

**Social-educational Responsibilities of Women,
According to the First Epistle to Timothy of the Apostle Paul**

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Abstract: *Our study examines the recommendations addressed to the women of Ephesus in Paul's first letter to Timothy. For a proper understanding of the circumstances in which these exhortations were made, a brief description of the cultural, social, economic and religious context of Ephesus was made in the first century AD. Issues related to women's clothing and how they should have been shown in society are addressed. In addition, it analyzes the recommendations that Saint Paul made to women in the city in an attempt to counter extravagance and elitism. Women should consider the work of spreading the gospel and of dealing with the ministers who have been entrusted with this sacred mission, stating that it excludes the possibility that the analyzed fragment is interpreted as an argument for men's support for women. It is emphasized the importance of maternity, against which the women of Ephesus showed themselves with restraint, being influenced by the heresy of the victims. Salvation is not conditioned by the birth of children, unless salvation is understood as a denial of heretical doctrine; therefore, recommendations addressed to women highlight aspects of the genuine living experience of the Christian doctrine that they have assumed in the past, but abandoned it in favor of heresy.*

Keywords: clothing, personal ornaments, temperance, quietness, submission, procreation.

Introduction

The First Epistle to Timothy was written from the author's need to warn Timothy, and the community of Ephesus on the risks represented by the various religious and cultural movements that have proven tempting for at least a part of the community. The text of the Epistle gives clues as well on the ideological content of these movements, in the sense that it was appealed to some Jewish myths, genealogies, speculation (1 Timothy 1:4; 4:7; 2 Timothy 4:4; Titus 1:14); wanton questions and quarrels regarding the Law (Titus 3:9); banning marriage and abstinence from food (1 Timothy 4:1-3.); disputes over certain words (1 Timothy 6:4; 2 Timothy 2:14.); concern for alleged high knowledge (γνώσις), empty words (1 Timothy 6:20); the belief that the resurrection had already taken place (2 Timothy 2:18); they have the appearance of true faith, but deny its power (2 Timothy 3:5); it is a false science (1 Timothy 6:20). Regarding the identity of the promoters of these ideologies, the text of the letter states that they are: Law teachers - νομοδιδάσκαλοι (1 Timothy 1:7); those circumcised - περιτομή (Titus 1:10); 1 Timothy 5:19-20, suggests that old people from the community were involved, representing a real threat to the author (1 Timothy 4:1-4; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Titus 1:10-11); they had unexpected results at the level of private homes (2 Timothy 3:6; Titus 1:11); and in order to achieve their goal, they

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appealed to women in the community who were easier to persuade (2 Timothy 3:6-7); and have become an important agent to promote new ideologies in their spheres of influence. The author approaches each specific element in the epistle, the subject of this study relating to a series of restrictive recommendations for the women in Ephesus, and aims to highlight their motivation and, above all, the social and educational responsibilities that emerge from them.

The fragment dedicated to the women of Ephesus is included in the First Epistle to Timothy in chapter 2:9-15:

In like manner also, in which women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becomes women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

It must be said that these exhortations are part of a wider series of recommendations, from chapters 2 and 3 of the epistle, directed to different social categories: first some general exhortations, then there are some recommendations for men, servants (slaves), bishops and deacons, and their families, their purpose being summed up by the statement: *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth* (3:15). On the other hand, it is particularly relevant that this fragment, dedicated to women, is marked at the beginning (verse 9) and at its end (verse 15) by the term *σωφροσύνη* - *wisdom, reasonableness, moderation, self-control, propriety, good judgment*, which determines us to believe that this aspect was taken into account by the author when he wrote his writing.

In order to understand the meaning of these recommendations, a minimum radiography of the context that caused such concerns from the author is necessary. First it should be mentioned that Timothy was Paul's delegate in the city of Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3), and this Mediterranean city enjoyed a special glow in the richest province of the Roman Empire, occupying the fourth place as importance within the empire, after Rome, Alexandria and the Syrian Antioch, with a population of about 250,000 people¹. The archeological discoveries here (theater, library, streets guarded by stone columns, terraced houses with indoor baths, sculptures, mosaics, coins, inscriptions) betray an aristocratic, cultivated and very prosperous air. From a religious point of view, the city was dominated by the cult of the

¹ E. Yamuchi, *The Archaeology of New Testament Cities in Western Asia Minor*, Grand Rapids, Baker, 1980, p. 79.

goddess Artemis², which had its peculiarities, having the title of “Artemis of the Ephesians” (Acts 19:28, 34). The literary evidence of the time³ indicate that she was considered the city’s protector without being associated with maternity or domestic life, but rather maidenlike and untamed in the narrowest sense of the word, and the priestesses from her temple were virgins, wives who were sexually inactive or widowed women⁴. According to the same sources, connections were established between the Artemisian cult and the Amazon women⁵, fact which explains why the goddess was associated with virginity and protection. The extent of the cult of the goddess Artemis was so great that the great Pausanias said “all the cities worship Artemis of Ephesus”⁶.

The popularity of the cult of the goddess Artemis seems to have experienced a decline during the preaching of St. Paul in the city of Ephesus; the book of Acts accounts for a rebellion led by the silversmith Demetrius, against the evangelists, on the grounds of compromising their income from the sale of the silver statuettes of Artemis (Acts 19:23-20:1); Following this revolt, St. Paul had to leave the city, heading for Macedonia. All this adds a strong conviction to the fulfillment of the public resurrection (2 Timothy 2:8) and therefore of experience, of fellowship to eschatological life.

Therefore, this is broadly the economic, social, cultural and religious framework that characterized Ephesus during the pastoral activity of St. Timothy, to whom St. Paul addressed this epistle.

I. In his approach to addressing women in the Ephesian community, the author proves first of all that he is concerned about three aspects that should be acquired by them: 1. a proper dress code; 2. the concern about inner beauty; 3. practicing good deeds.

² Antipater, the general remained in the leadership of Macedonia and Greece after Alexander’s death, when he first saw the statue of the goddess Artemis, compared it to the other wonders: "I have set eyes on the wall of lofty Babylon on which is a road for chariots, and the statue of Zeus by the Alpheus, and the hanging gardens, and the colossus of the Sun, and the huge labor of the high pyramids, and the vast tomb of Mausoleum; but when I saw the house of Artemis that mounted to the clouds, those other marvels lost their brilliancy, and I said, 'Lo, apart from Olympus, the Sun never looked on aught so grand. Antipater of Sidon, Greek Anthology" (IX.58) http://penelope.uchicago.edu/~grout/encyclopaedia_romana/greece/paganism/artemis.html, accessed on 01. 10. 2018.

³ Strabo (years 63/64 BC-AD 24), *Geography* 14.6; K. Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece: Ancient Artists and Roman Rulers*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 186.

⁴ M. P. O. Morford and R. J. Lenardon, *Classical Mythology*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 200-212. Cf. Nicolae-Olimpiu Benea, "Perspective Teologice ale Rugăciunii de Mulțumire din Epistola Către Coloseni," in *Astra Salvensis*, VI (2018), no. 12, p. 463.

⁵ S. L. Glahn, *The Identity of Artemis in First-Century Ephesus*, in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 172:678 (BSac 172:687 (July-September 2015) p. 322; M. P. O. Morford and R. J. Lenardon, *Classical Mythology*, p. 212.

⁶ M. P. O. Morford and R. J. Lenardon, *Classical Mythology*, p. 212.

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1. The first recommendation addressed to women in Ephesus focuses on external aspects such as clothing and various practices used to decorate hair. Modern psycho-social research has come to the conclusion that clothing is conceptualized "as a tangible object or material attached to the human body"⁷ and carries with it an important system of meanings, such as social, material status, membership to a particular group or geographical region, professional category, having the purpose, by design, color, shape, to form a signaling system⁸, which explains the attention paid by the author.

In addressing these issues, the author uses the term *καταστολή-clothing*, which according to the language of the times "meant more than the outer garment, because it includes the idea of the inner person, so the attitude, the behavior"⁹, therefore the transition from appearances to essentials is very common throughout this fragment.

Urging women to be concerned about the propriety of clothing, in order to clarify the perception of clothing, St. Paul adds two terms to highlight the accents and nuances of adopting an appropriate dress code.

a) The first recommendation addresses the modesty and moderation that should characterize the clothing, *μετὰ αἰδοῦς καὶ σωφροσύνης* – *from shyness and sapience*. *Αἰδῶς* (*modesty, a sense of shame*) is not a very common term in biblical writings, we only find it in Hebrews 12:28, associated with *εὐλαβεία* – *evlavie*, describing the benevolent worship before God. Bultmann suggests that it shows respect to God, to a priest, an oath, to his parents, to the guests; at the same time he thinks it is the antonym of *ὑβρις* - *insolence, indulgence, insolent person*, and is synonymous with *εὐσέβεια* - *respect*¹⁰, so it indicates "a proper reverence for a particular person or situation, a shade that fits our context."¹¹ About the second term of the pauline expression

⁷ S. B. Kaiser, *The social psychology of clothing and personal adornment*, New York, Publishing Company Macmillan, 1985, p. 4.

⁸ F. Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, University of Chicago Press 1992, pp. 3-18; U. Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics "I Am Speaking through My clothes"* Indiana University Press, 1979/2007, p.144.

⁹ W. Bauer, W. D., W. A., F. & Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2000. p. 527.

¹⁰ TDNT, vol. 1, p.169.

¹¹ W. D. Mounce, Vol. 46: *Word Biblical Commentary: Pastoral Epistles*, Dallas, Word Incorporated, 2002, p.113. For this term there is no Hebrew equivalent, at most it could be a correspondent of the phrase *יראת יהוה* (*Irat-Yehva, Irat-Elohim - fear of God*), as it appears in Genesis 20:11; Isaiah 11:2; Proverbs 1:7, occurrences for which LXX has correspondents, terms that closely approximate the meaning of this Hebrew expression to the semantics of *αἰδοῦς*, *θεοσέβεια* – *reverence, piety, religiosity*(Genesis 20:11), a term that is found among the other qualities that should define the character of the Christian woman; *εὐσεβείας* – *piety, godliness, devotion* (towards God) (Isaiah 11:2), also a favorite of the author of the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy 2:2; 3:16; 4:7 *et seq*; 6:3, 5 *et seq*, 11; 2 Timothy 3:5; Titus 1:1); *φόβος* – *fear*,

σωφροσύνη, Towner notes that it is met with the Greek writers most often associated with αἰδώς, as is the case of 1 Timothy 2:9, and has a very extensive semantic area: a healthy mind or the ability to be rational; covers aspects of behavior that express such thought: prudence, self-control, restraint, modesty. For the Stoics, σωφροσύνη was one of the four cardinal virtues along with wisdom (σοφία), *courage* (ἄνδρεια), *fairness, integrity*, (δικαιοσύνη) *righteousness*. When used with reference to women, express self-control or chastity, restraint, modesty, preoccupation not to stain the husband's honor¹². Regarding biblical occurrences, we mention that it is very common throughout the pastoral letters, where it appears no less than ten times and only six times in the rest of the New Testament writings. We find it as defining in the list of virtues of a bishop (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8), of an aged man (Titus 2:2), of the young ones (Titus 2:6), of younger women (Titus 1:15). Older women have the duty and the call to help the younger to learn these qualities (Tit 2:4), God Himself is defined by this trait (2 Timothy 1:7).¹³ In all these situations the significance of σωφροσύνη, with its entire family of words has the same semantic value that “covers the same interval, from prudence and self-control to moderation, reservation, and so on”¹⁴. However, what characterizes the Pauline approach to Hellenistic thinking is the emphasis on the Christological event as the basis of such behavior. In Titus 2:11-12 expresses this explicitly because it establishes an interdependent connection between authentic Christian existence as described by three capital virtues (*temperance, righteousness and godliness* - σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς), and the acquisition of the saving grace of God¹⁵. Thus, the author's recommendations do not only concern a dimension, limited to social relations between members of the same community, as it implies a reevaluation of the relationship with God, the relevance of which is given by the act of crucifixion.

The necessity of these mentions by the author suggests that his attention was rather centered on a sense of separatism, elitism, most likely sprung from the same beliefs that they are possessors of gifts and a special

dread, terror (Proverbs 1:7). The common denominator of these terms is that they are mainly used in characterizing the authentic relationship with God.

¹² P. H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2006, p. 207.

¹³ The other New Testament occurrences (Acts 26:25 - wisdom; Romans 12:3 – to be wise; 2 Corinthians 5:13– of sound mind; Mark 5:15 – of sound mind (after exorcism); Luke 8:35 – of sound mind (after exorcism); 1 Peter 4:7 – of sound mind (with reference to the preservation of the right faith). It is easy to note that whenever NT uses this term, the semantic value is emphasized to highlight Christian virtues, the new status of the one released from the slavery of the enemy, or the ability to remain consistent with Christian values.

¹⁴ P. H. Towner, *The Letters*, p. 207.

¹⁵For more details, see P. H. Towner, *The Letters*, p. 207

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status. So the Apostle is forced to intervene to discourage and counterbalance such a current that distorts evangelical values because they represented a real risk of compromising his preaching.

b) The second recommendation addressed to women focuses on extravagant hair styles, adornments and expensive clothes, all of which *being considered inappropriate* to the true ornament that defines authentic Christian women. Previous warnings suggest that the essence of the problem was a disturbance within the community, to which contributed people with immoral and extravagant clothing, betraying infatuation, disregard, elitism and separatism. Hence the author's need to intervene with the recommendation, meaning that the woman's adornment does not consist of: *πλέγμασιν, ἢ χρυσοῦ, ἢ μαργαρίταις, ἢ ἱματισμοῦ πολυτελεῖ*- *with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array*; (1Timothy 2:9 b);¹⁶ The author's first amendment aims at haircutting and arranging hair for which he uses the term *πλέγμα*¹⁷, which literally means braiding, and refers to the complex and fancy style of hair braiding, preferred by some rich women, unlike most women who tended to be more modest in social affairs¹⁸. Gold and pearls are part of the jewelry, of the lush language and practice of the rich women of the time¹⁹ and most of the time they induced the idea of frivolity and promiscuity. This is often used by the Book of Revelation for the description of "Scarlet Woman" (17:4; 18:12, 16) or in the denunciations of the prophets as in the case of the prophet Isaiah from 3:18-24²⁰.

The clarification about "expensive clothes" completes the clothing profile that the author has intended to discourage. The qualification *πολυτελής* – *expensive, very costly, luxuriant*, is used in biblical language when it is desired to emphasize an extremely high value, as in the case of the nard ointment used to anoint the Savior (Mark 14:3; John 12:3). The terminology used by the author is meant to signal that a woman who has excessive preoccupation with expensive ornaments and expensive clothes is not faithful, for excessive preoccupation with extremely valuable things excludes the need to invoke the mercy of God²¹. Therefore, the main concern of St. Paul is to arouse interest for the inner beauty or adornment, for ultimately,

¹⁶ Similar observations can be found in 1 Peter 3:3 and aims at the wealthy women.

¹⁷ It only appears here in the writings of the New Testament, because the parallel text from 1 Peter 3:3, uses the expression *ἐμπλοκή τριχῶν* – *hair braiding*.

¹⁸ For more details on this, see P.H. Towner., *The Letters...* pp. 204-205.

¹⁹ See details: I. H. Marshall & P.H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, London; New York, T&T Clark International, 2004, p.449.

²⁰ However, at least the second term (*μαργαρίτας*) is also used positively in evangelical language that emphasizes the intrinsic value of man in relation to minor concerns (Matthew 7:6) or in the parables on the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 13:45, 46).

²¹ C. Spicq, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, translated by Ernest, J. D. Peabody, Hendrickson, 1994, p. 134.

external manifestations are the consequences of beliefs and concerns nursed internally (Matthew 12:35; Luke 6:45; Psalms 36:30; 39:12).

2. The orientation of Paul's discourse towards the plan of soul intimacy at the expense of the sumptuous obsessions is confirmed by the adversative manner with which he continues his plea. The conjunction ἄλλ' - *but*, introduces the contrast between expensive adornments and clothes denounced in the previous verse, and the inner dimension of the human being considered the main objective of Christian life²². This perception of the message is reinforced by the use of *πρέπω* – *to be right, to be appropriate*, which implies the recognition and re-assumption of abandoned standards but which have remained valid²³. Moreover, the Apostle uses, as a continuation of his plea, the term *ἐπαγγέλλομαι*— *promise*, which expresses in biblical language a promise or a solemn commitment to faithfulness, sometimes even under oath, which most often has God as subject, and also refers to the attachment of the believer to the revealed moral values²⁴. So the women of Ephesus are not made a new proposal, but they are reminded of the values they believed and assumed, but abandoned them in favor of the teachings and tempting practices of heresy. The need for rediscovery of evangelical values is defined by the term *θεοσέβεια* - *piety, godliness, religiosity*, synonymous with *εὐσεβείας*²⁵, only that it has a compound form being preceded by the noun *θεός* – *divinity, God*, and the verb *σέβω* - *to be devoted, to have fear, to worship*²⁶. Since this term is only found here in the New Testament literature, the author may have preferred to use it in this context to accurately indicate the meaning of the godliness or religious preoccupations of the women of Ephesus; they had not renounced to the religious practices, but only directed them in a disadvantageous direction. Therefore, St. Paul's appeal is about faithfulness to faith, and especially the proper manifestation of faith as a revealing and witnessing force. Thus *θεοσέβειας* recommended to the women of Ephesus is defined as authentic Christian existence involving the knowledge of God and its concrete manifestation as an affirmation of the people who witnessed the truth of their faith.²⁷

²² It's the remark of I. H. Marshall & P. H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical*, p. 451.

²³ I. H. Marshall & P. H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical...* p. 238. It is used in this way in Hebrews 7:26; Matthew 3:15; 1 Corinthians 11:13; Ephesians 5:3. Such understanding of the text certifies women's apostasy and justifies St. Paul's insistence on proper conduct.

²⁴ BDAG, p. 355 *et seq* (TDNT, vol. 2, pp. 581-585).

²⁵ W. D. Mounce, *Vol. 46: Word Biblical Commentary*, p.113.

²⁶ BDAG, p.918.

²⁷ I. H. Marshall & P. H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical*, p. 452. It is interesting that this term is used by LXX, alongside other terms that highlight moral values. Thus in Job it is used three times 1:1,8; 2:3 together with *ἀληθινός*, - true; *ἄμεμπτος* – chastely; *δίκαιος* - right; *ἄκακος* – without wickedness; 28:28 together with *σοφία* – wisdom; so are the qualities required from the judges appointed by Moses in Exodus 18:21 etc. See TDNT, vol. 3, p. 125; I. H. Marshall & P. H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical*, p. 452.

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3. The practical dimension of Christian life is emphasized by the emphasis on the testimony of gestures, acts; from the interiorized and declarative level of reporting to Christian values, the transition to the palpable level of "good deeds" is done, as evidence and testimony of the inner preoccupations. The transition from the inner dimension to the concrete aspect of Christian life is mediated by the introduction of the preposition $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ - *through*, in a construction with the genitive that gives the preposition and genitival expression an instrumental role²⁸. Thus $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\alpha\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\acute{\alpha}$ – *good deeds*, describes the entire Christian existence in its observable dimension, on the other hand, it acquires a misiological dimension of the Christian existence, which has the objective of training and involving the people who have noticed the beauty and depth of Christian life (Romans 12:17; 13:1-7; 1Tes. 4:12; 1Pt. 2:12). The repetitive and insistent way about the practical dimension of Christian life induces the idea that the women of Ephesus, convinced of their eschatological status, have abandoned the practice of virtues, preferring a more convenient, more comfortable version of religious life²⁹, by virtue of fellowship to the eschatological experience. Such a belief made useless any concern about the fulfillment of the requirements of the Pauline Gospel.

These insights allow us to make a few findings that will provide more insight into the Ephesian heresy and the roles assumed by the women of Ephesus to the detriment of the balance and solidity of the Christian community in the city.

a) First, it is clear that the women of Ephesus were very rich and influential in the community;

b) Their influence was unfavorable to the values of Paul's gospel;

c) There was a clear connection between the behavior of the women of Ephesus and the disturbances in this city;

d) The condemnation by the author of clothing and luxuriant adornments is justified by the differences, separatism and infatuation involving them;

e) The ideal of living is still not attained, as the heretics claimed by their fellowship in eschatological life, which justifies the preoccupation for the embodiment of evangelical values by each person.

f) The author's preoccupation for inner values ($\alpha\iota\delta\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \sigma\omega\varphi\rho\sigma\omicron\upsilon\nu\eta\varsigma$) can be justified by the fact that women who had adopted the principles of heresy had morals opposite these values.

g) Excessive preoccupation with ornaments, elaborate clothing and social image betrays the abandonment of gospel values;

²⁸ For the instrumental value of preposition $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ with the genitive see: TDNT, vol. 2, p. 66.

²⁹ H. Balz and G. Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1990, p. 50.

h) The special emphasis on authentic piety (θεοσέβεια) suggests that superficiality had become a defining characteristic for the religiosity of the Ephesian women;

II. Starting with verse 11, a new subject is centered around the behavior of women. The main problem addressed by the author is that of the inappropriate role that women have assumed to participate in the missionary work. Verses 11-12 contain solutions, and the following verses are arguments for the author's decision that this mission should be forbidden to women, while at the same time expressing the right alternative to participate in social and educational-religious life.

The peculiarity of verse 11, within the whole fragment, consists in the fact that from the beginning the transition from the use of the plural (γυναῖκας – *the women*, 1Timothy 2:9), that is, from a generic approach to the use of the singular (γυνή – *the woman*, 1Timothy 2:11) is done, with the intention of the author to “establish a generally valid principle”³⁰.

The first sentence “*Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection*” (verse 11), at first sight has nothing restrictive in it, but it is so only at first glance. Even though the verb μανθάνω is synonymous with the verb διδάσκω – *to teach, to train*, however, the synonymy is not perfect. Unlike διδάσκω, this verb takes into account the initial Christian instruction taught by a teacher (Romans 16:17, 1 Corinthians 14:31, 35; Ephesians 4:20, Philippians 4:9; Colossians 1:7), sense which is confirmed by its semantics in the terminology of Greek philosophy³¹. Rengstorf notes that from many of the linguistic findings and the research of various passages, one can find, rather, that μανθάνω is a true sign for the apprentice, the pupil, the pupil (this finding is also confirmed by the fact that μανθάνω is part of the same family of words with the verb μαθητεύω – *to make disciples*, and with the derived noun μαθητής – *disciple*, which opens the perspective of a new sense, rather than **to learn**, namely, **to apprentice**). This semantic perspective correspond to the purpose of preaching the gospel in the sense that the Lord does not intend to provide information, but to awaken the desire for a commitment to Himself, as expressed in Matthew 11:29: *learn of Me* (μάθετε ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ), *for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls*; in John 8:31 He expresses himself very clearly in this sense when He tells the Jews who believed in Him: *If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine*; (μαθηταί μου ἐστέ). We can therefore say that the primary meaning of this verb, in biblical language, is only revealed when the subject of action is Christ, and the action of the verb is reflected upon those who are willing to be the receivers of the evangelical message³². Toward these semantic valences

³⁰ P.H. Towner, *The Letters*, p. 212.

³¹ TDNT, vol. 4, p. 399.

³² TDNT, vol. 4, p. 406-407.

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of *μανθάνω*, we are also guided through the observation of its use in the Pastoral Epistles. In three (1 Timothy 5:4, 13; Titus 3:14) of four occurrences, *μανθάνω* has a reflexive meaning, as it actually appears in the synodal translation, which once again indicates the target on which its action is taken. These explanations reveal the true meaning of Paul's first recommendation in this fragment. The author, however, does not propose to the Ephesian women the involvement in the preaching activity, but the introspection, the reflection, the return to the apprenticeship status, from which they have fallen away, following their own choices, and by embracing a lesson that is more enticing and seductive than the spirit of the Gospel. The responsibility for proclaiming and spreading the word of the Gospel does not belong to the one who is still an apprentice, but to those who have been entrusted with this mission (1 Timothy 1:18; 1 Timothy 3:2; 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:2).

The process of learning requires a positive atmosphere in the author's vision, *ἡσυχία* – quiet, in the view of some commentators it could be understood as absolute silence, or as silence in the sense of not learning³³, or to keep silence while someone is talking (Acts 22:3), but it can also mean quietness³⁴, but the closest sense is to be in peace, to enjoy loneliness and to have peace (2 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 Timothy 2:2), or to keep quiet while someone else is talking (Acts 22:2), suggesting consideration to the teacher. In our context, the right context is indicated by the context of the writing: "*ἡσυχία* must be understood according to the background of the situation in Ephesus described particularly in 1 Timothy 5:13-15: ... *some are already turned aside after Satan, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not*"³⁵, idea resumed in 2 Timothy 3:7: *Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

³³ J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (BNTC), San Francisco, Harper and Row, 1968, p. 68; M. Dibelius, & H. Conzelmann, *The Pastoral epistles a commentary on the Pastoral epistles*. Translation of *Die Pastoralbriefe*, 4th rev. ed. by H. Conzelmann. *Hermeneia - A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972, p. 47. W. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, Washington, University of America, 1982, p. 244.

³⁴ B. Witherington, III. *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians, Volume I: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John*, Downers Grove, Nottingham, England, IVP Academic; Apollos., 2006, p. 225.

³⁵ W. D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 117, here is also an inventory of the occurrences of this term in the New Testament writings. The noun *ἡσυχία* appears only four times in the NT. The related adjective *ἡσυχίος*, *quiet*, appears only two times, and the verb *ἡσυχάζειν*, *be quiet*, appears four times. It looks like the group *ἡσυχία* has maintained the same basic meaning among commentators. Four times in the NT, the group of words means *silence*: The Pharisees are silent when Jesus asks if He can heal on the Sabbath (Luke 14:4); the Judaizers are silent when Peter tells them that the Spirit has come upon the Gentiles (Acts 11:18); The Ephesians cease to insist when they realize that Paul is determined to go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:14); those who rebelled against Paul made peace when they heard Paul speaking in

Silence or quiet attitude is conjugated to another imperative, ἐν πάσῃ ὑποτάξει, - *with all obedience*, and serves as enlightening regarding ἡσυχία³⁶. Therefore, the *quiet learning* of the Ephesian women means, above all, to learn in a submissive manner. Any deviation from this dimension of Christian living favors the premises of social disorder that is at the antipodes of the providence plan through which all beings are ordered in a hierarchy with very well defined roles. Therefore, assuming an inappropriate role translates into a form of usurpation of power, authority on the one hand, and deviations from the right role within the community in which you are ordained, resulting in failure and compromise of τέλος, the ultimate goal of the entire community. Thus, the author's recommendation for obedience and submission is to realize the importance of assuming the appropriate role of each member of the community, of women in this case. It is not a power entrustment to some people, and the establishment of others as being owed to a degrading ministry; in the context of social-religious order “authority and obedience are not opposites but together ensure the stability and order of the whole, provided that each retains its place”³⁷.

The meaning of the recommendations in verse 11 is clearer clarified in the following verse by two prohibitions: Γυναικὶ δὲ διδάσκειν οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω, οὐδὲ ἀθθεντεῖν ἀνδρός (*I do not allow (tolerate) the woman to teach (another) or to master the man, male*) and by resuming the expression ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ. The author's intervention is vehement, categorical and marked by the

Aramaic (Acts 22:2). Four times the word group means a *quiet life*. Paul tells the Thessalonians to live in peace (ἡσυχάζειν), to think about their things and to work with their hands (1 Thessalonians 4:11); he tells them later to do their own work in silence (μετὰ ἡσυχίας), and earn their own lives (2 Thessalonians 3:12); Peter says women should have a quiet spirit (ἡσυχίου πνεύματος) (1 Peter 3:4).

³⁶ In biblical language the noun ὑποτάξει and the corresponding verb ὑποτάσσειν are used on the one hand to express the dominion of Christ over the whole being, as we can see from the following texts: Psalms 8:7; Ephesians 1:22; Philippians 3:21; Hebrews 2:8; 1 Peter 2:24; the angels are equally subordinate (Hebrews 2:5; 1 Peter 3,22); the Church is subject to the Lord (Ephesians 5:24); Luke uses the verb to describe the involuntary submission of demons to the disciples (Luke 10:17, 20; on the other hand they are meant to indicate the obedience of ordinary people to God, to His law, also to one another in order to cooperate (1 Corinthians 16:16), in fear of God (Ephesians 5:21), at the same time it defines the relationship with the superiors or authorities, as evidenced by Titus 3:1; Romans 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2, 13-14; of the spouses with their husbands (Titus 2:5; Colossians 3:18; Ephesians 5:22; 1 Peter 3:1), of the children with the parents (1 Timothy 3:4, compare Luke 2:51), of slaves towards masters (1 Timothy 6:1-2; 1 Peter 2:18) and of the spiritual sons to their spiritual fathers (1 Peter 5:5). Therefore obedience or submission is a fundamental coordinate of every man who received the baptism, and, according to St. Peter, the Christian could receive the title of son of obedience (1 Peter 1:2, 22). For more details, see G. Delling, *TDNT*, 8:41-45, 46, C. Spicq, *Theological Lexicon*, p. 424.

³⁷ Lévêque, P. Vidal-Naquet, *Clisthène l'Aténien*, Paris, 1964, p. 77, *apud* Spicq, *ibidem*. For more details, see G. Delling, *TDNT*, vol. 8, pp. 41-45, 46.

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imperative οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω (I do not allow), which together with βούλομαι, (I want), from 1 Timothy 2:8; 5:14; Titus 3:8, “enters the register (vocabulary) of the apostolic authority”³⁸ to which the author resorts to counteract the new and opposing situations of the gospel that the community faces³⁹. On the other hand, the personal note imparted to this ban (οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω - *I do not allow*), has the tone of a new command that “is not based on a tradition but rather is an ad-hoc solution to a recently encountered situation”⁴⁰. The object of the ban is clarified by the two infinitives accompanying it: διδάσκειν - *to teach* and αὐθεντεῖν - *to master, to be authoritarian*.

The natural question is directed to motivating these interdictions, especially in some situations when women were entrusted with a teaching role within the Christian communities. The Book of Acts records many situations that confirm this: 18:26 indicates that Priscilla and Aquila played a major role in Apollo’s deepening of Christian teaching, and the text seems to suggest a primary role for Priscilla in this process. Moreover, some women were involved in the prophetic work, the daughters of deacon Philip (Acts 21:9) or those mentioned in 1 Corinthians 11:5, among the apostles are included women like Junia (Romans 16:7) or other women involved in the evangelical ministry (Romans 16:1-3; Philippians 4:2). Pastoral Epistles are no exception to such recommendations, older women are urged to share the good teaching (καλοδιδασκαλώ - *to learn the good*) to the youngest as well as these to be wise (σωφρονιζῶσιν - *to be moderate, wise, calm, right-minded*) (Titus

³⁸ P. H. Towner, *The Letters*, p. 216.

³⁹ Although the form of the verb is in Present, it has printed the Imperative contextual force of verse 11. This verb can have very strong significance, being frequently used in a legal context, as found by J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, London: Hodder, 1930, p. 249. Further on, at Paul, 1 Corinthians 14:34 (women are not allowed to speak in the church) and 16:7 (Paul wants to spend time with the Corinthians, if the Lord allows them, cf. Hebrews 6:3). Elsewhere in the NT, he describes the divorce permission by Moses (Matthew 19:8; Mark 10:4), of demons to go into pigs (Mark 5:13; Luke 8:32), to participate in the funeral of his father (Matthew 8:21; Luke 9:59), to say good-bye before becoming an apprentice (Luke 9:61) and to descend Jesus’ body from the Cross, by Joseph of Arimathea (John 19:38). The word is also used in Paul’s request for permission to speak before the accusers (Acts 21:39, 40), before Agrippa (Acts 26:1), or to emphasize the indulgence of a centurion (Acts 27:3) and the Roman authorities (Acts 28:16). The idea is that if the semantic force of the word is authoritative, the use of the Indicative does not diminish its force. The Imperative from verse 11 has already set the tone of the passage. It can also be argued that the switch from βούλομαι - *I wish* (verse 8, itself a strong term), to the most powerful *to allow*, signals an increasing sense of authority. For more details on the semantics of this verb, see Mounce, W. D. (2002), vol. 46: *Word Biblical Commentary: Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, Dallas, Word, Incorporated), p. 121.

⁴⁰ P. H. Towner, *The Letters...*, p. 216. In support of this statement Towner mentions the finding of Witherington, from *Women in the Earliest Churches*, p.120, where he points out the difference from the impersonal formula in 1 Corinthians 14:34: οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν - *they are not allowed...*

2:3-4); among Paul's advice and appraisal of Timothy is shown the urge to keep the faith of his mother and grandmother, and is praised his familiarity with the Scriptures since his early childhood. Thus the author indirectly attributes to Timothy's mother and grandmother the merit of his initiation into the inspired values of Holy Scripture⁴¹. Therefore, the context of the pastoral letters, and not only, limits the universal application⁴² of this first prohibition. However, the restrictive commandment must be justified by a serious situation, put in causal relationship with the message of the texts (2 Timothy 3:6 *et seq*; 5:14 *et seq*, Revelation 2:20).

Identifying a concrete answer regarding the distinction between what is permitted and forbidden to Ephesian women in taking an educational role, represents the elucidation of the dilemma generated by the firm and restrictive tone of the author.

The priority given by the author to the verb διδάσκω – *to teach*, versus all the other verbs in the sentence, indicates the author's emphasis on this approach and contrasts with the previous verb μανθανέτω – *to be learned*⁴³. As we have mentioned above these two verbs are not perfect synonyms, and the verb διδάσκω – *to teach*, next to the noun διδασκαλία – *teaching*, (of the 22 occurrences in the Pauline writings, 15 are found in the Pastoral Letters)⁴⁴, and other terms in the same family of words, in the context of the New Testament writings, refer to the apostolic teachings received and the act of divine transmission of these in Christian communities⁴⁵. In this sense, they

⁴¹ Among those concerned with the involvement of women in missionary work, we mention the following: A. J. Köstenberger, *Women in the Pauline Mission*, in P. Bolt and M. Thompson (eds.), *The Gospel to the Nations: Perspectives on Paul's Mission*, Leicester, Apollos, 2000, pp. 221-247; C. S. Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives* Peabody, Hendrickson, 1992, pp. 237-257.

⁴² W.D. Mounce, *Pastoral*, p.123.

⁴³ W.D. Mounce, *Pastoral*, p.124.

⁴⁴ W. D. Mounce, Vol. 46: *Word Biblical Commentary: Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, Dallas, Word, Incorporated, 2002, p.125.

⁴⁵ I. H. Marshall & P. H. Towner, *A critical...*, p. 454. See also Witherington, B., III, *Letters and Homilies...* pp. 226-227; this meaning of διδασκαλία is also transmitted through other terms: faith, truth, depositary, but the preferred term seems to be διδασκαλία. A very special connotation of this term is highlighted in the context of Johannine writings; John 8:28; 14:26; 1 John 2:27 suggests the presence of direct inspiration or revelation as an act of the Father or the work of the Holy Spirit in the act of learning. In fact, learning activity focuses on proclaiming Jesus' name (Acts 4:18; 5:28); on the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 4:2; 5:42); on proving that Jesus is the One foretold in the Scriptures (Acts 18:25); and that his teaching coincides with the proclamation of the kingdom of God (Acts 28:31). On the other hand, St. Paul appeals to διδάσκειν only with reference to their own community training at the time of their foundation (2 Thessalonians 2:15; Colossians 2:7; Ephesians 4:21) but also in the sense of an internal role within the Christian community. What is interesting is the terms with which this term is associated in some Pauline writings. If in Colossians 1:28 and 3:16 it is used with the verb νοουθετέω – *to advise, to urge, to advise*, whose semantics is very close, in the pastoral epistles is associated with the verbs παραγγέλλω – *to*

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are massively used in the pastoral epistles to define the preaching of the truth of the Gospel (1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2; 2 Timothy 2:2); and the content of this work (διδασκαλία – *teaching*), each time, except 1 Timothy 4:1 (where it determines the teachings of the demons), refers to the Gospel (1 Timothy 1:10; 4:6,13,16; 5:17; 6:1,3; 2 Timothy 3:10; 16; 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1,7,10) and has the role of describing the positive teaching of the Gospel transmitted by a person with authority in this respect (2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:9; 1 Timothy 3:2)⁴⁶. Therefore, the restrictions imposed by the author are intended for a particular group of women, and their purpose is to exclude them from the preaching process, reserved only to those who have received this mission⁴⁷.

The second infinitive, with the second interdiction expressed in verse 12, is complementary to the former. We have noted above that διδάσκω – *to teach*, in the context of the New Testamentary writings, involves an

give order, to command, to order (1 Timothy 4:11) and παρακαλέω – *to urge strongly, to say bluntly* (1 Timothy 6, 2), giving a touch of authority, power and suggests the involvement of persons responsible for this task (cf. 1 Timothy 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:2), as opposed to women to whom the act of preaching is restricted, (1 Timothy 2:12). Cf. Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, in: *TDNT*, vol. 2, pp. 164-148; *BADG*, p. 613.

⁴⁶ The preoccupation of the author for a more precise terminology to express the truth of the Gospel through this term, and to make a clear distinction over the Ephesian heresy, is evidenced by unique linguistic formulas in the New Testament literature resulting from the compounds of this term. Except Titus 1:11, where from the context we deduce that the author is thinking of a *false teaching*, in 1 Timothy 1:3 and 6:3, to differentiate the doctrine of heresy from preaching the Gospel, he uses the compound terms of διδάσκω – *to teach*, ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν – *altā invāṭaturā; ἑτεροδιδασκαλέω – to teach a wrong teaching*, and goes till association with the devils, to define the heresy: διδασκαλίαις δαιμονίων – *the teaching of devils* (1 Timothy 4:1). See: Mounce, W. D., *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 125. Besides the author's preference for this terminology, in the pastoral epistles the vocabulary for the act of preaching highlights the content: πιστὸς ὁ λόγος – *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance* (1 Timothy 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Timothy 2:11; Titus 3,8), without any other occurrences in the writings of the New Testament; ὑγιαίνουσιν λόγοις – *wholesome words* (1 Timothy 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13, cf. 2 Timothy 2:15); πίστις – *faith*, (1 Timothy 3:9; 4:1,6; 5:8; 6:10,12,21; 2 Timothy 3:8, 4:7; Titus 1:13, 2:2); τὴν παραθήκην φύλαξον – *that which is committed to your trust* (1 Timothy 6:20; 2 Timothy 1:12,14); the term ὑγιαίνω – *healthy* is often used to characterize the teaching/ doctrine (1 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1), teaching that is also qualified as being καλὸς – *good* (1 Timothy 4:6). See details: Robert L. Saucy, *Women's Prohibition to teach Men: An Investigation into Its Meaning and Contemporary Application*, in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 1994, 37/1, p. 87. Therefore, only the vocabulary notions used by the pastoral author lead us to believe that the reserves for women were curative and preventive in relation to a practice that had proven to be contaminating and risky.

⁴⁷ In the pastoral epistles, preaching is entrusted to community leaders, Apostle Paul himself identifies himself with this mission (1 Timothy 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:11); also one of Tit and Timothy's main responsibilities is to be preachers or teachers (1 Timothy 4:11, 13; 6:2, 2 Timothy 4:2,16; Titus 2:1; 2:7) See: D. C. Verner, *The Household of God The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles*, Chico Scholar's, 1983, p. 158. Moreover, the role of the preacher equates to one of the gifts with which the Church was endowed by Christ (Ephesians 4:11).

authoritative force and is accompanied in some situations by the terms *παροαγγέλλω* – *to give order, command, order* (1 Timothy 4:11) and *παροακαλέω* – *to urge urgently, to say pressedly, bluntly* (1 Timothy 6:2), which amplify this connotation. If the first concept of the prohibition envisages the involvement of women in a work of authority, the second seems to emphasize this. The meaning of *αὐθεντέω* is much analyzed⁴⁸, to this problem also contributing the fact that this is the only occurrence of this term in the NT. The studies that have proposed to elucidate the semantics of this term offer a range of meanings as follows: *to control, to dominate, to act independently, to initiate something, to commit a crime*⁴⁹. Most interpreters opt for the sense of “exercising authority” which has positive valences, to the detriment of the connotation of “to dominate, to control” which has negative valences. In support of this option are brought arguments, starting from the premise that the first infinitive (*διδάσκω* – *to teach*) is positive, with no doubt, and the construction of the sentence does not allow one in the two infinitives to be positive and the other negative; the use of the coordinating conjunction *οὐδὲ* – *nor*, is responsible for this impossibility⁵⁰.

⁴⁸ Among the most important studies on this issue we recall: H. S. Baldwin, *A Difficult Word: αὐθεντέω in 1 Timothy 2:12*, in Köstenberger, et al. (eds.), *Women in the Church*, pp. 65–80; *idem*, *Appendix 2. αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek Literature*, in Köstenberger, et al. (eds.), *Women in the Church*, p. 269–305; G. W. Knight III, *ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ in Reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2:12*, *New Testament Studies*, no. 30, 1984), p. 143–157; R. C. Kroeger, C. C. Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:12 in Light of Ancient Evidence*, Grand Rapids, Baker, 1992, p. 84–104, 185–188; C. Osburn, *ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ (1 Timothy 2:12)*, *Restoration Quarterly*, No. 25, 1982, p. 1–12; cf. Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical...*, pp. 456–460;

⁴⁹ I. H. Marshall, & P. H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical...*, p. 456. H. S. Baldwin, *A Difficult Word: αὐθεντέω in 1 Timothy 2:12*, in Köstenberger, et al. (eds.), *Women in the Church*, pp. 65–80; Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Women, Roman Wives: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003, p. 116–119, makes an extension of his research and appeals to other terms in the semantic field of *αὐθεντέω*, for this use makes use of the Hesychius Lexicon (probably the 5th or 6th centuries BC), in which *αὐθεντέω* is synonymous with the verb *ἐξουσιάζω*. This is a much more frequent term in NT literature, implicitly in the Pauline, used with the meaning of having authority, power, mastery (Luke 22:25; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 7:4), and more frequent is the noun *ἐξουσία* used to express the absolute power of God (Acts 1:7), the dominion of Satan (Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:13), the universal power of Christ (Matthew 28:18), the capacity given to people to become sons of God (John 1:12), but also Paul’s favorite to express authority, power (Romans 9:21; 13:3; 1 Corinthians 7:37; 9:4,5, 6,12,18; 11:10; 15:24; 2 Corinthians 13:10; 2 Thessalonians 3:9). Werner Foerster: *TDNT*, vol. 2, p. 563-575.

⁵⁰ A.J. Köstenberger, *A Complex Sentence Structure in 1 Timothy 2:12*, in *Women in the Church*, ed. A. J. Köstenberger, T. R. Schreiner and H. S. Baldwin, G. Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995, pp. 81-103; although there are commentators who claim that *οὐδέ* has the role of conveying a single coherent idea. Such an interpretation implies that *οὐδέ* to be a subordinate conjunction, the verb *αὐθεντέω* – *to have authority* to function as an adverb whose object is the verb (*διδάσκω* –

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A strong argument for this semantic option is related to the morphology of this term and its lexical family⁵¹. The root of this term is identified with the third person of the personal pronoun αὐτός, which can also take the form of intensive pronoun⁵², which emphasizes one's person. În ceea ce privește termenii din familia lexicală a lui αὐθεντέω, remarcăm că sunt utilizați în scrierile NT, inclusiv în cele pauline, și au aproximativ aceeași semantică: αὐθαίρετος – *de unul singur, a decide singur* (2 Co. 8,3,17); αὐθάδης – *propria plăcere, propria voie, aroganță, îngâmfat* (Titus 1:7; 2 Pt. 2:10); αὐτόματος – *act by one's own impulse, by themselves* (Mark 4:28; Acts 12:10), αὐτάρχεια – *self-sufficiency, self satiety* (2 Corinthians 9:8; 1 Timothy 6:6); αὐτάρκης – *self satiety* (Philippians 4:11); αὐτοκατάκριτος – *condemned of himself, self-condemned* (Titus 3:11). All these examples lead us to believe that the author's choice for this scarce verb is justified by the specificity of the troubles in Ephesus; at the same time, the terms of this lexical family strengthen the idea that the women of Ephesus were forces concerned with themselves, with an exaggerated and excessive self-esteem, with self-centered preoccupations. These feelings usually tend to self-affirm, to exercise their own influence, ignorance, infatuation and disregard for any form of authority; it also contributes to social imbalance and tension.

Another aspect to be considered in order to establish the meaning of this double prohibition is that of contextualization, a process that will indicate the principal concern of the author. In relation to the previous verse, it is clear the existence of a parallelism (we do not know whether it is the result of an intentional process of the author, but if we consider his Jewish formation where parallelism is used with a maximum frequency - see the didactic-poetic books - it can be interpreted as an editorial strategy) worthy of analysis. The parallelism and continuity of the ideas of the two verses were considered to be assured by the use of the conjunction δὲ⁵³. So, on the one hand, both verses contain recommendations on the process of learning and exercising authority, the differences lie under the following:

1. In the first verse it is recommended and in the second, forbidden;
2. The verb in the first verse has a reflexive form, in the second, active;
3. The first verb is characteristic to the disciples, the second is specific to the preaching;

to teach), in which case, the second infinitive would have the purpose of forbidding authoritarian learning. Apud. W.D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 128-130.

⁵¹ J. Hübner, *Translating αὐθεντέω (authenteō) in 1 Timothy 2:12*; in Priscilla Papers, vol. 29, No. 2, Spring 2015, p.17.

⁵² *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti*, Originally published: New York: Harper & Brothers, 1889; Numerically coded to Strong's Exhaustive concordance of the Bible, (ii). New York: Harper & Brothers, p. 85.

⁵³ J. Hübner, *Translating αὐθεντέω (authenteō)*, p.18.

4. Submission is, first, recommended completely (ἐν πάση ὑποταγῇ), and in the next verse the expression of authority is forbidden (οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω, οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός).

Besides these antithetic situations, the two verses have as a common goal the establishment of a quiet atmosphere (ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ... ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ), which, obviously, is against an authoritative behavior. This insistent recommendation is most likely motivated by the behavior of the Ephesian women described in 1 Timothy 5:6, 13-15: *But she that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives... And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not... I will therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan.*

a) the author recommends women to reconsider their reporting to the evangelical principles they renegaded;

b) forbids women to participate in the teaching work as they contributed to the spread of heresy; this measure aims at recovering the status and role of women in society and in the family, including instilling Christian values like Timothy's mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5);

c) women are urged to manifest obedience to the spiritual leaders of the community, thus abandoning the doctrine of heresy to the role assumed within it and guaranteeing their return to evangelical values;

d) the aim pursued by the author through these recommendations is to establish a temperate atmosphere within the community and thus beneficial to the obedience and assumption of the word of God.

III. As we have found the author's discourse is not limited to findings and recommendations; His entire plea in a continuous ascendancy, from exhortations of attitude and behavior, goes to defining the honest reporting to the ministers of the word of God of the concrete aspects of Christian life to culminate with what, in his view, represents the ideal of Christian living. This last aspect is given by verse 15: σωθήσεται δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας, ἐὰν μείνωσιν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἀγασμοῦ μετὰ σωφροσύνης· - *Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety* (1 Timothy 2:15).

Verse 15a seems to be concerned only with the salvation of Eve as the future of the verb σώζω (σωθήσεται) –to save, to deliver, is formulated in singular and has as subject the one “was in the transgression”, from verse 14. However, it is clear that the author “does not only address Eva's isolated case, but she is introduced in his plea as a representative of the women of Ephesus”⁵⁴, and this becomes even more evident by finding that the author uses the plural, shortly after, in the conditional formulation ἐὰν μείνωσιν - if

⁵⁴ W. D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 143.

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(they) remain⁵⁵. As to the significance of σωθήσεται, the semantic framework must not be overcome⁵⁶ already defined by the author in the first verses of chapter 2, especially verse 4, which expresses the will of God to all men to be saved, or in 1:13-15, where the author confesses his own experience of salvation from wandering manifested by the persecution of Christians. Throughout the Pauline literature σώζειν is used to refer to the forgiveness of sins, to salvation or deliverance from sin (1 Corinthians 5:5; 3:15; Romans 13:11, Philippians 1:28; 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 11:11, 26; 10:9, 13; 2 Corinthians 7:10 - here we find the antonym of θάνατος - death, which clarifies its meaning more clearly; Romans 10:1; 1 Corinthians 10:33)⁵⁷. In the Pastoral Epistles, most occurrences (1 Timothy 1:15; 2:4; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5) refer to deliverance from sin. The more the same semantics must be adopted for verse 15, especially that in this context reference was made to ἐξαπατάω - to deceive, to wile, and παραβάσις - commandment transgressor, with which it is in relation of antinomy, marked by the opposing conjunction δὲ - but, which separates the two ideas; the association of these two concepts has the merit of "a term defining the other".⁵⁸ In these conditions σώζω regards

⁵⁵W. D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 147.

⁵⁶ According to Mounce, there have been various interpretations of this statement: 1) for some commentators the significance of σώζω aims the "safe keeping" in the sense of physical security, hence verse 15 indicates that women will be safely held through birth by children, if they remain in the faith; among these Simpson is remembered; C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1959, p. 56; P. K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1975, p. 60; B. Barron, *Putting Women in Their Place: 1 Timothy 2 and Evangelical Views of Women in Church Leadership*, in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, No. 33, 1990, p. 457; Keener, C. S. *Paul, Women, and Wives: Marriage and Ministry in the Letters of Paul*, Peabody, Hendrickson, 1992, p. 118-119; 2 others regard this verse as a promise to the Ephesian women that they will be kept secure, against the influences of the heresy of Ephesus (J. B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1981, p. 222), but at the same time, a good part of them says that there is insufficient evidence in this respect: Fee, G. D., *New International Biblical Commentary: 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, Revised edition, Peabody, Hendrickson Publishers, 1988, p. 75; J. Roloff, *Apostolat-Verkündigung-Kirche: Ursprung, Inhalt und Funktion des kirchlichen Apostelamtes nach Paulus, Lukas und den Pastoralbriefen*. Gütersloh, Mohn, 1965, p. 141; S. E. Porter, *What Does It Mean to Be 'Saved by Childbirth' (1 Timothy 2.15)?*, in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, no. IL (1993) p. 95; 3) and the third interpretation is in the sense that this term refers to a sense of utility, value and well-being, meaning that if they were covered by so many restrictions on the part of the author, the birth of children will give them a sense of personal fulfillment. (S. T. Foh, *Women and the Word of God*, Philadelphia, Presbyterian & Reformed, 1980, p. 128). *Apud* Mounce, W. D. *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 144.

⁵⁷TDNT, vol. 7, pp. 992-995, BAGD, p. 798. The object of salvation is not just the soul, but the whole man (1 Corinthians 5:5).

⁵⁸ W. D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 144.

the spiritual salvation of the women of Ephesus, although they had also proven themselves to be like Eve (Genesis 3:13) and Saul (1 Timothy 1:13; Galatians 1,13; Acts 9:1, 14, 21; 26:10; 1 Corinthians 15:9), disobedient to the word of God.

The author does not merely convey that salvation is possible for the women of Ephesus, but indicates the means and the conditions in which this becomes possible. In this sense, the use of the preposition διὰ - *via*, along with a genitive form (τῆς τεκνογονίας- *birth*) is very important, as it is specific in biblical writings to express the instrumental action⁵⁹. In the New Testament writings we find six more occurrences of the verb σώζω with διὰ (Acts 15:11; Romans 5:9; 1 Corinthians 1:21; 3:15; 15:2; 1 Peter 3:20) and, in each situation, indicates the means by which salvation is obtained⁶⁰; Consequently, we can say that the preposition διὰ indicates the means by which salvation for the women of Ephesus is possible.

The first of these conditions is underlined by the term τεκνογονία – *birth, bearing children*; the dilemma to be clarified is to determine what does τεκνογονία mean, and why the author attributes it such an important role in the oiconomy of delivering the women of Ephesus. A considerable part of commentators⁶¹ suggests that τεκνογονία should be translated not as *birth*, but as *Birth of the Savior*, and the arguments put forward in this regard focus in

⁵⁹ Acts 5:12; 8:20; 14:3; 19:11; 15:23; Romans 3:20; 5:10; 7:4; Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:22; Hebrews 2:14; BAGD, p. 224. There were commentators who opted for another translation of this fragment: “even if she has to bear (born) children, she can still be saved”, Scott, E. F. *The Pastoral Epistles*, Moffatt NT Commentary, New York Harper and Brothers, 1936, p. 28; or for another interpretation, in the sense that the traumatic experience of childbirth is salvific: R. Falconer, *1 Timothy 2:14-15: Interpretative Notes*, in *Journal of Biblical Literature* No. 60, 1941, p. 376; J. Roloff, *Apostolat-Verkündigung-Kirche...*, pp. 141-142; Porter, S. E., *What Does It Mean to Be ‘Saved by Childbirth’...*, p. 97, *apud. Mounce, Pastoral Epistles...*, p. 147; see also note 28.

⁶⁰G. W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A commentary on the Greek text*, Grand Rapids, Carlisle, England: W.B. Eerdmans, Paternoster Press, 1992, p. 147.

⁶¹C.J. Ellicott, *The Pastoral Epistles of St Paul*, 3rd ed., London: Longman, 1864, p. 37; Warfield, B. B., VIII. *Critical Note: Some Exegetical Notes on 1 Timothy: II. Connection and Meaning of 1 Timothy 2:8-15*, *PresR* 8, 1921, p. 504; Lock, 32-33; Spencer, A. B., *Eve at Ephesus: Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors according to the First Letter to Timothy, 2:11-15?*, in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, No. 17, 1974, p. 220; Jewett, P.K. *Man as Male and Female...* p. 60; D. Williams, *The Apostle Paul and Women in the Church*, Ventura, Gospel Light Publications, 1977, p. 113; Payne, P.B., *Libertarian Women in Ephesus: A Response to Douglas J. Moo’s Article ‘1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance’*, In *Trinity Journal* 2, 1981, pp. 177-78, 180-81; Huizenga, H., *Women, Salvation and the Birth of Christ: A Reexamination of 1 Timothy 2:15*, in *Studia Biblica et Theologica* 12, 1982, pp. 17-26; Knight, G. W., *The Pastoral Epistles...*, pp.146-147; Porter, S. E., *What Does It Mean...*, p. 90; *apud. Mounce, W. D.* (2002), vol. 46: Word Biblical Commentary, p.144.

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particular on the continuation of the parallelism between the episode of the fall from the Book of Genesis (verses 13-14) and the apostasy of the women of Ephesus, in the sense that 1 Timothy 2:15 reiterates the idea of the proto-Gospel from Genesis 3:15; however, nowhere in the Pauline literature is such an allusion to support this interpretation. The difficulty in determining the semantics of this term is amplified by the fact that here is its only occurrence in the biblical writings; only the Epistle to Diognet uses it only once⁶² and the meaning is clear, that of giving birth to children: γαμοῦσιν ὡς πάντες τεκνογονοῦσιν ἀλλ' οὐρίπτουσι τὰ γεννώμενα - *they marry like all people and give birth to children, but they do not throw those born* (Epistle to Diognet 5:6), fact which has led some researchers to note this meaning expressing "the power of the maternal instinct or simply maternity"⁶³. The only biblical relationship of this term is with the verbal form τεκνογονεῖν – *have children, give birth, raise children* (1 Timothy 5:14), used by the author in another series of recommendations addressed to women, expressing the desire for young widows to marry and have children⁶⁴.

The explanations regarding the semantics of this term, the Biblical occurrence only in the context of the first Epistle to Timothy, lead us to believe that the author wanted to rebalance the respectable role of maternity in the Ephesian consciousness, and thus reflecting the very strong heretical tendencies prohibiting marriages, encouraging the practice of asceticism (4:3) and discouraged the birth of children (5:14); to all these, the progressive stream of women's emancipation is added⁶⁵. Such an understanding of verse 15a does not allow a universal applicability to conditioning the salvation by the birth of children, but it must be perceived in the context and logic of the author to determine the women of Ephesus not to abandon God's entrusted affinities and the most important of these is maternity.

After the author points out the means for gaining salvation, he specifies that this desiderate depends on their perseverance (ἐὰν μείνωσιν⁶⁶ - *if*

⁶²BAGD, p. 994.

⁶³ W. M. Ramsay, *The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day*, by Hodder and Stoughton, London, New York, Toronto, 1913, p. 170-171, makes an insight into the use of this term in philosophical thinking, starting with Homer, Aristotle until St. Paul. See also J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, London, Hodder, 1930, p. 628.

⁶⁴ J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary*, p. 628, considers that the verb τεκνογονέω is synonymous with τεκνοποιεῖν – *to give birth to children, to make children*, and which appears in various marriage contracts from antiquity.

⁶⁵ I.H. Marshall, *A critical and exegetical*, p. 470; J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles...*, p. 69; G. D. Fee, *New International biblical...*, p. 75; D. J. Moo, *1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance*, *Trinity Journal* 1/1980, pp. 71-73; P. H. Towner, *The Letters...*, p. 234.

⁶⁶ For the New Testament writings, especially the Johannine, the verb μένω signifies more than consistency or firmness, as Paul recommends to women in 1 Timothy 2:15, sau lui Timothy 2 Timothy 3:14. St. Evangelist John develops such statements about the intimate bond between the Father and the Son as well as the Son as sent from the Father and

*they (will)*⁶⁷ *persevere*), in what the author considers authentic Christian living (πίσται καὶ ἀγάπη καὶ ἀγιασμῶ μετὰ σοφροσύνης - *faith, love, holiness and wisdom*, 1 Timothy 2:15b); therefore gaining salvation is associated with what defines a whole new life characterized by virtues. “Faith” and “love” are most often the nucleus of more extensive lists of Christian virtues 2 Timothy 2:22; 3:10; Titus 2:2; but only in 1 Timothy 1:14 and 2 Timothy 1:13 the two terms are singularly associated, so that in Galatians 5:6, love to acquire an instrumental role of authentic faith “faith which works by love”. The two terms together include “the vertical work of trust in God and the horizontal work in the service of others”⁶⁸. Most likely the recommendation *for the holiness of life* (ἀγιασμῶ) is meant to define the life antithetic to sin, impurity and implies sexual purity, meaning with which it is used in 1 Thessalonians 4:3,4,7, which allows for a connection with the recommendations regarding clothing and its promiscuous connotations. The last qualificative of authentic assumption of evangelical values is repeated from verse 9, where we approached its semantics; what should be noted is the author’s preference for this term, both in defining the proper social behavior for the women of Ephesus and as a spiritual, inner norm that is meant to ensure the full dimension of Christian life. So the whole fragment is under the imprint of moderation, of self-control, which should define the life of the women of Ephesus in all its aspects.

Therefore, the Ephesian women are urged to return to their status of Christian women, and this is possible insofar as they assume their natural purpose in society, exploit their maternal potential as a given from the Creator and their life reflects the experimentation of the communion with God.

those who believe in Him. Thus the Father abides in the Son (John 14:10), Christians remain in Christ (John 15:4-7; 6:56; 1 John 3:6,24), God remains in the believers (1 John 4:16) and the believers in God (1 John 2:24; 4:16). In addition to these statements, St. John uses this verb to express the work of divine energies in believers, such as the word of God (5:38; 15:7, 1 John 2:14), the life (1 John 3:5), the love (1 John 3:17), the truth (2 John 2), the anointing (1 John 2:27). Believers also remain in those of God, for example, in the house of God (John 8:35), the love (John 15:9, 10), the light (1 John 2:10), the teaching (2 John 9). Here also the relationship of salvation is both present and long-lasting with an eschatological perspective. The same is true for perdition. Unbelievers remain in the dark (John 12:46) and dead (1 John 3:14). Cf. Friedrich Hauck, in *TDNT*, vol. 4, p. 576. The profound dimension of this verb in the Johannine theology has led to its association with the Pauline formulation ἐν Χριστῶ - *in Christ*, *TDNT*, vol. 4, pp. 541-543. Vild M., *A fi „în Hristos” după Epistolele Sfântului Apostol Pavel (Being ‘in Christ’ according to the Epistles of St. Paul)*, in *Studii Teologice (Theological Studies)*, no. 3/2006, p. 24-26.

⁶⁷ Unlike the Greek text, the synodal translation uses the singular in here.

⁶⁸ P. H. Towner, *The Letters*, p. 141.

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Conclusions

The women of Ephesus, referred to by the Apostle Paul's recommendations in the first Epistle to Timothy, exerted an influence on the Christian community in this city. The main concern of the author was to discourage the practice of the principles imposed by the heretical movement in the city of Ephesus since this movement enjoyed a special success especially among women. The author's strategy starts from obvious, observable aspects, and goes towards the spiritual, inner values; in other words, from simple to complex. Thus, the responsibilities of these women, according to Saint Paul, must focus in the following directions:

- a) Eliminating any form of elitism and separatism from the rest of society;
- b) Concern for the cultivation of Christian values embodied in good deeds, since Christians are part of the process of becoming the sons of the kingdom of God;
- c) Abandoning the claim to be partakers of the fully realized eschatology;
- d) Transmission and perpetuation of natural moral values (assuming maternity, raising and educating children, prudence, wisdom, goodwill, etc.);
- e) Ceasing to engage in gospel preaching, a mission dedicated exclusively to those consecrated in this respect, thus ensuring the accuracy of the message;
- f) Obedience to the One Truth represented by the word of God, both of the women of Ephesus and of the entire society in this city;
- g) Cultivation of wisdom, faith, love and holiness as an ideal of Christian living;

By virtue of the fact that this letter belongs to the biblical canon, we understand that these recommendations are universally valid, and therefore, as a general conclusion, we can say that any exaggerated secular concern is a threat to the earthly and eternal purpose of the human person.

It is clear that in the postmodern world the moral exigencies collapsed and the family went into crisis. The crisis has its spiritual causes, but other negative factors also hit the family: poverty, unemployment, proselytizing sects, violence, uncertainty of tomorrow, emigration to richer countries.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ His Eminence Andrei Andreicuț, "Familia, copiii și tinerii, educarea lor și viitorul omenirii", in Ion Albulescu, Adriana Denisa Manea, Iuliu-Marius Morariu (ed.), *Education, Religion, Family in the contemporary society*, Saarbrücken, Lambert Academic Publishing, 2017, p. 9.