. The readers or hearers of 1 Timothy then start to reread Genesis 2-3 with the text of 1 Timothy in mind" (cited in Mouton, 2012:10). Van Wolde concludes that the letter of 1 Timothy serves the male readers to stick to their own treasured positions, and provides them with power to keep the women in their legally secured lower places.

4.4 Childbearing and implications for man 2:15

Solevåg (2012:2) affirms that some understand childbearing in this text as a messianic statement, referring to Mary's birth of Jesus. As the fall came through one woman, so did salvation, according to this interpretation. Others understand it as a statement concerning women's safe delivery. The verb σώζω has a variety of meanings, ranging from "keep from harm, bring out safely" to "save." Some interpreters, then, opt for a non-theological understanding: a woman will be kept safe during the actual process of giving birth. Building on this reading, Bruce Winter (2003 cited in Solevåg, 2012:2) has suggested that the statement is a response to women among the recipients of the letter who put their health at risk by seeking abortions. The message to such a woman was that she "would be preserved by continuing in her pregnant condition." Yet another suggestion is that "childbearing" should be understood metaphorically: the women in question should "give birth" to the virtues noted in v. 15b, faith, love, holiness, and modesty.

According to Neufeld Redekop, (1990:244), the charge in verse 15 to women has elicited various explanations. However, if this verse is a continuation of the author's typological use of an Old Testament Scripture, the first verb "σωθήσεται" would refer to Eve and the second verb μείνωσιν to the women whom the author of 1 Timothy is addressing. As a cautionary word, the warning is sounded that those women must not be deceived by false teachers as Eve was deceived by the snake.

When reading the context on 1 Timothy 2 one must take into consideration the fact that women in Ephesus might have been looking to Artemis for help during childbirth. And due to influence of Eve

and the Artemis mythologies, the writer is suggesting that those women are kept safe through childbirth by remaining in faith, love and moral purity with self-restraint.

Solevåg (2012:17) is of the opinion that the implicit plural of generic woman may have led to the plural verb form μείνωσιν, or there may be a shift in subject, from women to the children they bear. According to the household system of the Pastorals, the places of children and women are to some extent similar: submission is implied in the opening phrase of this section (ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ, of women in 1 Timothy 2:11; τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ, 1 Timothy 3:4). For Solevåg this explains why it is difficult to decide whether it refers to childbearing women or to their children. These commands apply to both groups. It affects the children, through the instructions to act in accordance with the requirements of male leaders (1 Timothy 3:4; 12) as well as women (1 Timothy 5:10; 14, Titus 2:4-5), to raise children in the faith. In that case, verse 15b assures that not all women are saved by their childbearing, but only if it is accompanied by Christian virtues.

In 1 Timothy 2:15a men and women are both called to the responsibility of childbirth. The woman might be the one who gives birth, but the male is also called to participate fully in taking care of the children since it might comprise the requisites of those males who might aspire to be bishops (1 Tim.3:4-5).

The discussion above then reinforces the idea that the instruction in verse 12 relates to married women, for childbirth as the condition for salvation cannot be applied to all women, because some are not married, others might be widows, still others married but childless. In Ephesians 2:8, salvation is acquired by the grace of God, not something we work for, so that no one could boast. So, to use this reverse literally and to assume the salvation for women based on childbirth is to miss the interpretation of the Scripture.

Another consideration in the interpretation of this verse is the extent to which false teachers were influenced by the teachings of Gnosticism, in particular the prohibition of marriage (Tim. 4:3). Thus, the pastor may have wished to emphasize that childbirth was a positive experience and part of salvation history (Neufeld Redekop, 1990:244-245).

Mouton (2012:2) argues that “1 Timothy functioned as an allegory a well-known method of interpretation at the time. And this opens the possibility that Adam and Eve, as well as the image of childbearing, functioned metaphorically as a context-specific appropriation of the creation story rather than a general relationship between women and men”.

This study reads this passage that women shall be salvaged from the risks accompanying childbearing, if they abide in faith and walk in love. It is more likely to think that the literary Paul wanted the

Christian women of Ephesus to know that getting married and having children would not jeopardize their salvation, as some ascetics thought. The author associated moral purity with childbearing because some people within the Ephesians' church were forbidding marriage and teaching that celibacy was a necessary virtue (1 Timothy 4:3). Another extremist and ascetic teaching that the author was correcting in this verse targets is those who emphasize either sexual licentiousness or asceticism. He wants women to know that they will not lose their salvation if they become pregnant, but he also wants them to exercise self-restraint (cf. Kroeger, 1994:171-177).

4.5 Conclusion

Having understood the gender rhetoric of the text, this chapter concludes that 1 Timothy 2:1-15 is a gendered rhetorical text which uses gendered language specific to the context of Greek and Roman culture. The writer was acutely aware of the importance of gender divisions, power and roles in the household of God which were borrowed from the first century Mediterranean world view. The writer understood very well what it meant to be masculine or feminine. For him the place of women was bound up with domestic roles and childbearing. The men were entitled to be in power to govern their families and provide for them. Men were entitled to the responsibility of teaching the whole family, including their wives. The author of 1 Timothy used a traditional interpretation of Genesis 2-3 to reinforce and perpetuate the position of men and women in the household of God. The instruction of childbearing in 1 Timothy 2: 15 had been interpreted as though it concerns only women, but it also has implications for men, by relating to their responsibility as fathers and calling upon them to exercise their role in the family before aspiring for ministry. Man who aspire to be in ministry must be exemplary fathers as requirement to be overseers (1 Timothy 3:4-5).¹⁸ In this chapter I focused on the gender rhetoric of the text, while the next, chapter 5 will describe 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and the challenge of being church in Angola.

¹⁸ This study considers 1 Timothy 3 as a valuable text to compare and engage with, but the space does not allow for this engagement here.

Chapter 5: 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and the challenge of being a woman in the Angolan Church

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is primarily concerned with applying the findings on “Women, Teaching and Leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15” to the Angolan context. It will engage with some analysis done on the interpretation of the text in question, including the interpretation of some pastors in Angola. Given the rhetorical context of the text, the direct or literal application of this text to a contemporary African society, in particular to Evangelical churches in Angola, does not seem justified. This study argues that the 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is responding to particular challenges in Ephesus that were causing obstacles in the advancing of the Gospel. It aimed to combat false teachers and heresies within the Ephesian church as the household of God, and provides instruction on the right behaviour for the believers. Both men and women in public gatherings.

Three important factors provide goals for interpreting the New Testament. First is the fact that the reader, who is also a participant in the interpretation process, should not merely discern the significance of the text but should construct new meaning. Second, this factor analyses the reader’s response and criticism looking at the need for principles of interpretation to avoid misconstructions. The third factor is the reader’s response. Most response to 1 Timothy 2:11-15 resist and criticise the acceptance of woman’s role of teaching and leadership in church based on the literal interpretation of the same text. 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and other texts to support the boundaries imposed on women in church, and expose the rhetoric behind some interpretations (Vanhoozer, 1995:283).

The lack of sources by African theologians, scholars and particularly by Angolan academics and pastors on the issues of the role of women in church, gives the impression that not much research has been done on 1 Timothy 2:11-15.¹ Therefore this section will also introduce contributions by some African and other scholars in general. The chapter will use two sermons as case study examples on how the text is interpreted in Angola.²

5.2 Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in relation to Angola

The significance of appropriating this text to Angolan context resides in the need for appropriate application in relation to women, teaching and leadership in the church. This is a very important

¹ Regardless of meticulous literature search, a small number of sources by Africans on the role of women in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 are available

² Both are from the Presbyterian Church. They will be indicated by their initials. P.A.P Pastor from the north and J.L.S from the south.

emphasis, since the lack of proper understanding of this Scripture in African society, and Angola and the Evangelical churches in particular, has undergirded the discrimination against women in positions of leadership and teaching.

The instructions of 1 Timothy 2:11-15, are perceived to reflect a context that is very different for the reader of today. As far as the NT texts are concerned, the first century Mediterranean world was impacted upon by different cultures, namely Judaism and Greco-Roman cultures. In each of these cultures women were viewed differently and given privileges differently (Balch, 2003:266). It is within this context that the Letter to Timothy was composed, to respond to a specific situation in Ephesus. The text under consideration has influenced some Angolan churches to see the prohibition in the text as authoritative teaching in Scripture which is used to reinforce the marginalisation of women in the Church. Therefore, it becomes a burning issue to interpret the text 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and understand different interpretations of this text, as well as the tension surrounding its application today.

5.2.1 Submission and full silence: 1 Timothy 2:11-12

1 Timothy 2:11-12 presents two commands for a woman, firstly to learn in quietness and to submit, and secondly not to teach nor to exercise authority over her husband. The most problematic discussion is when it comes to defining submission, for the Bible contains various instructions for believers on the attitude of submissiveness. In the New Testament writings and in the Jewish society it was considered indecent for a woman to speak publicly. Like in many African cultures, submissiveness is an attitude imposed on women. Women were to show respect to their husbands by submitting themselves to these men, who are regarded as the heads of the family.

Long (2015: 35-36) proposes that in the Pastorals, the word “submission” in its semantic world, most often served as indicator of the reigning set of domestic principles. These principles served to mark out the boundaries for those who depended on the head of the house, as in this case, women who should submit to their husbands, children to their parents, and slaves to their masters. And since the church was the household of God, these social patterns were established as guidelines to be followed in homes, and embraced in the church in order to avoid distortion of social principles. But the church was established not to be subjected to the social or cultural patterns, but rather to challenge them. Therefore, the Pastor is quite concerned that Timothy, the young pastor, must look after the organization of the church. In the church, women are also being told to be submissive toward their husbands, as the social ethos holds that women are not to teach their husbands, who act out the role of the paterfamilias. Women are instructed to listen in quietness and submission as a way of showing

respect to their male counterparts; but both quietness and submission are social virtues that serve or obstruct women's development in church and society.

Summer (2003:105), contends that the most of the rules regulating the Christian faith are based mainly on social patterns and not on Scriptural principles. This idea may be supported by our understanding of 1 Timothy 2:1-2, where the Pastor urges prayers for all, so that there would be peace and quiet lives (NIV). For example, Da Silva (2011) points out that:

Original Portuguese:

“No meio rural angolano regista-se forte predominância da tradição cultural, razão pela qual hábitos e costumes locais têm sido preservados, entre os quais os ritos de iniciação que contribuem não apenas para a diferenciação de papéis sexuais mas também para a inferiorização social das mulheres. Tais preceitos são reforçados por lógicas de dominação masculina que tendem a naturalizar a submissão das mulheres”.

English translation:

“In the Angolan countryside there is a strong predominance of the cultural tradition, which is why local habits and customs have been preserved; among them are initiation rites that contribute not only to the differentiation of sexual roles but also to the social inferiorization of women. Such precepts are reinforced by the logic of male domination that tends to naturalize the submission of women”.

Da Silva is pointing out the real situation which women are experiencing in Angola. Even from a very young age, they are taught to be housewives, and often that domestic work is for women, and that the opposite, not to engage in domestic work implies a lack of respect for the husband as well as for her parents, as this indicates that she was not taught to be a good housewife. Women grow up knowing their role in and outside the family. In the church the same principle is taught based on 1 Timothy 2:1-12. Such notions are reinforced in pre-marriage counselling as women are taught to respect their husbands, listen to their husbands, keep quiet when the husband is talking, and whenever the couple are in a meeting or any kind of gathering, being it church or family, the woman is not expected to respond unless the husband gives her permission to do so.³

³ Simões and Alberto (2015:509) show in their research that, “All participants described the wife as the main person responsible for all household chores (e.g., cooking, laundry, cleaning, shopping) and the husband was considered the “head of the house,” assuming the role of the economic provider: “The wife has the responsibility to take care of the house, look after the children, to cook, do the laundry. They perform all domestic chores;” “the father or husband is always seen as the ‘head of the family’; he has to bear all the responsibilities regarding financial provision for the family;” “it’s a male-dominated society: women assume all domestic responsibility: taking care of the house, of children and even of their husbands”.

Andria (2006:1478) like many other scholars, argues that 1 Timothy 2:11-12 constitutes one of the most difficult texts to interpret, and it has stimulated an ongoing dispute between believers in Africa.⁴ Andria understands the silence of women as not denoting women's inferiority to men, but rather a silence that shows their obedience to men, therefore granting the men power and authority. As a further consequence of her silence, a woman demonstrates obedience to the order of creation. This interpretation seems to be based on the idea that since man was created first, the man is therefore assumed to be superior to the woman. But this study understands that this is not necessarily what the author is teaching in 1 Timothy 2:13. For this, misinterprets the first creation narrative of Genesis 1:26, where the prominence and equality of both male and female before the Creator was underscored. They were both blessed by God and were both given authority over the creation (over fish, all kinds of animals, plants and the land). Even that authority was not to be misused to destroy the creation but to look after it. It is interesting to note that many interpreters regard the instruction of silence in support of the idea that the woman was created to submit to the man. Genesis 1:26 might not be understood in terms of 1 Timothy 2:12-14's arguments. It has been used to support the author's agenda in relation to women in teaching and leadership and not the gender equality before God suggested about in Genesis 1:26.

Mounce (2002:103) interprets the command in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 as a limited message which intended to respond to a specific situation and rebuke those women in Ephesus who were not being submissive to their husbands (cited in Inyamah, 2008:103). The text wanted to discourage them from attempting to exercise authority over men, a social role expected to be reserved for males. It is, however, inappropriate to use this text to impose the silence and submission toward men on women as a universal principle. Moreover, the text should not be used by churches, especially in Angola, as reason to limit women's leadership roles in the church.

In his reading of the text Pastor J.L.S (2018:2) provides the following analysis in Portuguese: "Os versículos 11 e 12 são mais polêmicos. Mas, com mais compreensão, isto é, relendo e analisando contexto, descobre-se que a inadequação não está no conteúdo. É aqui que nós recomendamos lembrar sempre o contexto histórico em que o texto foi escrito". The English translation would be: "verses 11 and 12 are very controversial. But with more comprehension, that is, rereading and analyzing the context, one discovers that the inadequacy is not in the content; thus, it is recommendable to remember the context in which the text was written". This reading is valid, for it challenges the readers to be aware of the historical context of the text. The context of 1 Timothy 2:11-

⁴ Tonkin (2017:1) states the same when he affirms that the "analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15, arguably is the most controversial passage on this topic in the bible". Please check original source. I suspect it should read: "analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15, is arguably the most controversial passage on this topic in the Bible."

12 concerns firstly, the misconduct of believers in the household of God (1 Timothy 2:8-10) and secondly, the emerging of false teaching against the sound doctrine which Timothy is to teach and preserve.

This appeal to the deeper understanding of the context constitutes one of the important steps when reading the Scriptures, not just 1 Timothy 2:11-12, which has raised an ongoing debate concerning the role of women, but the reading of any text within the Bible; for these texts were written to respond to a given situation which the original audience was facing.⁵

This study agrees with the idea above, for when looking at the rhetorical situation, one discovers multi-cultural perspectives on women within the contemporary church as the household of God. The church was composed of Jews, Greeks, Romans, men and women, children, slaves, free and others. In this context it is important to recognize the use of language to describe humans according to their gender and roles. Those who were marginalized (woman, slaves children) would find hope that in Christ they are all one with equal rights to participate in the church with the gifts given them through the Holy Spirit.

Pastor B.A.P (2018:1) analysed the submission of women in 1 Timothy 2:11, as follows:

“Não é um castigo ou uma doutrina para todas as igrejas, mas uma lei para a igreja de Éfeso, por causa da situação que estavam a enfrentar. O que na verdade o apóstolo estava a acautelar as mulheres do falso ensino e lhes orientar a pessoas certa em quem deviam aprender, ou seja, seus maridos para as casada e pais para as solteiras” (Portuguese).

English translation: “it is not a punishment or a doctrine to be applied to all churches, but a law to the church in Ephesus, for the situation in which they were in. The apostle was warning women against false teachings and instructed them to the right people to learn from, the married to their husbands and the single ones to their fathers”.

In the context of gender oppression in which the text was written, it would have been a double punishment for women, to be told to learn in silence as a way of showing respect to their husbands. One can understand that pastor B.A.P looks at the context and ponders the many different situations in which churches may find themselves today, and thinks that the text is not to be applied literally to contemporary churches.

⁵ Pastor J.L.S (2018:2) affirms for example that “Portanto não é obrigação para a igreja de hoje; e tal orientação nem mesmo é coerente com a visão do Novo Testamento (At.2:17; Gl. 3:28). The translation would be “it is not mandatory to the church today, for the fact that this instruction is not coherent with the vision of the New Testament teaching as whole (Acts 2:17; Gal.3:18)”.

In his interpretation, Pastor B.A.P indicates that since the man is the head of the family, he is the one to be the teacher instructing his wife, because she is the helper and depends on her husband. But it becomes a challenge in Angola, for it may be questionable whether this command is applicable to all married women. A possible reason for resistance is that the majority of Christian women are married to unbelievers – which might of course also have been the case with some Christian women in First Mediterranean world.⁶ For those whose husbands are unbelievers, the question still stands: ‘who would teach them?’

To avoid confusion and misinterpretation of this text, it must be re-examined carefully in order to understand it and consequently present the correct application of it. Misinterpretation will perpetuate the longstanding patriarchal and cultural oppressive structures against women, and therefore support people, in this case men, with similar ideals regarding the oppression of women.

Interpreting 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Africa it requires a meticulous understanding of the ways in which women show their submission to those in leadership positions as well as to men generally (Andria, 2006:1498). Verse 13 suggests that Adam (the male) was more blameworthy. First of all he paid attention to the voice of Eve (female) whose role was to listen and not to teach, and in this way Adam failed to obey the order of authority given by God, in which he was given the responsibility to teach his wife rather than his wife assuming this responsibility.

Therefore, women’s role is defined or limited in light of Eve’s usurpation of authority by teaching Adam, her husband. Consequently, woman’s role according to gender division is to live in the way that gives her dignity – namely to aspire to domestic roles, and submit to men. Most Angolan cultures propagate the supremacy of men over women by invoking the so-called natural ideology. Therefore, texts like 1 Timothy 2:11-15 are seen to support the perpetuation of the oppression and injustice of women in the church and society.

The instructions in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 expose some of the false teachings in relation to women’s role in the church, which were apparently conveying and promoting disputes in the Christian community. Those teachings were obstructing God’s plan for people in that community.⁷ It suggests that the Pastor’s worries concerned teachings that were misleading people at the time, and not on the person teaching. Therefore, it is questionable to assume that “silence and submission” are setting a general principle to be applied to every female (Tonkin 2017:1).

⁶ 1 Corinthians 7:13-14; 1 Peter 3:1-2

⁷ 1 Timothy 1:3-4.

According to Pastor B.A.P (2018:2), the cultural view of women understands the text to be teaching women's submission to men based on the creation narrative presented by the writer in 1 Timothy 2:13-14. He argues that:

“E para fundamentar sua declaração, o apóstolo se apoia no primeiro casal para apresentar a ordem que Deus criou o homem e a mulher, mas não para promover a superioridade do homem, mas para apresentar o ideal de Deus desde o princípio. Ou seja, a mulher deve aprender de seu esposo e não de um estranho (serpente), pois o seu esposo foi ensinado por Deus e seu ensino é verdadeiro. Infelizmente a mulher (Eva), por dar ouvido ao falso mestre, foi enganada e desobedeceu a lei de Deus. Se ela permanecesse aprendendo somente de seu esposo isso não teria acontecido. Mas ainda assim, Deus não abandonou a mulher e fez parte de seu projecto de salvação. Através dela veio o Salvador, Jesus Cristo”.

Translated into English:

“To support his command the writer uses the illustration of the first couple to present the order that God created man and woman, not to promote superiority for man over woman, but to present the ideal of God from the beginning. A woman must learn from her husband and not from a stranger (the serpent), for her husband was taught by God and his teaching is true. Unfortunately, the woman (Eve), was deceived by listening to a false master, and disobeyed the law of God. If she had remained to learning only from her husband, this would have never happened. Yet, God did not abandon the woman; instead He included her in the salvation plan. Through her came the Saviour, Jesus Christ”.

This interpretation tends to assume that when God created man and woman, God gave direct instructions concerning the roles each one would play in the Garden in conformity with their genders. Therefore, it contradicts the statement in Genesis 2:18 where God affirms the narrative that “The Lord God said, it is not good for man to be alone, I will make a helper suitable for him” (NIV). This seems to be the same description that Jesus gave about the Holy Spirit in John 14:16.⁸

The Holy Spirit was to help the disciples in every way by testifying about Jesus Christ, guiding them in their lives, teaching them and reminding them of everything that Jesus had taught them. If the description of the woman as helper means that she is to submit to the husband as the sole teacher according to the Law of God, what about the Holy Spirit in the life of believers? Even if a woman has something to teach the husband, does that mean she cannot do that, because teaching is not her role? For instance, 1 Thessalonians 5:11 teaches that the believers are to encourage one another, according to the Word of God. The other issue to consider in this text is the fact that both woman and man were deceived. For Adam as Eve had the choice to decide whether to take the fruit or not, so as to avoid falling into deception. Regardless of the sinful nature or the guilt attributed to women, they

⁸ “And I will ask the father and he will give you another advocate to help you and to be with you forever” (NIV). “And I will pray to the father and He will give you another helper, that he might abide with you forever” (NKJV).

too are called to perform the task of teaching the word of God when they have the gift of teaching, being a pastor, or similar gift given by the Holy Spirit.

The silence and subordination demanded of women in the text, is a result of the male-dominant society in which women were assigned to be mothers and exercise domestic roles. It was offensive in that culture, when women taught their husbands because they would be assuming an authoritative role that was associated with males. The Pastor's church reinforces the established social patterns for families according to the culture of the day, and uses the second creation narrative to enforce that idea, as many interpreters still do today. Angola is considered a male-dominated culture in which men define culture and prescribe what is expected from the woman in the family and society.⁹ To this end, the beneficiaries of many cultural norms in Angola are men.

5.2.2 Childbearing and the implication of 1 Timothy 2:15a

The expression, "women will be saved through childbearing" has been a very difficult passage to interpret, because it gives the impression that the salvation of women is related to their reproductive ability. The Pastor is the first and only biblical author to make this claim. Most of the problems derive from the different translations which tend either to relate to the salvation of woman literally as it is in the text, or simply as a figurative expression.

"But the women will be saved through childbearing",¹⁰

"Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing",¹¹

"But woman will be preserved through the bearing of children",¹²

"But women will be saved by having children",¹³

This text also constitutes another point of tension in the author's arguments to restrict women to domestic and submissive roles. It is part of the description of the role of women in that society. The author attempts to expose another form of false teaching at the time. According to the custom, women were expected to be submissive to their husbands, and not to teach them, and another function for the woman was to bear children and educate them as part of her domestic roles. The difficulty in the interpretation of this text is situated in the fact that for the first time the salvation of the women is linked to childbearing. When reading different translations, some suggest a literal meaning stating

⁹ The results of their research permitted Simões and Alberto (2015:509) to judge southern Angolan culture as "traditional culture guided by 'Machismo'"; for the man is appreciated as the supplier and the woman as the chief caregiver, therefore continuing the notion that rearing children is the sole obligation of mothers.

¹⁰ NIV and NLT.

¹¹ NKJV.

¹² NASB+ Strong's.

¹³ CEV.

that women will attain eternal salvation if they become mothers, but others propose a different reference for the prepositional phrase linked to childbearing, understanding it to mean that a woman will be kept safe in the process of childbearing.

There have been different interpretations among scholars trying to solve the conflicts on how to read this verse – either metaphorically or literally. In what follows, I will expand on my previous analysis, discussions, and interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:15a.

Führmann (2010:31) argues that the main idea in 1 Timothy 2:15a, is related to the general impression of the woman's physique in the ancient times. For that reason, the text illustrates a particular aspect of power conflict between divergent philosophies and gender. Führmann based his arguments on the writings of Hippocrates and specifically his notion of the *de virginum morbis*. Studies done by Hipocrates lead the reader to understand that the authors of 1 Timothy 2:15 used the text as metaphorical expression in reference to a “sacred disease called anamnesis”. Führmann (2010:34) explains that it was mostly related to “epilepsy or some symptoms similar to it”.¹⁴ In the letter, the writer describes the true teaching as sound doctrine. It was suspected that the illness affected predominantly females, and the suggested main cure was intercourse with a man.

1 Timothy 2:15a contains the reference to salvation that could be attained through sexual intercourse between wife and husband, with the potential of a child being conceived. Since women with those sicknesses were seeking help from a female deity¹⁵ for a cure, the author explains the salvation of women by means of childbirth. In this case the appeal, which led women to go to men, as a substitute of a female goddess, advocates a justification as well as heretical doctrine of woman as divine and bodily problems (Führmann 2010:35-36).

This interpretation poses the idea that women will be literally be kept safe through the process of childbearing which constitutes one of the most difficult period in their lives, as it is reported that during the process many women, and sometimes the baby as well, die. Waters (2004:705) interprets "childbearing" in 1 Tim 2:15, not as literal, but rather suggests that the actual children that the author envisioned was the virtues in part b of the verse “faith, love, holiness, with propriety”.¹⁶ In this case,

¹⁴ “The reason for the ‘called sacred disease’ laid in an obstipation, by which the blood is collected in the womb and hindered from flowing away, thus causing pressure on the heart and the diaphragm. Among the symptoms caused by this disease, the author reckons, are visions and a death wish” (Führmann 2010:34-35).

¹⁵ According to Führmann (2010:35) Hippocrates observes that “... when the woman is [again] in possession of her senses, women dedicate many other things and the most expensive feminine clothing to Artemis, thoroughly beguiled by the ordering of the soothsayers. Her deliverance [occurs] when nothing hinders the outflow of blood. But I myself urge the maidens, whenever they suffer such things, to cohabit with men in the quickest manner, for if they conceive they become healthy”.

¹⁶ (NIV). According to Waters (2004:706) childbearing has a similar metaphorical attachment in Philo, *Leg.* 3. I.3. Where the interpretation of the delivery of Hebrew newly-born boys are at the hands of midwives (Exodus 1:21) it is the effort

childbearing is to be interpreted allegorically. But this would contrast with other reprimands by the author to women, when he recommends the “young widows to marry and have children, be good housewives and not give the enemy opportunity to slander”.¹⁷ If the wrong teaching was affecting marriages and women’s roles according to the culture, and if a woman went through a difficult time during the process of delivery and looked for help from a female deity, then it would be inconsistent to interpret the childbearing as the bearing of the virtues rather than literal children.¹⁸

Andria (2006:1498) considers that in an African context the teaching that “woman will be saved through childbearing” needs to be assumed to mean “preserved in the process of childbearing.” This would offer an appropriate interpretation, since it is well-known fact that not all women become mothers. In Angola for instance, just like in other African countries, motherhood brings reward, prestige, power and dignity to married women. The literal interpretation of spiritual salvation would cause destruction for it discriminates against women who are not married, and even those who are married but barren. The concept of being “preserved safe in this process” is relevant for the fact that many women die during childbirth. The pregnancy is characterized as a period of anguish for women and those around them.¹⁹

The interpretation of childbearing as literal would be appropriate in the Angolan context, being one in which surviving labour constitutes great victory for women, the children as well as for the midwife. But again, it has to be associated with the spiritual duties that every believer is to portray “faith, love, holiness and propriety”. This combines the ideas of physical and spiritual effort; therefore, salvation lays a responsibility upon women to be good mothers (Nihinlola, 2016:319).

Andria (2006:1498) supports two statements from 1 Timothy 2:15 which, according to African culture are unchangeable. The first is the idea that women are designed for bearing children, though this does not institute the vocation for all women. Second, women will not be saved for bearing offspring. Holding fast to this kind of reading of the text does not do justice to the text. This is the context where many women are abandoned by their partners who flee from fatherhood

of the soul to “build up the substance of virtue.” Philo then says that the substance of virtue is that “in which they have also decided to abide”. In each case, that which has given birth abides in the very thing that was borne”.

¹⁷ 1 Timothy 5:14

¹⁸ Waters (2004:734) believe that childbearing in 1 Tim 2:15 stands allegorically for “virtues-bearing”. He points out that one benefit of this interpretation compared to the traditional, lies in the fact that “saved through childbearing” fits together with the characteristic Pauline view of “saved by faith” (Rom 1:16; 10:9-10; 2 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 2:8). The second advantage indicates in what way “saved through childbearing” coheres with the typical Pauline ideas of “love as the fulfilment of the law” (Romans 13:10), “fruit unto holiness” (Romans 6:22; cf. Hebrews 12:14), “Love, goodness, faith, and self-control as fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22-23), and “working out your soul salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12).

¹⁹ The concept of pregnancy in Angola is described by two stages. From the time of conception till the sixth month the woman is described as being conceived “concebida. But from the seventh month till the day of deliverance the woman is defined as being gravid, for this word “gravida” denotes in Portuguese the sense of being between life and death, for she or the baby or both of them might die in the process.

responsibilities. Many children are raised only by the mother without the responsibility of a father figure, so that the women are seen as both mother and father at the same time.

This tendency which is so prevalent in Angola is that women's roles in the family tend to be both male and female, and are therefore challenging the social and cultural notion of masculinity.²⁰ In Angola in most homes the woman is the main manager of the household in relation to feeding and maintaining the daily life of family members, starting with her husband and extending to her children, and this tendency often reaches the neighboring children. In the context of marriage, when the couple cannot have children, it is almost always the woman who suffers criticism, and infertility is always ascribed to the woman. Writing from an African context, Oduyoye (1995:69) rightly asserts that "in a system where the birth of a child is more important than its paternity, relatives may, in case of delayed conception, even encourage extramarital affairs and, in the extreme, divorce". For Oduyoye, it is often the duty of African women to make their marriages work. She contends that in many African societies, barrenness in a woman of matrilineal heritage is an obvious disaster that can destroy a marriage. It is very rare to hear that the couple does not have children because the husband has problems. The woman is given the task of nurturing, educating and caring for her children.

Craig Keener (cited in Long, 2015:38), also, maintains that "The most natural way for an ancient reader to have understood 'salvation' in the context of childbirth would have been a safe delivery, for women regularly called upon patron deities such as Artemis and Isis in childbirth". This agrees with the idea presented by Führmann when describing the power struggle of female body, in which the body of the male is as a resolution to the problem; therefore requiring the wife to be with her husband.²¹

Among the earliest Christian interpreters, the literal understanding of the text was also very common. So for example, Chrysostom suggests that maternity is the consistent manner of redemption, for it gives hope for salvation only when women persevere in virtue and keep their children on this path.

²⁰ According to Da Silva (2011), in Portuguese: "Nas comunidades rurais, a mulher constitui o pilar da vida familiar e doméstica, cabendo-lhe pesadas responsabilidades nos domínios da educação dos filhos, dos proventos do agregado familiar e da gestão da vida doméstica. Apesar disso, a sua existência pauta-se por uma grande invisibilidade no plano social na medida em que não é chamada a intervir nos processos decisivos da vida comunitária." Translation: "In rural areas, women are the mainstay of family and home life, with substantial duties of child rearing, household income and household life management. In spite of this, their reality is shown by an excessive invisibility in the social strategy insofar as they are not called to interfere in the crucial processes of public life.

²¹ This ideal promotes a marriage union before the child is born, which contrasts the reality in Angola where the majority of children are from single mothers, or born before marriage. This interpretation would also suggest a spiritual implication of those who have children before marriage. It would be welcomed in some churches where the ceremonial wedding is given only to virgin couples, particularly women. In those churches even if a person was an unbeliever and had children before knowing Jesus, even after conversion, they would be denied a religious marriage ceremony in the church, for it was held that in the act of sexual intercourse people were considered already married.

Therefore, remaining in faith and love becomes more vital than natural maternity itself (cited in Zamfir, 2008:160).

Women today, also in Angola, work hard to provide for their families financially, spiritually, emotionally, materially. They have to struggle to keep the family in order, to the extent that some women do not aspire to be mothers, fearing that the men (fathers) will shirk their responsibilities. So the image of masculinity that the culture portrays has been based on the roles that males have to play as providers, protectors, which is slowly dying out because men are failing to play the roles that their culture prescribes. Children are growing up despising their fathers, therefore they do not aspire to be like father (male), but like the mother (female).²²

Interpreting the text of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 should be done considering the context of the letter as a whole, and particularly in the light of 1 Timothy 3:4-5. Within these texts both men and women are called to the responsibility of childbearing, which is not a matter of conceiving a child but bearing the responsibility of caring for the family together and nurturing the children.

Jusu's²³ (2016:1782) interpretation rests on the idea that women and men were made in different ways, and since this was what God had intended from the beginning, it has to be acknowledged and established in the way that both man and woman may worship together in tradition and culture, in accordance with the text of 1 Timothy 2:8-10. For that reason, women ought to be involved in the church service, bearing in mind that what they are called to do in worship, and this dare not offend the culture, as happened in Ephesus.

The role of the church in this case is to insist on and emphasise the roles that women are called to play, part of which is being mothers and nurturers of the family. The reader's response to this interpretation is that in the African context the Scripture ought to be used to perpetuate the cultural view of man and woman. And since the culture is to be considered in the way people behave or try to live, the question is how is one to respond to economic, social and spiritual oppression that most cultures perpetuate and for which they find the biblical text supportive.²⁴

Since this study understands that the Scripture should be used to challenge all forms of oppression and marginalization within the culture, the danger exists that one could mould a text to conform to

²² Nihinlola, (2016:321) rightly affirms that "Childbirth is significant but there is more to childbearing. While the birth of a child takes place instantly, child-nurture is a life-long task. Unfortunately, modern society seems not to adequately appreciate the vital role of motherhood to develop a better-cultured, more humane world."

²³ Editor of the African Study Bible.

²⁴ Kimberley (1992, cited in Tonkin, 2017:11) believes that the fact that the writer was opposing incorrect gnostic teachings in Ephesus implies that childbearing was evidence for conviction of Christian women. Führmann, (2010:35-36) expresses the idea that only "by marriage, childbirth and by means of submissiveness and domestic conduct, women would be able to withstand the temptations of Satan. That is, only men can guarantee salvation for women. Salvation by childbirth illustrates the power play of gender roles in early Christian writings".

one's cultural value system. If the text is not interpreted carefully, it might not be understood and may eventually create some confusion. Some cultural norms provide good social patterns when it comes to regulating communities in accordance with their values, but they need to be transformed in order to be just to all within the community of believers. The church ought to change the tradition which perpetuates oppression, restriction of women in teaching and leadership positions because they are females. The church should in this case work toward liberation of those who are oppressed, because this is what they are called to do.

5.3. Application (Appropriation) of 1 Timothy 2:11-15

This section focuses on some interpretations by some African scholars in general and two pastors from Angola. Caldwell and James (2017:67) provide a sound approach to the text raising three important issues pertinent to 1 Timothy 2:11-15. These are: 1. what exactly did the author say? 2. Why did the writer say this? Otherwise, what is the biblical theology behind the teachings? And, 3. In what way did the contemporary church seek to appropriate this teaching?

From the exegesis of the text, this study stands with the scholars²⁵ who are of the view that the text is giving women a positive opportunity to learn alongside men, which constitutes a major change in the life of the church. Previously within Judaism, women were denied the right to be part of the learning of the Torah and the church tradition.

The reader understands that this opportunity was not given in this letter or this portion of the Scripture; the one who bestowed this privilege for women to learn the truth of the Bible is Jesus Christ in Luke 10:38-42, when Jesus answered Martha by letting her shift her cultural perspective onto what a woman is supposed or not supposed to do. Martha had assumed that women were supposed to stay in the house, doing the domestic work, but Jesus demonstrated that Mary had chosen well to be at the master's feet. Jesus was the one who introduced women to the realm of learning of the truth at the master's feet as the disciples did.

The other account of women learning from Jesus is found in John 4:1-42, the longest narrative of Jesus engaging with a woman, and not just any woman, but a Samaritan woman, considered religiously unclean for her marital status. Writing from the Southern African perspective, Dube (2001: 62)²⁶ contends that the text of John 4:1-42 calls Southern African and African women to continue

²⁵ Mounce, (2000:118); Towner, (2006:214), Mouton, (2012:121), Winter (2003:77-96), (cited in Towner, (2006:215); Gaebelein, (1978:361) and Moo (1991:176).

²⁶ See Dube, (2001). She argues that the text in John 4:1-42 is our African story. The experience of the Samaritan woman with many husbands is also our own experience. The situation the Samaritan woman found herself in is related to African women, specifically, Angolan women who have been exposed to multiple forms of oppression inside and outside the church.

journeying to the well since the women are still thirsty. Dube sees that African women have been to the well many times (which she reads allegorically as the church). In Dube's sense, women represent some of God's creation that are being exploited and oppressed. Similarly, Machingura (2013:237) affirms that the social challenges which are faced when interpreting the Bible establish a vital element to understand why texts such as 1 Timothy 2: 8-15 which lean toward disadvantaging women, as are prevalent within male-dominated cultures, equally in the case of Angola.

Thus, this study understands that the text (1 Timothy 2:11-12), allows women to learn in silence and full submission; but this submission is not a physical or non-participatory learning but a positive manner in which women ought to learn in order that they understand, accept and submit to the teachings. Witherington (2006, cited in Caldwell and James, 2017:68) discloses the ideas behind the writer's imperative teachings by arguing that:

“Nothing whatsoever is said about absolute silence here, nor is anything said about women being subordinate to men in general or even about wives being subordinate to husbands. The context here is different from that in 1 Corinthians 14. The issue is submitting to the teaching of others and quietly and intently listening to it so that one might learn.”

This study would clearly agree with Witherington. The issue that the writer is addressing in the letters is one of submitting to the teaching, and the church organization (in this case the church as an institution) cannot use this verse to determine the role of women in the church and family. Both men and women are called to work side by side to support and help each other. To this end, 1 Timothy 2:11-12 has been (ab-)used as the core support for justifying the submission of women to men, for in this text the writer gives orders concerning the role of women in the church and family.

The text of 1 Timothy 2 should not be read in isolation, however, but rather be interpreted in conjunction with other texts. One important intertext is found in the letter to the Ephesians. The response of the reader of 1 Timothy 2 could be expected to be in line rather with Ephesians 4:7 *Ἐνὶ δὲ ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ* “but to each one of us grace has been given as Christ appointed it...verse 11 *καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ ἐὺαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους*. And he himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as pastors and teachers (NIV)”.

If the personal pronoun *ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν* as a partitive genitive denotes the whole of which the head noun (*ἡ χάρις*) is a part, is referring to male only, then the prohibition in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 on women teaching and having leadership roles can be understood as that women everywhere and at any given time are to be silent; for then it could be argue that Ephesians 4 supports the idea that Jesus distributed the gifts according to gender, meaning that only men are called to be pastors, prophets, evangelists

and teachers. The reason why Ephesians 4:7,11, should be used as a guiding text in this argument is that in this text Paul gives instructions on how the members in the church should work in unity, knowing that each one, both male and female, has been given different gifts to serve in the body of Christ.

However, this study would argue that the personal pronoun refers to both men and women, for they were both meant to be servants in the body of Jesus Christ. Women are called to exercise any position in the church as men do. Jesus gives the gifts according to his will, and he uses whomever he wants. This conclusion is borne out by the texts Mark 16; Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:1-12, and the account of Jesus' resurrection was given to the women (Mary Magdalene, Joana, Mary the mother of James, Salome and the others) to announce the good news that he had risen from the dead. Furthermore, in Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus Christ commands the disciples "to go and make disciples of all nations (*NIV*)". The reader argues that "all nations" includes men and women, children and adults. And in Galatians 3:28 Paul endorses this position by saying "There are neither Jews nor Gentiles, neither slaves nor free, nor there is male and female, for you are all one in Christ (*NIV*)". The study uses Galatians 3:28 because of its feminist liberating notions in favour of women's emancipation.

According to Caldwell and James (2017:69 -70)

"The apostle is surely not restricting any and all instruction that a woman might give to men, for there are ample New Testament texts which seemingly encourage women to teach. Consider the case of Priscilla and Aquilla teaching Apollos (Acts 18:24-28). Readers must also reckon with Paul's command in Colossians 3:16 that members of the church should teach one another, for there is nothing inside that text that would limit this command to men only".

This statement supports what this study has discussed above. It is supporting that the Pastor is not forbidding, neither discouraging women to teach. However, Caldwell and James (2017:74-75) contradict themselves when responding to the question, "What exactly is Paul prohibiting in 1 Timothy 2?" They understand the prohibition on a woman to teach a man as a general principle for, by teaching, she was exercising authority over the man, which goes against the God-given hierarchy through Adam's headship. So Caldwell and James argue that, "Based on Paul's prohibition (verse 12), the only role that a woman cannot be given is that of an elder, because the only responsibility she is denied is that of exercising authority through teaching men within the church, which belongs to the elder".

This interpretation supports male dominance over women, and reinforces the idea that God distributes the gifts according to gender, and thus contradicts the prophecies given to Joel 2:28-29 which says "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people, your son and daughter will prophesy, your

old man will dream dreams, your young man will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women I will pour out my Spirit (NIV)”.

In this passage, God himself sees both women and men as his servants. Women as well as men have received one Spirit from One God, who distributes his gifts not according to criteria determined by gender, cultural, political and economic boundaries through which men are acculturated to view society. So the concern of the text in 1 Timothy 2:8-15, is to instruct the young pastor Timothy to teach the congregants to behave correctly when they gather. For that he instructs men and women to obey the rules in the household of God as formulated Ephesians 5:21: “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (NIV)”.

Pastor J.L.S (2018:3) states that “É este espírito de emancipação” na atuação da mulher na igreja que desejamos ver presente nas comunidades cristãs em Angola” (translated, “we want to see an emancipatory spirit like that of Ephesians in the Christian communities in Angola”). Many Angolans believe that it is a sin for a woman to inspire leadership positions in the church, and there is also strong resistance from the men’s side with regards to women being appointed in leadership positions. In the current context, the emancipatory spirit in Angola within the churches is lacking, and this probably has to start with women.

Zuiddam (2016:282) reasons that the African ethos and traditions may well be regarded as a male-inflected social structure, and thus accommodates the traditional interpretations on the disparities concerning the genders, which is ostensibly promoted in 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

The study understands that the call for submission is grounded on the misinterpretation of the teachings that come from the (mostly, masculine) teachers. Whether emanating from a woman or a man, the important thing is that one should be appointed by God and should teach sound doctrine²⁷. This is the main concern in the letter, and might motivate the congregants to submit to one another – in particular, the women who are promoting heresies like the men Hymenaeus and Alexander, and who were going from house to house, acting like busybodies (1 Timothy 5:11-15), were supposed to be silent and should learn to submit, since they were misleading people in faith communities.

If any contemporary church is facing the same issue, then it is important to take this passage and apply it in the most responsible manner so that the text will not perpetuate what the original author did not intend to say to his audience.²⁸ Thus this study will agree with Tzabedze (1989:86) who

²⁷ 1 Timothy 1:3-4: “As I urged you when I went to Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrine any longer, or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculation rather than advancing God’s work (NIV)”.

²⁸ This study agrees with Machingura, (2013:238) who argues that invocation of 1 Timothy 2: 11-12 to silence contemporary women ecclesiastically is done out of context so as to serve patriarchy and those sympathetic to it.

strongly suggests that “the church has no reason to deny women full participation in the ministry. The prime issue that is involved in the texts of 1 Timothy and Ephesus is that these should be understood in terms of their concern about giving pastoral guidance in ecclesiastical matters”.

Therefore, this study agrees with B.A.P. (2018:2)²⁹ that it is not responsible to interpret 1 Timothy 2:11-15 as encouraging the notion that women are not allowed to teach in the church merely for the reason that they are women. The point of the text, rather, is that just as no men should be allowed to teach if they are not qualified to do so, so also women.

Summer (2003:261) argues that the prohibitions placed on the women in Ephesus were due to the writer’s mission to the Gentiles in light of the goddess’ worship in the city. Therefore, it was imperative for the pastor’s church to remind the young pastor Timothy that Adam was created first and that Adam was not deceived. In the same way the writer wanted Timothy to remind the church congregants that God was not a goddess and Artemis was not the Messiah.³⁰ In the ancient world of the New Testament, the main concern was the articulation of truth and facts by the orator in order to convince the audience (Penner and Lopez, 2012:40).

Therefore, when reading the text of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 it is important to look at the main issue which was sound doctrine that many had abandoned in favor of myths and endless genealogies (1 Timothy 1:3-4). And since those false teachings were bringing about controversies, the Pastor’s church was concerned that the true and sound doctrine should be preached, for he urges Timothy and the congregants to pray for everyone because God wishes that everyone come to the knowledge of the truth. So, if the women in Ephesus were usurping authority or teaching or were subordinate toward their husbands based on the assumption that woman came first and then the man, then the writer refutes this idea as not true and affirms that it is the other way round. Adam was created first, then

²⁹ It suggests three lessons that are to be taken from the text: “primeiro, as mulheres devem submissão a seu esposo pelo simples facto ele ser o cabeça e ser alguém que ama e tem o dever de lhe proteger de qualquer mal, principalmente dos falsos mestres. Segundo a mulher não pode querer usurpar a autoridade do homem no lar. E terceiro, as mulheres, assim como os homens, devem aprender bem antes de querer ensinar”. Translation: “First, women owe submission to their spouses for the simple fact that he is the head and someone who loves and has a duty to protect her from any evil, especially from false teachers. Secondly women must not usurp the authority of the man in the home. And thirdly, women, as well as men, must learn well before they want to teach”. The position presented by B.A.P is doggedly in line with the patriarchal way of thinking in relation to woman. Man and woman were given responsibility to care for and protect each other, it is not exclusively man who can protect woman. And what protects woman from wrong teaching is not the husband but the spirit of discernment and knowledge of the word of God given by Christ through the Spirit. For many women in Angola have been deceived by false prophets, and their husbands are unable to protect them from such, because most of them are unbelievers, still others are believers, but without solid knowledge of the word of God to oppose the false teaching propagated by false prophets.

³⁰ This issue has been presented in 1 Timothy 2:4-7, “who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle. I am telling the truth, I am not lying and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles” (NIV).

Eve. Therefore, in terms of argumentation the writer is pointing to a historical chronological order, rather than fiction, that is why he made two statements in his arguments 1 Timothy 2:7b: “I am telling the truth, not lying”; and in 3:1a “here is a trustworthy saying.” (NIV).

Witherington (cited by Briggs, 2009:154) interprets the text in the way that brings more justice to the text as reflected in the main issue in the Pastoral letter. He proposes that 1 Timothy 2:11-12 should be read as: “let (these) women learn, so that as they go on to teach they will understand the Gospel of which they are trying to speak. The illustration of Adam and Eve similarly reaches its culmination in Eve’s lack of correct teaching.”³¹

The leaders should not put so much prominence on the gender roles which the social order, the church in general and African values have consigned to women and in which the Bible was often used to perpetuate. The focus should be on each human being according to the Biblical truth, regardless of their gender, social status, culture or any other factor, to discover for themselves through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, what they are called to do in the church or society. They should be allowed to exercise their gift to contribute in preparing the church for its ministry, in order that the household of God which is the church, may be built up well³² (Njoroge, 2006:1497).

Because of the deeply entrenched patriarchal, hierarchal and sexist attitudes and practices and the male-dominated leadership in many of the churches in Angola, women have a critical and prophetic role to play. Women must stand up and speak if God has called them to do so. They should be confident with their calling and step up to empower the church for the advancement of God’s kingdom here on earth.

To date, women in Angola, like in many other parts of Africa, have been deprived of leadership positions as well as their capability to preach or teach, to pastor, to evangelise and minister among other church duties; the prohibition harks back to a specific interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11–15, in particular. In Angola some churches within the Evangelical circles have already disregarded the patriarchal interpretations of the Scripture (particularly 1 Timothy 2:11-15) and given space for women to teach and be ordained for pastoral and other positions in the church.

The First Baptist Church is one example of an Evangelical church in Angolan which ordains women as evangelists and for pastoral ministry. The Evangelical Pentecostal church allows women to preach

³¹ For Briggs, (2019:154) Witherington’s interpretation resonates a balance of background information and factually acceptable explanations to description for anything being said, without demanding that men and women today read the NT text so as to require women not to teach.

³² According to Ephesians 4:12.

and teach but they do not ordain them as pastors, evangelists, nor give them other ministerial positions.³³ Since the struggle for women to attain positions of leadership and teaching positions is a challenge particularly within the Evangelical churches, the reader would urge the leaders within Evangelical circles to learn with others in an ecumenical manner. This will create a mutual understanding for Evangelical Church leaders on how to open the space for possible debates and to learn from other denominations' experiences. This will also help these churches as to how they will resolve the problem, and assist them in exploring the advantages or the progress that the church is making about the ordination of women and assist them in calling their own church to account.

The study suggests that women must be given the opportunity and freedom to develop a permanent role in the life of the church on equal terms with men. To evoke the text of 1 Timothy 2: 9-15 or even 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 in order to justify the restrictions that are imposed on the female ministry today, is to ignore some basic rules of hermeneutics and good biblical interpretation. We conclude that the literal application of the Pastor's instructions serve only to reaffirm reigning cultural norms, and when the text is read in church, it perpetuates threefold oppression, namely exploitation, marginalization and disempowerment (Jones, 2000:78).

One agrees with Muchingura, (2013:243) that "dynamics and challenges surrounding 1 Timothy 2: 11-12 in both hermeneutics and exegesis should be the guiding factor in liberating women from the social, economic, religious and cultural oppressive placement of women's roles in society". Similarly, Kanyoro (2001:163) advises that in trying to deal with the issue of oppression of African women, we must consider a safe space and safe environment of mutual trust between men and women. Such a safe environment will provide for a dialogical model to take root. Since the oppression of women in Africa involves social, economic, religious and cultural issues, Kanyoro (2001:164) suggests that cultural hermeneutics is an important first step towards liberating African women. She sees that all questions concerning the welfare and status of women in Africa are observed through the framework of culture. According to Kanyoro (2001:164) "it is not enough simply to analyse culture without reference to the people who maintain the culture and on whom the culture impacts". Hence, both Muchingura and Kanyoro point out that employing cultural hermeneutics and exegesis should be

³³ In the Evangelical Pentecostal church, women are given positions only as secretaries or deaconesses and this happens mostly only when the husband is a pastor. Leadership positions for women exist only within women ministries. There is no restriction for women to attend a theological seminary, or acquire a degree in theology, but they are not ordained for ministry. Some are great evangelists and through them the church has grown considerably, but they are not regarded as more than deaconesses. Deaconesses In the church the term refers to those women who help with the cleaning of the church, decoration of the church and preparation for the Holy Communion. Since children are not baptized in the Evangelical Pentecostal Church, when the children are brought to church for the first time, those women are responsible for taking the babies to the pastors or ministers to be dedicated and prayed for.

considered in the Evangelical Church of Angola so that women may experience liberating theology in the church.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the challenge of being a church in Angola in relation to the interpretation of the text 1 Timothy 2:11-15. It first provided a social and cultural analysis of the situation of women in Angola. The experiences of some Angolan women are somehow similar to the first Mediterranean world in which women were considered inferior to men and therefore created for different roles. The similarity is situated especially in the male's being seen as provider, protector, the head of the family, and the female as domestic manager tasked with bearing and nurturing children.

The two Angolan pastors cited in this chapter show how leaders in the church understand, analyse, and interpret the text 1 Timothy 2:11-15. The chapter recorded further that African interpretations of this text shows that male dominance still influences the use of Scripture to perpetuate gender roles of both men and women. This reinforces the marginalisation of women from acquiring leadership positions in the church. It also suggests that Angolan culture should be re-examined and should not be offended by anything considered as deviation from the traditional social patterns, as it was in Ephesus. Therefore, the study concludes by saying that the Evangelical Churches in Angola should not continue using this text to oppress and restrict women from realizing their full potential in the church.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate the “woman, teaching and leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 with reference to the Angolan context, by means of rhetorical-critical analysis. The intended aim of the study was to assess the use of 1 Timothy 2: 11-15 by the Evangelical churches in Angola to silence women. The argument focused on 1 Timothy 2:11-15 but also in its immediate context, on 1 Timothy 1-2:8-10.

This analysis was piloted by an attentive rhetorical interpretation approach to the text. Therefore it made use of secondary literature. Throughout the study various ideologies or definitions of women were borne in mind, and it was stressed that the text of 1 Timothy was a response to group of women at the time of writing, who were changing the social patterns or ideologies and roles due to the false teachings that infiltrated in the Household of God. The study looked at the socio-historical context of the text, and superimposed a modern world interpretation on the same text.

What follows in this concluding chapter aims to demonstrate to what extent the study has achieved this aim.

6.2 Summary

Timothy 2:11-15 addresses the prohibition of woman to teach and exercise leadership positions. It also reflects a male-domination dispensation. Therefore, the text challenges contemporary reading to reinterpret it and apply it in accordance with its context.

The exegesis in Chapter 2 of the rhetorical situation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 revealed the various linguistic difficulties in understanding the restrictions enforced upon women. Those difficulties were based mainly on the uses of ἡσυχία (quietness) and πάση ὑποταγῇ (full submission) in 1 Timothy 2:11, as well as in verse 12: διδάσκειν δὲ γυναικὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω: οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός (I do not permit women to teach neither exercise authority over man or husband).

Furthermore the analogy of Adam and Eve in 1 Timothy 2:13-14 exposes a well-worked rhetorical argument in the text. Although it is clear in most of the texts in the New Testament that in the first century women were co-workers in the church, this text reinforces the cultural and patriarchal ideals on what is expected of women in and outside the household of God. As a whole the letter restricts the privilege of leadership and teaching only to males, thereby marginalizing women from teaching and exercising leadership in the church.

Chapter 2 and 3 then, responds to our first hypothesis that the author in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 was responding to a specific case within the church of Ephesus that needed the intervention of literary Paul as apostle and the founder of the church.

The text of 1 Timothy 2 shows that the author reinforced the male dominance agenda for women, placing males in key positions of leadership, in order to maintain the normative code for a reputable household as it was structured in the ancient world. The household was characterized by the idea of power allocated to man as the head, to control those under his care, and this was reinforced by the submission of women, children and slaves to the husband, father and male master. This findings of chapter 4 address our second hypothesis that the author used imperial language based on gender inequality to apply authoritative power by claiming to be one of the founding fathers of the church to determine the position of women in the body of Christ and in the process further the learning of the word of God.

The context of 1 Timothy presents various visions of the struggle of women for liberation from male-dominated society in which they were regarded as less than men, therefore restricted to the domestic sphere, under the injunction of submission toward men. The role of women in the church in 1 Timothy is restricted to functioning only among other women, instructing other women, doing good deeds, bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of Lord's people, helping those in trouble (1 Timothy 5:10). Today this text challenges the church leaders, particularly evangelicals, to free women to teach and assume leadership.

This study aimed to evaluate the use of 1 Timothy 2: 11-15 by the Evangelical churches in Angola to silence women. It sought to investigate the interpretation of the verses from the perspective of the church leadership. It investigated how the biblical culture within this passage perpetuates the oppression, restriction and silencing of women in the church's hierarchal gender construction in which the man/male is assumed to be higher than the female for the fact that he was created first, and the blame¹ put on women as the cause of the sin, quoting "1 Timothy 2:13 *For Adam was formed first, then Eve.* (NIV)". Using Ruether's (1983:13) words, the experience of women "has been almost entirely shut out of theological reflection in the past". This is the main reason this study sought to examine the interpretation of the text 1 Timothy 2:11-15 through an ideological criticism, using the Angolan scenario as a case study. Chapter 5 responds to the third hypothesis of the study that a study

¹ "Unfortunately, the Mosaic laws and other Old Testament narratives have been widely interpreted as teaching that women were responsible for the fall of men, hence the adage that 'the problems that befell humankind and the world are because of women'. In the creation story (Genesis 3: 12), a woman is portrayed as the originator of sin and death to humankind. It is then surprising when New Testament texts like 1 Timothy 2:13-15 are used to support the view that women need the leadership of and some handholding by men for them to behave harmoniously and live fruitfully in society? Therefore, the challenges are still with us today in this worthy debate about women" (Manchingua, 2013:234).

on the hermeneutical focus of 1 Tim 2:11-15 can expose the gendered setting of the text, both to expose problems in the text but also to offer alternative options for understanding the text, also for today.

6.3 Final conclusion

This study has built on existing knowledge and associated literature emanating from the academy. It has been observed that the text, 1 Timothy 2:11-15, has an historical issue in relation to women. As a result, it has applied wrongly by both men and women, especially in the Angolan context. The experiences of some women in Angola have not been well-documented and have been left unexamined. Hence, the main claim of this study was that the gendered rhetoric in the text is so diverse that it includes issues influencing interpretations, since they relate to gender roles in the Angolan context. It has been observed that some Evangelical pastors were operating within religious and socially constructed definitions of inequalities of freedom and privilege compared especially to their beliefs within the already held doctrinal teachings of the priesthood of all believers.

This sought to make an academic contribution to the debate in the struggle against the myriad of injustices carried out against women. Furthermore, an examination of the text 1 Timothy 2:11-15 has revealed that the gendered rhetoric of the text is discussed regarding the manner in which it relates to the lifestyles or lived realities of the first century Greek and Roman worldview. It is in this latter regard, that this study sought to make a significant theological contribution towards this gap in knowledge.

Another observation worth consideration is the fact that because women's experiences have been marginalized throughout the ages of the Christian tradition, any research on the experience of even only Angolan women is of significance to African theological research.

While there are multiple socio-cultural and religious-theological factors that conspire and contribute towards the misinterpretations of 1 Timothy 2:11-15, the construction of the identity of both men and women in the Angolan context and their roles, as presented in this study, are significant and unique in terms of the experiences of both men and women who face oppression.

The analysis of the findings on the text 1 Timothy 2:11-15 concerns the roles of women. In this regard, it is significant to note that the pastors whose voices have been recorded in this study acknowledged that both men and women are called to teach the word of God. This is a unique contribution to new knowledge because previous studies have shown a growing separation of women from their male counterparts in ministry.

In terms of gaps identified for further research, it is noted that since no study can exhaust all that can be known about the interpretations of the Scriptures, this study has identified gaps in the following areas: 1) violence and oppression of women's right to teach and be leaders; 2) women preaching the word of God in the Evangelical Churches; 3) the ordination of women in the Evangelical Churches in Angola; 4). This study has demonstrated that a plurality of perspectives contribute to the construction of the identity of women in the Evangelical churches in Angola. These perspectives include: doctrinal or biblical, ecclesiastical, congregational, and cultural constructions. This is in addition to the alternatives suggested by feminist theologians cited in this study.

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