

I TIMOTHY 2:12: PART III: DOES Αὐθεντέω MEAN “ASSUME AUTHORITY”?

The most crucial question about 1 Tim 2:12 is the meaning of αὐθεντεῖν. It is a transitive verb that takes the genitive¹ for its object, “man.” Consequently, this analysis does not discuss possible intransitive meanings such as “to act independently” and “to exercise one’s own jurisdiction” since they do not fit this context. Similarly, it does not discuss meanings that do not fit the context, including “murder,” nor the meanings that, as Baldwin notes,² do not fit with the object “a man”: “to rule,”³ “to reign sovereignly,” “to grant authorization,” “to instigate,” and the rare middle voice use meaning “to be in effect, to have legal standing.”

Besides 1 Tim 2:12, there are only two established and uncontested occurrences of the verb αὐθεντέω through the end of the first century AD: BGU 1208, and the first-century BC–first-century AD⁴ grammarian Aristonicus Alexandrinus in *De signis Iliadis* 9.694, where it simply combines the meanings of αὐτός and ἑνύω,⁵ “the one self-accomplishing

1. Cf. Robertson, *Grammar*, 506; BDF §177 (for other verbs that take a genitive, see, e.g., Mark 10:42; Rom 6:9; 15:12; 1 Cor 7:4).
2. Henry Scott Baldwin, “A Difficult Word: αὐθεντέω in 1 Timothy 2:12,” WCFA 78–80; and its 2005 second edition, “Important Word,” WCA 51.
3. The first instance of this usage appears to be ca. AD 325 Eusebius, *On Ecclesiastical Theology* 3.5.21.1, which refers to God the Father as “ruling” (αὐθεντοῦντος).
4. Luci Berkowitz and Karl A. Squitier, *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae: Canon of Greek Authors and Works* (3rd ed.; New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1990), 61–62. Al Wolters, “A Semantic Study of Αὐθεντης and Its Derivatives,” *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 1 (2000): 149, dates it to the late first c. BC.
5. Ludwig Friedländer, ed., *Aristonici περὶ σημείων Ἰλιάδος reliquiae emendatiores* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1853; repr., Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1965), note on line 694. This same scholium on

[ὁ αὐθεντῶν] the speech had set forth something astounding."⁶ Wolters notes that this passage contrasts Achilles, who does the actual speaking, with Odysseus, who reports what was spoken.⁷ Another possible instance is a papyrus fragment of the *Rhetorica* of Philodemus. The following detailed analysis of this and BGU 1208 corrects fallacious assertions about them and establishes as far as possible the meaning of αὐθεντέω in them.

A fourth possible instance of αὐθεντεῖν is a copy of a scholarly note on Aeschylus' *Eumenides* 42a that many scholars believe to be derived from Didymus (80–10 BC). If this attribution to Didymus is correct, "to murder" was a meaning of αὐθεντέω in Paul's day.⁸ Unless there was some metaphorical sense of "murder" that the church in Ephesus would understand,⁹ however, this meaning does not fit 1 Tim 2:12. Consequently, this abbreviated summary does not pursue this meaning further. Because 1 Tim 2:12 is one of the first occurrences of this verb, its etymology is particularly important in investigating how it was originally understood. The paucity of

early occurrences of this verb makes it more important than usual to consider the meanings of other forms of the word to help establish its meaning.

THE ORIGIN OR ETYMOLOGY OF Αὐθεντέω

The etymology of most, if not all, αὐθεντ- root words is agreed upon by Pierre Chantraine, Paul Kretschmer,¹⁰ LSJ 275, MM 91, and nearly every other Greek lexicographer to be "self-achieving," a combination of αὐτός and ἔντης, derived from ἀνύω. Chantraine writes: "Etymology: The sense of the word, the existence in Sophocles of the form of this word written αὐτοέντης, and the gloss by Hesychius Lexicographicus συνέντης / συνεργός lead us to recognize a compound of αὐτός signifying 'by one's self, of one's own initiative' and a second term *έντης 'who finishes, achieves,' from the root of ἀνύω."¹¹ The etymology stresses the activity of the self first of all in its use of αὐτός, but also in the nuance that ἀνύω could carry of "accomplish for one's own advantage ... make one's way, win ... get, obtain."¹²

Thus, it is not surprising that many of the uses of the αὐθεντ- root refer to self-initiated activities and, consequently, usually up through Paul's day carry a negative nuance. As Chantraine noted, the αὐθεντ- root words are typically strong and emotionally-laden words with negative or dominating overtones such as: murderer,¹³ domestic murderer, perpetrator, or autocrat. Etymology provides no basis for isolating the αὐθεντ- verbs from its cognate forms in studying its range of meanings. Αὐθεντέω is a denominative verb formed from the noun αὐθέντης.¹⁴ Consequently, George W. Knight III and Henry Scott Baldwin err procedurally in ignoring meanings of the noun as evidence for the meaning of the related verb.¹⁵ Knight unduly

Homer's *Iliad* is cited in a tenth-century AD work, Hartmut Erbse, ed., *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem (scholia vetera)* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1971), 2:543, book 10, entry 694b.

6. Baldwin, "Important Word," WCA 203, translates it "the one doing the speech had set forth something astounding." Wolters, "Semantic," 149, translates it "speaker." Both are equivalent to "the one self-accomplishing the speech."

7. Wolters, "Semantic," n. 70.

8. LSJ 275, and most other commentators cite this passage for the meaning "commit a murder." There is some doubt about the date of this occurrence, however, since this scholium on line 42 is documented in the tenth c. AD Medicean MS M and a similar but expanded scholium on line 40 occurs in MS T from ca. AD 1325 and in MS E from the 15th century AD. David Hutter ("ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΙΝ in the Aeschylus Scholium," *JETS* 44 [2001]: 615–25) proposes that αὐθεντέω in MS M means "initiated." Although scholia are supposed to explain obscure references, his translation does not explain what the obscure "dripping" refers to, whereas "murder" does. The quotations in the Philodemus fragment suggest that in it, too, αὐθεντέω may have meant "murder." A. Adler, ed., *Suidae Lexicon* (Part I; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1928–1938; repr., Stuttgart: Teubner, 1971), 412, A4426 (10th c. AD) cites αὐθέντης to mean "murderer" and states regarding the verb, "Αὐθεντήσονται itself does not require that one wear the sword himself. For Mithridates ... ordered them to kill." This implies that αὐθεντέω can mean murder whether with one's own hand or at one's command. The incident cited is from ca. 87 BC. This, which H. Scott Baldwin, "αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek Literature," WCA 303–4, cites, confirms αὐθεντέω meaning "to murder," *pace* Baldwin, "Important Word," WCA 48; Hutter, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΙΝ," 625.

9. Cf. Kroeger and Kroeger (*I Suffer Not*, 87–104, 185–88), who suggest various possibilities: "to teach in a way that figuratively or symbolically murders men," "to teach men ritual or sham murder," "to teach a man in such a way that virtues are destroyed," as well as "to proclaim herself author of man" (p. 103). Cf. Catherine C. Kroeger, "Ancient Heresies and a Strange Greek Verb," *The Reformed Journal* 29.3 (March 1979): 12–15, 14. For rebuttals see A. J. Panning, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΙΝ—A Word Study," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 78 (1981): 185–91; Carroll D. Osburn, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ (1 Timothy 2:12)," *ResQ* 25 (1982): 1–12. Leland E. Wilshire, "1 Timothy 2:12 Revisited: A Reply to Paul W. Barnett and Timothy J. Harris," *EvQ* 65 (1993): 48, suggests "instigating violence," but he cites no other examples with this translation, must assume a narrowly defined meaning of "to teach," and does not integrate vv. 13–15 with this translation.

10. Paul Kretschmer, "Griechisches: 6. αὐθέντης," *Glotta, Zeitschrift für griechische und lateinische Sprache* 3 (1912): 289–93. Webster's *New World Dictionary*, s.v. "authentic," correctly identifies its Greek etymology, "one who does things himself" from "self + to prepare, achieve."

11. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique*, 1:138–9, translation by P. B. Payne. Wilshire praises Chantraine's "reasoned conclusion" in his article "The TLG Computer and Further Reference to ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ in 1 Timothy 2:12," *NTS* 34 (1988): 129.

12. LSJ 168.

13. Wolters, "Semantic," 145–75, lists twenty-seven instances of αὐθέντης meaning "murderer" in Classical Greek, four in the first century AD and eight in the second century AD.

14. Robertson (*Grammar*, 147–48) who also notes that most -έω verbs are compound; Wolters, "Semantic," 149–50.

15. George W. Knight III, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ in Reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2:12," *NTS* 30 (1984): 153, apparently does this to support the meaning, "authority, in the objective and positive sense"; Baldwin ("Important Word," WCA 49) sweeps away substantial evidence to the contrary, alleging, "What we can say with certainty is that we have no instances of a pejorative use of the verb before the fourth century AD."

restricts evidence only to verbal forms on the basis of an improbable etymology that "two quite different words have by similar pronunciation and spelling come to have an identical form."¹⁶

The verbal root of ἐντης, ἄνύω, accepted by Chantraine and most other lexicographers, had two meanings: "effect, accomplish" and "make an end of, destroy, kill."¹⁷ Consequently, this one simple origin explains both the sense of "perpetrator" and the sense of "perpetrator of a murder." The meanings of the noun αὐθέντης include murderer, suicide, perpetrator, author, doer, and master. At about AD 180, Phrynichus wrote, "Never use 'αὐθέντης' for 'master' as [do] the orators in connection with the law courts, but for murderer."¹⁸ Paul may have known of the noun's use in LXX Wis 12:6, "murderers of their own helpless babes." Common to these meanings is that the αὐθέντης is one who takes authority into one's own hand to do something. What is done is generally regarded as reprehensible, an act of unlawfully assumed authority.

Since achievement tends to lead to power, it is not surprising that the αὐθέντ- root gradually began to be used for power and authority, sometimes with repressive overtones such as: dominate, domineer, absolute master, autocrat, or absolute sway. Particularly in the patristic writings, the meaning "authority" came to predominate, usually in a positive sense. The dictionary of modern Greek by Σταματακου gives as synonyms for αὐθεντέω and αὐθέντης terms both of authority (e.g., ἡγεμονεύω, ἄρχω, βασιλεύω, κύριος, ἄρχων) and of dominating (δεσπόζω = dominate, τυραννεύω = tyrannize, and δεσπότης = despot, τύραννος = tyrant).¹⁹

The meanings of other αὐθέντ- root words are clearly derived from their component elements: self + achieve: αὐθεντία with his own hand²⁰ or absolute sway, authority. The verbal form αὐθεντίζω meant take in hand.²¹

The adjective form αὐθεντικός meant with one's own hand, principal, warranted, original, authentic.²² English's authentic, Latin authenticus, and the German authentisch, are derived from αὐθεντικός. The adverb form αὐθέντικῶς meant with perfect clarity²³ or authoritatively.²⁴ The comparative form αὐθέντικώτερον meant with higher authority in the second century. Each of these nuances derive from the root idea of "self + achieve."

Αὐθεντέω IN BGU 1208.38

Probably the single most important document illuminating the use of αὐθεντέω in 1 Tim 2:12 is the papyrus BGU 1208, since it is the closest in time to Paul, it establishes a clear context that limits its meaning, and its meaning fits 2:12. Knight also identifies this as the most important passage for understanding the meaning of αὐθεντέω in 1 Tim 2:12.²⁵ BGU 1208 gives the text of a papyrus dated 27/26 BC by Schubart, who entitled it, "A Letter from Tryphon (?) to Asklepiades (?)" concerning the matter of ferrying and related payments.²⁶ It relates an incident when a slave of Asklepiades refused to pay the boatman Calatyti his boat fare. Tryphon writes an apology to the slave's owner, explaining that when he intervened, acting with self-assumed authority (αὐθεντηκότος) over the slave, he consented to pay within the hour.

John R. Werner²⁷ translated BGU 1208 lines 37–42 for Knight in this way: "I called him to account [αὐθεντηκότος], and he consented to provide for Calatyti the Boatman on terms of the full fare, within the hour." Knight, however, falsely attributes to Werner's letter of March 18, 1980, the following translation of BGU 1208: "I exercised authority over him."²⁸

22. Kretschmer, "αὐθέντης," 290; E. A. Sophocles, *A Glossary of Later and Byzantine Greek: Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (New Series; Cambridge & Boston: Welch, Bigelow, 1860), 7:215. LSJ 275 adds "authoritative" for the adjective, but the example it cites from Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* 182, is translated "independent" by F. E. Robbins (*Ptolemy Tetrabiblos*, 390–91, LCL).
23. BAG 120 and BDAG 150, citing two occurrences in Cicero's *Epistulae ad Atticum* 9.14.2, and 10.9.1 and its use in contrast with enigmas and parables later in *Preaching of Peter* 4.
24. The earliest recorded by PGL is Origen (d. AD 254), *Fragmenta in Lam.* 116, 4:20 (GCS 3, p. 277.7; M 13.660B). Cf. LSJ 275.
25. Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 154, cf. 145.
26. *Aegyptische Urkunden aus den koeniglichen Museen zu Berlin: Griechische Urkunden* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1912), 4:351.
27. John R. Werner authorized this author to quote from his letters to Knight.
28. Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 145, 150, and 155 n. 13 states, "Dr. John R. Werner ... provided this and several other translations. ... This particular translation [of BGU 1208] was provided in a letter dated March 18, 1980." It is a matter of public record that this attribution is false. Werner made carbon copies of this letter to Knight for the 1 Timothy files of the Wycliffe Bible Translators

16. Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 154. Robertson's (*Grammar*, 148) proposal regarding ἐντεα is also improbable.
17. LSJ 168; cf. Pindar, *Pythian* 12.11, for the meaning "murder" from the fifth century BC.
18. Phrynichus 1.20: αὐθέντης μηδέποτε χρήση ἐπὶ τοῦ δεσπότης ὡς οἱ περὶ τὰ δικαστήρια ῥήτορες ἀλλ' αὐτόχειρος ἐπὶ τοῦ φονέως. Quoted in Chr. Augustus Lobeck, *Ρηματικὸν sive Verborum Graecorum et Nominum Verbalium Technologia* (Regimontii: Borntraeger, 1846), 121. Quotation translated by Caroline Bammel (August 26, 1991), slightly modified.
19. Ἰωννου Δρ. Σταματακου, *Λεξικὸν τῆς νεας Ἑλληνικῆς Γλῶσσης* (3 vols.; Athens: Εκδοτικός, 1971), 1:680. English equivalents are from George A. Maqazis, *Langenscheidt's Standard Greek Dictionary* (Berlin: Langenscheidt, 1990). For extensive references to αὐθεντέω, αὐθέντης, etc. from AD 1100–1669 see Εμμανουήλ Κριαρά, *Λεξικὸ τῆς Μεσαιωνικῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Δημοδους Γραμματικῆς* (3 vols.; Thessalonika: Σφακιανήκη, 1968–1973), 3:333–38.
20. E.g., the second/third century AD Dio Cassius, *Fragment* 102.12.
21. E.g., BGU 103.3.

Werner's letter to Knight on April 8, 1980, clarifies, "I've come out with neither 'have authority' nor 'domineer,' but 'assume authority to oneself,' i.e., without that authority having been delegated to oneself or to anyone else." To this Werner adds on p. 3, "Note that Carney has preceded me in seeing 'of its own initiative' as an important component of *authentēo*."

Werner explains, "In the next sentence the author reports how Calatyitis returned to him with a report of the insolent failure of the debtor to execute that agreement."²⁹ Werner adds, "I am reminded of the situation in Exodus 2:13–14 when Moses tried to break up a fight between two Hebrews by asking the one in the wrong, 'Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?' and his attempt to *authentēin* was rebuffed by the latter's, 'Who made you ruler and judge over us?'" Werner's letter to Knight of April 8, 1980, confirms that Werner had not changed his opinion:

The more evidence you send me, the more I'm convinced that the kind of authority denoted by *authentēō* is ... authority that is assumed by the person exercising it.... A King of Thieves is not exercising an authority that has been delegated to him by a higher authority (*exousia*).... He simply has taken it upon himself to give orders to the other thieves ... apparently 1 Timothy 2:12 does not prevent a higher authority from delegating to a woman, equally as to a man, an authority to direct activities and/or to settle disputes

29. Translation Department and for himself, and provided copies of it and later correspondence with Knight to this author, who provided a copy of Werner's letter to editor Lieu of NTS. March 18, 1980 letter from Werner to Knight, p. 2. BGU 1208 lines 42–47 states, "But Calatyitis, having been summoned by you, explained (ἐξηγήσατο) to me in full the subsequent insolence." Baldwin, "αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCFA 74, writes instead, "In BGU 1208 the influence the writer exercises on the boatman is viewed as achieving positive results and even the boatman gets his 'full fare.'" On p. 276 n. 5 Baldwin quotes from the current author's unpublished 1986 study on οὐδέ, "Of Payne's arguments the last is the most important." The quoted paragraph also states, "the person who was called into account, did not in fact pay the boatman." Baldwin's assertion to the contrary is partly explained by his email to Payne on February 5, 2006, explaining that he had not seen BGU 1208 but drew the text of BGU 1208 from the Duke website, which misrepresents BGU 1208's "you" (σοῦ) as ὅου. Baldwin, as explained in "Important Word," WCA 203 n. 50 emended the Duke text, which had only one letter wrong at this point, by deleting two letters and replacing them with three different letters, thereby changing BGU 1208's "you" (σοῦ) to "me" (ἐμοῦ). This changes the context from Calatyitis reporting to the writer the insolent failure of the debtor, to the writer summoning Calatyitis, whom Baldwin then interprets as showing insolence to the writer. Baldwin also changes "in the hour" to "at that time," thereby obscuring why it was only later the author learned of the debtor's failure to pay. Baldwin's translation also fails to convey that ἐξηγήσατο means "explained," as in John 1:18. Werner emailed Payne on June 22, 2006, after assessing Baldwin's contention, "it still looks to me as if the passenger reneged on his promise to pay [C]alatyitis the boatman." He concluded that even if Baldwin's conjectural emendation and interpretation were accepted, in this context αὐθεντέω would still mean "having assumed authority."

involving men. When she exercises that authority, she will not be *authentēōing*: she will be exercising *exousia*.

Knight's article states, "No attempt has been made to select a translation favourable or unfavourable to a particular rendering or meaning and no alternative translation has been excluded."³⁰ Knight, however, not only excluded Werner's translation of BGU 1208, he also excluded Werner's translation of αὐθεντέω twice in BGU 103, "accept jurisdiction," instead alleging "assume authority" as the translation "provided in Werner's letter dated March 18, 1980."³¹ Although Knight in these cases substitutes his own translation of αὐθεντέω, he writes, "the linguistic evidence provided by a translator or lexicographer will always be that of someone other than the author of this article. This will help ensure impartiality and objectivity."³²

Werner, upon further investigation, confirmed to the present writer his conclusion that "*authentia* is authority that is taken upon oneself."³³ He writes that it is better to translate αὐθεντηκότος in BGU 1208 "assumed authority" or "took authority" than "exercised authority." "The stranger certainly did not have *exousia* over another man's slave. That is why he says he 'assumed authority,' admitting that his command was not a command based on pre-existing authority."³⁴ Werner states, "The very reason the letter was written was that the patrician who exercised *authentia* did not have *exousia* over the slave. Just as Americans normally refrain from disciplining other people's children, so Romans ordinarily refrained from commanding other people's slaves. That is why the author feels a need to send the slave's owner an *apologia*, an explanation of the circumstance."³⁵

Knight's misquotation of Werner has been repeated in numerous subsequent studies. For instance, Baldwin states, "G. W. Knight, 145, gives Werner's translation here":³⁶ "exercised authority over." In the footnote citing this translation, Baldwin also cites extensively from the very paragraph where P. B. Payne identifies "the actual translation sent by

30. Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 155 n. 3.

31. Ibid., 147 (the citation) and 156 n. 22 (the attribution).

32. Ibid., 144, cf. 149.

33. July 21, 1993, letter from John R. Werner to Philip B. Payne, page 2.

34. Ibid., page 3.

35. Ibid., page 2.

36. Baldwin, "αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCFA 276 n. 5.

John Werner to Knight, 'I called him to account.'³⁷ Yet Baldwin does not provide Werner's actual translation, nor does he give any hint that Knight had misquoted Werner. Since Payne's essay was unpublished, readers could not discover this. This is just one of several instances where Knight and/or Baldwin cite erroneous data to give the false impression that ἀθθεντέω consistently conveyed positive authority in Paul's day. In particular, Knight's staunch rejection of negative meanings of ἀθθεντέω, such as "dominate" and in BGU 1208 "to assume authority," has dissuaded interpreters from considering these historically better-supported solutions to its meaning in 1 Tim 2:12.³⁸

Knight identifies ἀθθεντέω in BGU 1208 as being "in the category of authority, in the objective and positive sense,"³⁹ thus implying objectively sanctioned rather than self-assumed authority. Six factors in the content of BGU 1208 make Knight's proposed translation doubtful:⁴⁰

1. Nothing in the narrative shows that the person who forced the slave to agree to pay had any recognized authority over that slave. His letter of apology to the slave's owner confirms that he had no such authority. Unless he had a position of authority over the slave, the translation "exercised authority" is inappropriate.
2. BGU 1208.39–42 states, "He consented [ἐπιχωρέω] to provide for Calatytis the boatman on terms of the full fare, within the hour." Normally, only someone who has a choice "consents" to provide something. The person who consents to provide can also set terms and a timetable for that provision just as the nonpaying rider did. These expressions are more appropriate from a man agreeing to accept a responsibility than from a man obeying a command from someone in a recognized position of authority over him.

37. Payne, "Use of οὐδέ," 10.

38. E.g., Wilshire, "The TLG Computer," 130 and n. 7; Baldwin, "Difficult Word," WCFA 67, 74, 276; Moo, "What Does It Mean," RBMW 186 and 497 n. 18; Wolters, "Semantic," 151–53; and Perriman, "What Eve Did," 132, and *Speaking of Women*, 144 n. 22, who cites Knight to reject meanings related to "misuse of authority by women. Such a nuance, however, is barely, if at all, warranted by the lexicological evidence."

39. Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 153.

40. These six reasons also weigh against the LSJ 275 erroneous listing of ἀθθεντέω in BGU 1208.37 (it is actually 1208.38) as "to have full power or authority over someone." The eighth edition of LSJ had more properly noted this meaning as "Byzantine." If he had full authority over the debtor, it is unlikely that the debtor would have acted insolently in not paying the fare. These reasons similarly show the inadequacy of the unexplained translation "came to have authority," in Wilshire, "Revisited," 46.

3. The debtor did not pay the boatman after all. If the writer had recognized authority over him, it would be foolhardy for him to so blatantly lie to that person and disobey him.
4. If the person assuming authority over the slave had recognized authority over him, it would have been more typical in this sort of context to use a word such as "commanded" or "told" or "ordered" rather than "exercised authority over," even if that were a meaning of ἀθθεντέω at that time.
5. Since no instances of ἀθθεντέω meaning "exercised authority" have been established prior to or near Paul's time, it is doubtful that it would have been understood in this way among Paul's audience.
6. ἀθθεντηκότος is followed by πρὸς with the accusative to denote a "relationship (hostile or friendly), *against, for*—a. hostile *against, with* after verbs of disputing, etc."⁴¹ This passage is about a hostile relationship; the debtor's action is called "insolence." None of the other uses of πρὸς in the over three columns devoted to it in BDAG seem to fit this context. Werner wrote, "I'm sure the slave, at least, regarded the stranger's action as hostile to him!"⁴²

Paul D. Peterson's translation of ἀθθεντηκότος in BGU 1208 "when I had prevailed upon him to provide ..." implies a person taking authority unto himself to resolve the dispute,⁴³ just as does Werner's translation, "I called him to account." Osburn pushes the negative nuance much further by translating ἀθθεντηκότος in BGU 1208 "domineer."⁴⁴ John Werner gives a decisive objection to the translation "domineer": "I can hardly imagine anyone saying 'I domineered,' as would thus be the translation of BGU 1208.38 lines 37–38."⁴⁵ Since it is unlikely that the author would have described himself with this word if he thought it would have been understood to have as strong a pejorative sense as "I domineered him," this provides evidence that "domineer" was not the primary meaning of the word at that time.

41. BDAG 874; cf. LSJ 1497.

42. July 21, 1993 letter from Werner to Payne, page 3.

43. Translation provided for the author in Hamilton, Massachusetts, in 1986.

44. Osburn, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 5.

45. August 27, 1984 letter from John R. Werner to Philip Barton Payne.

Friedrich Preisigke expresses the meaning of *ὑποθεντηκότος* in BGU 1208 as "fest auftreten."⁴⁶ Ernst Bammel assured the current author that "fest auftreten" is appropriate to convey the sense of "to force one's way."⁴⁷ Although more plausible than "I domineered him," one would not expect the author of this sort of letter to write, "I forced my way on him" or "I dominated him." Thus, even though the sense of "dominate" is conceptually congruent with this passage, it is psychologically improbable that the author would describe his own act in this way. The translation, "I took the matter with him into my own hands [lit., 'I assumed authority against him'] and he consented to provide for Calatyti the Boatman on terms of the full fare, within the hour," however, fits in the context of this particular letter of apology and explanation perfectly. It acknowledges what is indisputable, that he took authority into his own hands that only rightfully belonged to the slave's master, without implying that his manner was oppressive.

Thus, the grammatical construction and content of BGU 1208 imply that the bystander took authority into his own hands over the debtor. Its date and verbal form make it especially important for establishing the meaning of this verb at the time Paul wrote. The continuing use of *ὑποθέντω*, documented below, further supports as current in Paul's day the meaning "assume authority over" in the sense of taking authority unto oneself that had not been generally recognized.

ὑποθέντω IN THE RHETORICA OF PHILODEMUS

A papyrus fragment of the *Rhetorica* of Philodemus, who lived between ca. 110 and 40/35 BC,⁴⁸ is tantalizing because of its date. The interspersed lacunae throughout the text include both the letters after *ὑποθέντ*, which are essential to be sure that it is a verbal form,⁴⁹ and all but *αν* of the word that may be its object. If the proper reconstruction is the noun *ὑποθένταισιν*, it means "with lords [who are] murderers," in keeping with

the closest parallel to this quotation from Euripides, who is cited earlier in this sentence, and the usual meaning of the noun *ὑποθέντης* prior to Paul's day. If the proper reconstruction is *ὑποθεντούσιν*, it is a verbal form and of more relevance to 1 Tim 2:12. Since there are over 148 columns of entries in LSJ beginning with *αν* (all that is left of the object of this verb), reconstruction of the text is of necessity conjecture. Sudhaus reconstructs the Greek text as follows, lacunae indicated by square brackets:

Ἄλλ' εἰ δεῖ τὰ-	But if one is to
ληθῇ καὶ γινόμενα λέ-	speak the truth
γειν, οἱ ῥήτορες καὶ μεγά-	the rhetoricians do greatly
λα βλάπτουσι πολλοὺς καὶ	harm many [and]
μεγάλους καὶ περὶ τῶν [δει-	great men, and concerning
	those things (ambitions)
νοῖς ἔρῳσι τοῖς εὐομέ-	which are "aimed at
	with strong desires"
νων" πρὸς τοὺς ἐπιφανέσ-	against distinguished
	personages —
τάτους ἐκάστοτε διαμά-	on each occasion they
	contend earnestly
χονται καὶ "σὺν ὑποθεντ[οῦ-	and "with dominating
σιν ἄν[αξι]" ὑπὲρ τῶν ὁμοί-	masters," —to similar
ων ὥς[αὐτως]. ⁵⁰	ends.

Jay Shaynor translates this: "But if one is to speak the truth the rhetoricians do greatly harm many (and) great men, and they do contend earnestly both with distinguished personages — concerning those things (ambitions) which are 'aimed at with strong desires' — and also 'with

50. Siegfried Sudhaus, ed., *Philodemi: Volumina Rhetorica* (3 vols.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1896; repr., Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1964), 2:133 lines 6–16. Line 14 contains *ὑποθέντ*.

46. Friedrich Preisigke, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrskunden* (vol. 1; Berlin: Selbstverlag der Erben, 1925), 235–36.

47. On September 16, 1991, in the Cambridge University Library, commenting on the judgment of the meaning of this occurrence of *ὑποθέντω* by Preisigke in *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrskunden*, 235–36.

48. Piero Treves, "Philodemus," *OCD*, 818–19.

49. Kroeger and Kroeger, *I Suffer Not*, 96. Wolters, "Semantic," n. 60, and Baldwin, "ὑποθέντω in Ancient Greek," *WCFA* 275, note that *ὑποθένταισιν* is the Old Attic dative plural of *ὑποθέντης*, as in Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1573. It also occurs in the 256–246 BC papyrus PCairo Zenon 4.59. 532,15.

authorized rulers' — to similar ends.⁵¹ Osburn renders *διαμάχονται καὶ* "σὺν αὐθεντ[οῦ]σιν ἄν[αξις]," "fight even with dominating masters,"⁵² which is more in keeping with the other early occurrences of *αὐθεντέω*.

Proper interpretation, and for that matter proper reconstruction, depends on identifying what is being quoted in the two phrases Sudhaus has put into quotation marks. Werner notes, "The quoted phrase, *sun authentousin anaxin*, employs the poetic word *anax* and scans as the latter half of a line of dactylic-hexameter poetry. Since Philodemus writes in prose, I would suspect that the half-line is quoted from some earlier source than himself, perhaps as early as the Epic Cycle of poems."⁵³

The first quotation in this sentence, "aimed at with strong desires" ([*δει*]νοῖς ἔρῳσι το[ξ]ευομένων) has remarkable similarity to fragment 850 from the works of Euripides, "τοξέυεται δεινοῖς ἔρῳσιν"⁵⁴ and is properly recognized as a quotation by Sudhaus. Wilshire states that the second phrase quoted in this sentence, "σὺν αὐθεντ[οῦ]σιν ἄν[αξις]" also finds its closest parallel in the entire TLG database to Euripides fragment number 645, which reads "sharing the house with murdered children," ἡ παῖσιν αὐθένταισι κοινωνῇ δόμων.⁵⁵ In light of these apparent citations, Wilshire properly questions Sudhaus' reconstruction of *αὐθεντ[οῦ]σιν ἄν[αξις]* and especially a translation of it as "authorized rulers."⁵⁶ Since eight out of nine of Euripides' known uses of *αὐθεντ*- mean "murderer," an interpretation in line with this would seem to be preferable. A quotation including the idea of murder would be appropriate at this point given the context at the beginning of this sentence, "the rhetoricians do greatly harm many (and) great men," and also the prior quotation, "aimed at with strong desires."

Unfortunately, the lack of certainty of what Philodemus's *σὺν αὐθεντ*___ *σιν ἄν*___ was quoting makes it impossible to be confident what he meant by *αὐθεντ*___ *σιν*. The closest known parallels to the quotations in this passage suggest that Philodemus meant "murderers" (*αὐθέντ[αι]σιν*) or "those who murder" (*αὐθεντ[οῦ]σιν*). Thus, the only meaning of *αὐθεντέω* that

fits in 1 Tim 2:12 and is also established prior to Paul's day is "assume authority." "To dominate" appears in literature shortly after Paul's time, but "to have authority" or "to exercise authority" are meanings that can be confirmed only much later in ecclesiastical writings.

Knight writes that "Hubbell as a translator gives the phrase 'those in authority' "⁵⁷ for Philodemus's *αὐθεντ[οῦ]σιν*. Belleville identifies this as a misidentification by Knight since "Hubbell actually renders *authent[ou]sin* rightly as an adjective meaning 'powerful' and modifying the noun *lords*.⁵⁸ 'they [rhetors] fight with powerful lords [*διαμάχονται καὶ* 'σὺν αὐθεντ[οῦ]σιν ἄν[αξις].'" Werner's April 8, 1980, letter to Knight states, "Hubbell's 'powerful' paraphrases *megalous*, *epiphanestatos* and *authentousin* all together."⁵⁹ He thereby alerted Knight prior to publication that he had mischaracterized Hubbell's paraphrase as a translation and also that he had misidentified "those in authority" as Hubbell's translation of *αὐθεντ[οῦ]σιν*.

DOES *Αὐθεντέω* IN 1 TIMOTHY 2:12 MEAN "TO HAVE AUTHORITY OVER"?

Not even one instance of the later ecclesiastical use of *αὐθεντέω* with the meaning "to have authority over" or "to exercise authority" has been established before or near the time of Paul. Nevertheless, because this is how many Bible versions translate 1 Tim 2:12,⁶⁰ this analysis examines it in some detail. In both editions of the most detailed volume trying to prove that 1 Tim 2:12 prohibits women from having authority over men, Baldwin's study of *αὐθεντέω* "narrows down the range of meaning that might be appropriate in 1 Tim 2:12" to four possible meanings: to dominate, to compel, to assume authority over, and to flout the authority of.⁶¹ Baldwin says Schreiner will identify which best fits 1 Tim 2:12.⁶² Schreiner, however, adopts none of these, but rather "exercise authority over."⁶³

Although there are no established instances with this meaning until centuries after Paul, the interpretation "to teach and have authority over

51. Wilshire, "The TLG Computer," 134.

52. Osburn, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 5, cf. p. 6, "the present participle of *αὐθεντέω*, used here in its normal sense of 'domineer.'" Cf. above, pp. 380–85.

53. April 8, 1980 letter from Werner to Knight, p. 3.

54. August Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1889), 637.

55. Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, 562.

56. Wilshire, "The TLG Computer," 134. On the same basis Wilshire appropriately questions the paraphrase "those in authority" cited by Knight from Harry M. Hubbell, "The Rhetorica of Philodemus," *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* 23 (1920): 306.

57. Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 154, cf. 145.

58. Belleville, "Usurping Authority," 215.

59. April 8, 1980 letter from Werner to Knight.

60. E.g., "to have authority": HCSB, Beck, RSV, NRSV, NIV, NAB, TEV, Weymouth; "exercise authority": ESV, NASB; "put them in authority": Phillips; "have dominion": RV, ASV.

61. Baldwin, "A Difficult Word," WCA 78–80; "Important Word," WCA 45–51.

62. Baldwin, "A Difficult Word," WCA 80; "Important Word," WCA 51.

63. Schreiner, "Dialogue," WCA 97, 101, 102, 104.

a man," namely, to teach a man authoritatively, solves several problems for people who feel that a hierarchy of man over woman is compatible with Paul's teaching. Unlike unqualified separate prohibitions of a woman teaching and of a woman having authority over a man, which contradict so much of Paul's teaching and practice, it prohibits only authoritative teaching of a man by a woman. Nor does it restrict in any way women teaching women. It appeals to a symmetry of permitting women to learn in submission but not to teach men authoritatively. If "in quietness" is translated "silence,"⁶⁴ this, too, contrasts with teaching. The following γάρ clause in verse 13, if interpreted as implying a hierarchy based on temporal priority in creation,⁶⁵ gives a theological basis for not permitting a woman to teach a man authoritatively. The reference to the deception of Eve, if interpreted as establishing that women tend to be deceived in a way that men are not,⁶⁶ gives a further reason for prohibiting a woman from teaching a man authoritatively. The final affirmation of woman's role in salvation through the birth of Christ gives consolation in spite of woman's subordinate position and inherent susceptibility to deception. Under this view, the final condition for salvation, "with self-control," reminds women to stay in their restricted role. This interpretation, however, in addition to all its exegetical weaknesses, faces major problems both lexically and theologically.

Lexically, as demonstrated above, no other passage prior to or near the time of Paul clearly supports the meaning, "have authority over."⁶⁷ There is support for this meaning considerably after Paul's day. The first instance of αὐθεντέω⁶⁸ confirmed to mean "exercise authority" is ca. AD 370 in Saint Basil, *The Letters* 69, line 45: "he [the bishop of Rome] may himself exercise full authority [αὐθεντῆσαι] in this matter, selecting men capable

of enduring the hardships of a journey."⁶⁹ The Lexicon of Hesychius of Alexandria (fifth century AD), which survives only in a fifteenth-century manuscript known to have been redacted in many places,⁷⁰ states: αὐθεντεῖν = ἐξουσιάζειν,⁷¹ which means "to exercise authority."

Lampe has established the patristic use of αὐθεντέω predominantly to convey various nuances of assuming, having, or exercising authority. Although there is a significant difference between "to exercise authority" and the root meaning of αὐθεντέω, "self-achieving," the original meaning of αὐθεντέω could have shifted first to "self-achieving through assuming authority," then "assuming authority" and eventually to "exercising authority." This shift, however, is not at all self-evident from the root meaning of αὐθεντέω and so should not be assumed to have occurred much before its first confirmed occurrence in AD 370 and certainly not in Paul's day over three centuries earlier.

Paul does refer to exercise of authority in many passages, but nowhere else does he use this word, and many scholars question that Paul would have chosen such an unusual verb to convey the simple idea of positive authority, especially since the αὐθεντ- root normally through the time of Paul carried negative connotations. If Paul wanted to convey the meaning "to have authority" without any negative nuances, it would have been natural for him to use a term such as he did in verse 2 of this chapter ἐν ὑπεροχῇ εἶναι or ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν⁷² or ἐξουσιάζειν⁷³ or one of the many other expressions Paul uses for having, using, or sharing authority.⁷⁴ Wilshire states that "everywhere [else] in the NT where teaching and authority are mentioned together ... it is always the word ἐξουσία that is the word used for 'authority.'"⁷⁵

64. Cf., however, above, pp. 314–15.

65. Cf., however, above, pp. 43–44, and below, pp. 399–404.

66. Cf., however, above, p. 47, and below, pp. 410–15.

67. Despite Knight's assertions to the contrary, Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 152, as shown above, pp. 362–72.

68. It is unclear whether αὐθεντέω describing "inhumane despots" in Pseudo-Hippolytus (of unknown date, possibly late fourth century). *On the End of the World* 7.5, means "lord it over" (e.g., Roberts, ANF 5:243), "dominate," "assume authority over," or "have legal authority over." Baldwin, "αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCEA 278, notes that Codex B of Hippolytus omits αὐθεντέω here, so the "text may be corrupt." Since this, like all other statements in this passage, exemplifies "all shall walk after their own desire," since all of the parallel verbs are negative ("lay hands upon," "hand over to death," "hand over to judgment," "assume an unruly disposition"), and since the subject of αὐθεντέω is inhumane or savage masters, "lord it over" or "dominate" (in the sense of "domineer") fits the context best.

69. Roy J. Deferrari, trans., *Saint Basil* 2:40–43 (LCL).

70. Baldwin, "Important Word," WCA 197 n. 19. John Chadwick (*Lexicographica Graeca: Contributions to the Lexicography of Ancient Greek* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1996], 13) cautions that one must not "believe everything Hesychius tells us. Some entries are plainly wrong, or partially wrong, as when he gives a series of synonyms, only one of which appears to be correct. And the text is often too corrupt for any emendation to carry conviction."

71. Kurt Latte, ed., *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon* (2 vols.; Hauniae, Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1953, 1966), 1:279, entry A8259. Cf. entry H49, ἡγεῖτο [the imperfect of ἡγεομαι, "I lead, guide, think, consider, regard"] = ἡρῶνται, ἡρχεν [from αὐθεντέω and ἄρχω].

72. Rom 9:21; 1 Cor 7:37; 9:4, 5, 6, 12 (μετέχω); 11:10; 2 Thess 3:9.

73. 1 Cor 6:12; 7:4 (twice); cf. "to submit to authorities" (ἐξουσίαις ὑποτάσσεσθαι) in Titus 3:1.

74. E.g., "to use authority" in 1 Cor 9:12; "to make full use of authority" in 9:18; "have a share of authority" in 9:12; "to be given authority" in 2 Cor 10:8. See further in Walter L. Liefeld, "Women and the Nature of Ministry," JETS 30 (1987): 52.

75. Wilshire, "The TLG Computer," 131.

Moo objects that "Paul's three other uses of that verb hardly put it in the category of his standard vocabulary, and the vocabulary of the pastorals is well known to be distinct from Paul's vocabulary elsewhere."⁷⁶ Moo's statement is misleading since Paul also uses "to have authority" (*ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν*) seven times.⁷⁷ These combined with the four other verbal composite forms using *ἐξουσία* (1 Cor 9:12, 18; 2 Cor 13:10; Titus 3:1) and his fifteen other uses of *ἐξουσία* as a noun,⁷⁸ not in a verbal construction, firmly establish *ἐξουσία* as Paul's standard vocabulary for authority. The occurrence of *ἐξουσία* in Titus 3:1 confirms its use in the Pastoral Epistles. Luke, the most likely amanuensis for 1 Timothy,⁷⁹ uses *ἐξουσία* twenty-two times in Luke-Acts, the majority in verbal composite constructions, and Luke 22:25 also uses the verb *ἐξουσιάζω*, so these are confirmed vocabulary for him as well.

Theologically, this interpretation of *ἄρθεντέω* prohibits the sort of authoritative teaching of a man that Paul approves for women elsewhere, including Priscilla, along with Aquila, instructing Apollos.⁸⁰ It also conflicts with Paul's theological principles implying the equal standing of men and women in Christ.⁸¹ Some affirming a hierarchy of men over women have tried to explain Priscilla's teaching as an exception⁸² and may well grant other exceptions when they believe men would benefit from the teaching of a woman. To be consistent, however, they cannot also affirm 1 Tim 2:12 is a *universal* restriction against women teaching and/or having authority over a man. Nor can they also affirm that woman being formed after man or Eve being deceived demands this as a *universal* restriction.

Understanding *ἄρθεντέω* in 1 Tim 2:12 as a present prohibition⁸³ for the specific situation in Ephesus, where many women were deceived by false teachers, resolves these theological tensions. Interpreting this verb "to exercise authority," however, still must face the objection, "Why would all women be restricted from authoritatively teaching men if they were not all deceived by the false teachers?" Would this apply to Priscilla, whom Paul

greeted in 2 Tim 4:19? In contrast, if Paul's prohibition is against "assuming [undelegated] authority over men," it places no restriction on women with properly delegated authority.

Knight states: "The 'authority' in view in the documents is understood to be a positive concept and is in no way regarded as having any overtone of misuse of position or power, i.e., to 'domineer.'"⁸⁴ His statement and the evidence he presents for it are misleading:

1. None of the translators or lexicographers he cites implies that *ἄρθεντέω* conveys "a positive concept . . . in no way regarded as having any overtone of misuse of position or power."
2. BAG 120 specifically defined *ἄρθεντέω* as "have authority, domineer over someone." In Knight's chart of "Meaning Given by Lexicographer" he omits this definition of BAG in every case but one, and in this one he deletes "domineer" from his quotation! It is only later on page 153 that he acknowledges BAG's use of "domineer."
3. Knight acknowledges that in PGL 262, under "assume authority, act on one's own authority," there "is a more negative usage proposed in two homilies," but he does not give the meanings there cited: "play the despot, act arbitrarily."⁸⁵ Beyond these two, Lampe also lists the negative meaning "presume on one's own authority."⁸⁶
4. Knight acknowledges that Sophocles' *Lexicon* lists the meaning "compel," a meaning that is appropriate to misuse of power.⁸⁷
5. A classic argument from misunderstanding German comes in this statement: "The 1957 English translation and edition of the 1952 4th ed. of Bauer by Arndt and Gingrich faithfully renders this German word by the English equivalent 'have authority . . . τινός over someone' as does the newest English edition by Gingrich and Danker (1979). The riddle appears with the insertion of the word 'domineer' between 'authority' and 'τινός'

84. Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 150–51. Cf. Baldwin, "Important Word," WCA 200, "The most basic sense is the positive exercise of authority."
 85. Cf. below, pp. 380–85.
 86. G. W. H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961), 262.
 87. Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 157, in footnote 50, as does Baldwin similarly, "ἄρθεντέω in Ancient Greek Literature," WCEA 66.

76. Moo, "Rejoinder," 186.
 77. Rom 9:21; 1 Cor 7:37; 9:4, 5, 6; 11:10; 2 Thess 3:9, and 1 Cor 9:12 has *ἐξουσίας μετέχουσιν*.
 78. Rom 13:1, 1, 2, 3; 1 Cor 8:9; 15:24; 2 Cor 10:8; Eph 1:21; 2:2; 3:10; 6:12; Col 1:13, 16; 2:10, 15.
 79. Cf. above, pp. 292–93.
 80. Cf. above, pp. 64, 328–34.
 81. Cf. above, pp. 69–76.
 82. Cf. Calvin, *Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 67 and above, pp. 66, 219.
 83. Cf. above, pp. 319–25.

- in both the 1957 and 1979 English editions.”⁸⁸ Apparently Knight overlooked the fact that the German words “*herrschen*” and “*beherrschen*” have a semantic range including both “have authority” and “domineer,” as a check of virtually any standard German-English dictionary shows.⁸⁹
6. Ptolemy describes the planets’ “dominating” as “injurious to the subjects.”⁹⁰ Knight does not cite this description but instead writes, “The following parallel clause speaks of such an *αὐθεντέω* and rule as a position of dignity.”⁹¹ The following clause, however, is not explaining *αὐθεντέω*. It is merely stating that if Saturn has a dignified position with reference to the universe and the angles, various traits result, including: “dictatorial, ready to punish, lovers of property, avaricious, violent, amassing treasure, and jealous.”
 7. The preponderance of examples of forms of *αὐθεντ-* up to Paul’s time have negative connotations. This forms part of the background from which people understood early occurrences of *αὐθεντέω*. If Paul had wanted to select a neutral term for positive authority, *αὐθεντέω* was a bad choice. There are many ways he could easily have done so without inviting the negative associations the *αὐθεντ-* word group carried at that time.
 8. It is also surprising, if Paul intended to exclude women from authority positions over men, that he specifically refers to women in his description of the requirements for deacons, listing their requirements for this office in 1 Tim 3:11. Furthermore, he introduces the requirements for an overseer by saying that *anyone* desiring the office of overseer desires a noble task, and nowhere in the requirements does he use a masculine pronoun.⁹²

Knight alleges, “there is the passage in the historian Diodorus of Sicily (1 BC) which utilizes the word *κυριεύειν*, rather than *αὐθεντεῖν* as in 1 Tim 2:12, but with a nearly identical form both as to construction and content. The statement says the Egyptians have made a law ‘contrary to the general custom of mankind’ ... with the result that *κυριεύειν τὴν γυναῖκα τὰνδρός*.”⁹³ Knight confuses two different laws. Diodorus writes, “The Egyptians also made a law, they say, contrary to the general custom of mankind, permitting men to marry their sisters.”⁹⁴ By omitting, “permitting men to marry their sisters,” Knight gives the false impression that Diodorus identified women ruling men to be “contrary to the general custom of mankind.” To the contrary, Diodorus stated that the rule of Isis gave

greater blessings to all men than any other. It is for these reasons, in fact, that it was ordained that the queen should have greater power and honour than the king and that among private persons the wife should enjoy authority over her husband [*κυριεύειν τὴν γυναῖκα τὰνδρός*], the husbands agreeing in marriage contract that they will be obedient in all things to their wives.⁹⁵

This passage shows not only a high regard for women in authority, but also that the idea of a woman having authority over a man could be expressed quite naturally with the common word *κυριεύω*, which Paul used six times, including 1 Tim 6:15, and could have used here if he had intended to convey this meaning.

Either “to assume authority” or “to dominate” makes a better contrast with “quietness” in 1 Tim 2:12 than “to exercise authority” or “to have authority.” Furthermore, either “to assume authority” or “to dominate” makes a better contrast with “to be in full submission.” Dibelius and Conzelmann state, “‘to be domineering’ (*αὐθεντεῖν*) would be the opposite [of *ὑποταγή*].”⁹⁶

88. Knight, “*ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ*,” 153.
 89. E.g., Cassell’s dictionary lists for *herrschen* both “rule” and “domineer,” and translates some of its compounds as “despot, autocrat, lust of power, despotism, tyrannical, tyranny.” Harrap’s dictionary lists for *beherrschen*: “to rule (country/people/the known world/the universe), to dominate (a person, one’s children, etc.); to hold someone in one’s power, in one’s grip; to have dominion over someone ... to be dominated, ridden by fear.” Note that *beherrschen* when used with persons as objects tends to be negative but when used of nations tends to refer to executive authority. Similarly, Langenscheidt: Muret Sanders lists for *beherrschen*: “to rule over (ein Volk) ... bad sense: ‘to domineer over’ (of a person ‘to boss it over’).”
 90. Cf. Robbins’ translation cited below, p. 381.
 91. Knight, “*ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ*,” 146. Baldwin (“Important Word,” WCA 199 n. 28) alleges similarly, “Robbins clearly does not mean anything pejorative like ‘domineer’ here.”
 92. Cf. further on this below, p. 448.

93. Knight, “*ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ*,” 149.
 94. Oldfather, *Diodorus of Sicily*, Book I, §27, 1:84–85.
 95. *Diodorus of Sicily*, 1:84–87 §27 (trans. C. H. Oldfather, LCL). Cf. Sophocles’ *Oed. col.* 337–41.
 96. Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 47. Baldwin (“Important Word,” WCA 199 n. 28), in attempting to exclude “domineer” as a possible meaning of *αὐθεντέω* in 1 Tim 2:12, incorrectly describes “dominate” as a transitive verb in contrast to “domineer,” which he states “is defined as an intransitive verb.” Either can be transitive or intransitive: e.g., *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, 417; *Webster’s Encyclopedic Dictionary*, 582.

In the wider context as well, either “to assume authority” or “to dominate” fits better than “to have authority.” It fits Paul’s mention of the temporal priority of Adam in creation. Since man was formed before woman and since woman was formed from man, she should respect⁹⁷ man, not assume authority over him or dominate him. In Paul’s day the need to respect one’s source was reinforced by a strong tradition of respect for one’s ancestors. There is no necessary or logical link, however, between temporal priority in creation and authority. In the Genesis account man and woman are equally given the creation mandate. Nowhere else does the Bible state that man’s temporal priority in creation grants man authority over woman.⁹⁸

DOES Αὔθεντεῖν IN 1 TIMOTHY 2:12 MEAN “TO DOMINATE”?

Although some scholars have argued that αὔθεντέω in BGU 1208 means “dominate,” the above study agrees with Werner that this meaning is unlikely in BGU 1208. The meaning “dominate,” however, is attested in many other passages. The closely related noun αὔθεντία means *domination* in 3 Macc 2:29, written about 100 BC. Ptolemy decreed

that all Jews should be degraded to the rank of natives and the condition of serfs, and that those who spoke against it should be taken by force and put to death; and that those who were registered should even be branded on their bodies with an ivy-leaf, the emblem of Dionysus, and be reduced to their former *domination* [εἰς τὴν προσυνεσταλμένην αὔθεντίαν]. . . . But if any of them prefer to join those who are initiated into the mysteries, they shall have equal rights with the citizens of Alexandria.⁹⁹

The sense of “domination” is required by the contrast between “degraded to the rank of natives and the condition of serfs” and its contrast to “equal rights with the citizens.”

Nägeli argued that the verb αὔθεντέω was introduced into common Greek as an equivalent to κρατεῖν τινος, “to dominate someone.”¹⁰⁰ This is seen in Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* 3.13.10 (127–148 AD),¹⁰¹ the first confirmed use of the verb αὔθεντέω meaning “dominate.”

The powers, however, of the nature of the planets that dominate [ἐπικρατησάντων] or overcome [καθυπερτερησάντων] them are vigorous and injurious to the subjects. . . . If Saturn alone is ruler of the soul and dominates [αὔθεντήσας] Mercury and the moon, if he has a dignified position with reference to the universe and the angles, he makes his subjects lovers of the body, strong-minded, deep thinkers, austere, of a single purpose, laborious, dictatorial, ready to punish, lovers of property, avaricious, violent, amassing treasure, and jealous; but if his position is the opposite and without dignity, he makes them sordid, petty, mean-spirited, indifferent, mean-minded, malignant, cowardly, diffident, evil-speakers, solitary, tearful, shameless, superstitious, fond of toil, unfeeling, devisers of plots against their friends, gloomy, taking no care of the body.¹⁰²

These characteristics are particularly negative and “injurious to the subjects.” The verbs that parallel αὔθεντέω, “dominate” and “overcome,” reinforce that αὔθεντέω conveys a negative sense in this passage. Moo, however, citing Knight, alleges, “the occurrences of this word—the verb—that are closest in time and nature to 1 Timothy mean ‘have authority over’ or ‘dominate’ (in the neutral sense of ‘have dominion over,’ not in the negative sense ‘lord it over’).”¹⁰³

Chrysostom (d. AD 407) writes in *Hom. in ep. ad Col.* 10.1 (11.396C), “Do not, therefore, because thy wife is subject to thee, act the despot”¹⁰⁴

100. Theodor Nägeli, *Der Wortschatz des Apostels Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1905), 49–50.

101. G. J. Toomer, “Ptolemy (4)” *OCD* 897–88.

102. Robbins, *Ptolemy*, 338–41. Note 1 explains that “dignified positions with reference to the angles” refers to particular angles of the horoscope, especially mid-heaven angles. Baldwin, “αὔθεντέω in Ancient Greek,” *WCFA* 275, repeats Knight’s error of misreading “angles” as “angels”: “ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ,” 146. The critical edition is Franz Boll and Æ. Boer, eds., *Ptolemy, Apotelesmatika* (vol. 3.1 of *Claudii Ptolemaei Opera quae exstant omnia*; ed. Franz Boll and Æ. Boer; Leipzig: Teubner, 1940; repr., 1957), 158.

103. Moo, “What Does It Mean,” *RBW* 186 and n. 18; Knight, “ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ,” 146.

104. *NPNE* 13:304; PG 62:366. Pace Wilshire, “The TLG Computer,” 132, who states that “the word is used in regard to a wife, respecting the authority of her husband.” Baldwin (“Important Word,” *WCA* 51) acknowledges that αὔθεντέω means “domineer” here, but alleges without evidence or contextual warrant that this is “a clear use of hyperbole.”

97. Respect for the earth, plants, and animals created prior to humankind is implied in God’s call in Gen 2 to “take care of” the garden. This provides a theological basis for ecological respect for nonhuman life forms and the earth itself.

98. Cf. above on 1 Cor 11:2–16, the one passage sometimes alleged to do so (pp. 130–31, 181).

99. *APOT*, 1:165–66, with the exception that Charles has “limited status” in place of “domination.” “Domination” fits the established range of meanings of αὔθεντία and the context better than any other suggestion, such as “restriction,” “rights,” or “limited rights” in Wilshire, “The TLG Computer,” 124; idem, “1 Timothy 2:12 Revisited,” 46. Cf. *LSJ* 1529 on προσυστέλλομαι.

(Μὴ τοίνυν, ἐπειδὴ ὑποτέτακται ἡ γυνή, αὐθεντεῖ).¹⁰⁵ PGL 262 translates this, “play the despot, act arbitrarily.” As in 1 Tim 2:12, “being subject” contrasts with αὐθεντεῖ, except here it is men who are not to αὐθεντεῖ. If it means “to have authority,” then, Chrysostom wrote, “do not have authority over your wife”!

PGL 263 gives three fourth- to fifth-century AD examples of this noun meaning “high-handedness; tyranny.” The fifth- to sixth-century AD Christian grammarian and philosopher Joannes Philoponus wrote “ignorance dominates,” using the verb form αὐθεντεῖ ἄγνοια in *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* 15.487.12. Papyrus 9239,8 from AD 548 describes a woman who was dominated, cast aside, and suffered a life-threatening blow as “αὐθεντία καὶ τυραννικ(ῶ).”¹⁰⁶ In the sixth century AD,¹⁰⁷ Johannes Malalas’ *Chronographia*¹⁰⁸ uses αὐθεντούσαντες τὸν ἡγεμόνα to mean “put pressure on.”¹⁰⁹ Clearly, then, there are many instances where the verb αὐθεντέω means “dominate.” Depending on the context, appropriate translation could use an equivalent expression such as “domineer, compel, force, prevail upon, put pressure on, prevail over, or call to account.” Harris even went as far as to say, “in all of the occurrences of the verb close to the NT period, there is one indispensable element: that to exercise *authentein* was ‘to hold sway or use power, to be dominant.’”¹¹⁰ Many Bible versions translate αὐθεντεῖν with some equivalent of “dominate”:

“dominate”: Fenton, TNT

“domineer”: Berkeley, New Berkeley, Goodspeed, NEB, Williams¹¹¹

“exercise dominion”: Reina-Valera 1960, 1995 (*ejercer dominio*)

105. F. Field, *Joannis Chrysostomi interpretatio omnium epistularum Paulinarum* (vols 1–7; Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1845–1862); *Homilias in Epistolae ad Philippenses, Colossenses et Thessalonicenses* (1855), 5:276 line 5.

106. Emil Kiessling, *Sammelbuch Griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963), 6:139.

107. LSJ xxxii.

108. Ludwig Dindorf, *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia* (Bonn: Weber, 1831).

109. As translated by Elizabeth Jeffreys, Michael Jeffreys, and Roger Scott, *The Chronicle of John Malalas: A Translation* (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986), 136. Baldwin (“Important Word,” WCA 46) concludes “that ‘compel’ is the intended meaning, if not something stronger.”

110. Harris, “Eve’s Deception,” 342. This does not, however, apply to Aristonicus Alexandrinus, *De signis Iliadis*, 9.694, cf. above, pp. 361–62.

111. Cf. also Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 47 (“to be domineering”); Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 456–60; Osburn, “ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ,” 4–12.

“lord it over”: LB, Way¹¹²

“to tell a man what to do”: CEV, JB, *The Message*

“dictate to men”: Moffatt, REB

“lay down the law”: JBCerf (*faire la loi*)

Several NT Greek lexicons include “domineer” as a meaning for αὐθεντέω in 1 Tim 2:12.¹¹³ Similarly, Marshall concludes, “Ideas such as autocratic or domineering abuses of power and authority appear to be more naturally linked with the verb in view of the meanings of the cognate nouns αὐθέντης and αὐθεντία.”¹¹⁴

Furthermore, almost everything in the logical development of the passage makes sense with “to teach and dominate a man.” Just as submission should characterize a woman’s learning (1 Tim 2:11), domination should not characterize a woman’s teaching a man (2:12). Domination is the opposite of submission and so makes an excellent contrast. Dominating teaching is the opposite of tranquil learning (2:11). Verse 12 contrasts αὐθεντέω with, “but to be in quietness” (ἀλλ’ εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ) and the same phrase from the prior verse, “let a woman learn with a quiet spirit (ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ).” “To dominate a man” implies forceful imposition of one’s will that is the opposite of a quiet spirit.¹¹⁵ “To dominate” fits the context better than “to have authority,” since it is diametrically opposed to “quietness,” as required by “but” (ἀλλ’, 2:12).

Wilshire properly observes, “Calmness is the opposite of violence, not of authority or power.”¹¹⁶ Calmness and authority are compatible, not contrasting concepts.¹¹⁷ Although no verse in 1 Timothy explicitly states that women in the Ephesian church were dominating men, “women must ... not be malicious talkers” (3:11) may allude to some form of domination. Moreover, 1 Tim 6:4–5 may imply a dominating spirit on the part of “anyone [who]

112. Cf. J. H. Bernard, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1899), 48 (“to lord it over”).

113. BAG 120; L&N, 1:474 §37.21; John Groves, *A Greek and English Dictionary* (5th ed.; London: George Cowie, 1833), 100; Barclay M. Newman, Jr., *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971), 28; Souter, *Pocket Lexicon*, 42; and Parkhurst, *Lexicon*, 79.

114. Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 457.

115. Since ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ structurally parallels ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ at the end of v. 11, the structure contrasts αὐθεντέω with “in full submission.” “To dominate” is the opposite of “to be in full submission.” “To have authority” would also contrast with “to be in full submission,” but the contrast is greater with “dominate” or “to assume authority.”

116. Wilshire, “1 Tim 2:12 Revisited,” 48.

117. Cf. Harris, “Eve’s Deception,” 343. Pace Barnett, “Wives and Women’s Ministry,” 232.

teaches false doctrines ... controversies and arguments that result in envy, quarreling, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men [*ἀνθρώπων* may include women] of corrupt mind" (cf. 1:4, 7; 4:3).

The "for" clause in 1 Tim 2:13 indirectly supports the "dominate" interpretation since dominating teaching is the opposite of the respect a woman owes to man as prior in creation and the one from whom she was formed. The translation "to dominate" also contrasts well with Paul's final word in verse 15, his insistence that women exercise "self-control" (*σωφροσύνης*). Furthermore, for women to dominate men in teaching would be particularly offensive and reflect poorly on the gospel. It fits the contentiousness of the false teachers in Ephesus and provides guidance on how "you ought to behave" in the church of the living God (1 Tim 3:14–15). Yet unlike the "have authority" interpretation, it does not conflict with any other Pauline passage. Consequently, there is sufficient lexical and contextual evidence to give serious consideration to translating *ὑποτασσέσθαι* in 1 Tim 2:12, "to dominate."

If Paul intends this as a separate prohibition from "to teach," then in light of the false teaching he is not permitting a woman "to teach" or "to dominate a man." The goal of this double prohibition would be to stop the major source of the false teaching and to shield the church from a major source of conflict and from a bad reputation due to women dominating men.

In light of Paul's usual use of *οὐδέ*, however, it is more likely that Paul is conveying a single idea that merges "to teach" and "to dominate a man": "I am not permitting a woman to teach and dominate a man, but she should have a quiet spirit." One weakness of the "dominate" interpretation is that it is not clear what "to teach and dominate a man" would have meant.

Dominating teaching could refer to bombastic or threatening teaching or teaching that forces a man to change his belief or behavior. There is evidence that most women lacked the training in Scripture available to men and that women were particularly susceptible to the false teaching.¹¹⁸ Since their message would not be welcome, it would cause the kinds of controversies troubling Ephesus and would be more likely to be perceived as dominating. Any teaching aims to influence, and some people in a male-dominated culture such as Paul's might have considered women teaching men to be dominating under any circumstance.

The major weakness of the "teach and dominate a man" interpretation is that the appeal to Eve's deception does not directly support it. If Paul is specifically prohibiting teaching that dominates a man, one would expect his supporting illustration to exemplify dominating teaching. Nothing in Gen 3:6 or its context, however, gives any hint that the first woman dominated Adam. Paul's stress on the deception of the woman that led to the fall seems designed instead to support a prohibition focused on stopping women in Ephesus who were deceived by the false teaching from assuming authority for themselves to teach men, which could lead to a corresponding fall of the church there.

DOES *ὑποτασσέσθαι* IN 1 TIMOTHY 2:12 MEAN "TO ASSUME AUTHORITY [TO ONESELF]"?

Several key factors make "to assume authority" the best-supported meaning of *ὑποτασσέσθαι* in 1 Tim 2:12. Of only two cases of *ὑποτασσέσθαι* unambiguously documented up to Paul's time, the meaning of only one fits 1 Tim 2:12, BGU 1208, "to assume authority [to oneself]." Like the only other case,¹¹⁹ it is closely associated with the word's etymology: "self-achieving." BDAG 150 defines *ὑποτασσέσθαι*, "to assume a stance of independent authority." This precisely identifies the meaning argued here for 1 Tim 2:12.

Perriman also correctly identifies the focus in the use of *ὑποτασσέσθαι* in Paul's time as the "assumption" of authority and "the active wielding of influence (with respect to a person)."¹²⁰ Werner identifies the "assumption of authority" as the core meaning of *ὑποτασσέσθαι*.¹²¹ Baldwin correctly notes that "assume authority over" is an appropriate translation of *ὑποτασσέσθαι* in 1 Tim 2:12.¹²² He also states that *ὑποτασσέσθαι*

occurs several times in negative contexts, where it refers to a condition that results when one has taken to himself or herself the judgments or authority belonging to another. Thus, the word is used

119. Cf. above, pp. 361–62.

120. Perriman, "What Eve Did," 136, 138; cf. Andrew Perriman, *Speaking of Woman: Interpreting Paul* (Leicester: Apollos, 1998), 151–57.

121. Cf. above, pp. 365–69 and below, 386–87, 390–91. Pace Wolters, "Semantic," n. 82.

122. Baldwin, "Difficult Word," WCA 75, 79, 80, but he incorrectly states on p. 75 and in "Important Word," WCA 47, that it is "a positive term" even though his "Important Word," WCA 201 n. 32 states, "Submission to authority, not independence, was one of the driving values of the early church. So several of the examples given are in a context where the author undoubtedly intends the context to have negative connotations."

118. Cf. above, pp. 299–304.

three times to speak of an underlord who carries out an execution that ought to have been sanctioned by the king. It is used of other officials who release prisoners, lighten tribute, or convene assemblies without full authorization. In this it is like "usurp."¹²³

Various lexicons¹²⁴ and Bible versions reflect the taking of authority that has not been properly delegated: "usurp authority": Bishops (1589), Geneva (1560), KJV; "take authority": Segond (1910) and A. Crampton, La Sainte Bible (1864, 1938) ("prendre autorité"), Casiodoro de Reina (1569) ("tomar autoridad"). The meaning "to assume authority" is well-documented in occurrences of αὐθεντέω after Paul's time as well.

Werner argues that αὐθεντέω means "assume authority" in a fifteenth-century astrological papyrus believed to reproduce a third-century text attributed to Hermes.¹²⁵ Walter Scott states, "Most of [the extant *Hermetica*], if not all, were written in the third century after Christ... Probably none [were written] so early as the first century."¹²⁶ Just as one properly identifies later NT manuscripts as identifying first-century text, Osburn may not be far off in identifying this text as second-century AD,¹²⁷ but a third-century date fits better with most of the *Hermetica*. In this passage, "A king of thieves gets his authority by assuming it (and then defending it against rivals, like Robin Hood dousing Little John), not by having it delegated to him by a higher official or recognized as his by cultural custom."¹²⁸

123. Baldwin, "Important Word," WCA 47. Baldwin, "Αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCA 276, 291, 301, 304, includes in this category the second-century AD Moeris's *Attic Lexicon*, the ca. AD 450 Olympiodorus 456.3, the ninth-century AD Photius *Bibliothèque* 80.59a.11; 80.62b.31; and 238.317b.7; and the thirteenth- to fourteenth-century AD Thomas Magister's *Attic Sayings* 18.9. Baldwin distinguishes uses of αὐθεντέω from "usurp" by saying they do not refer to actions but to states, but his own translations of Olympiodorus and Photius in "Αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCA 291, 301, prove this to be false.

124. E.g., Groves, *Greek and English*, 100 ("to usurp power").

125. Franciscus Cumont, *Codicum Parisinorum in Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum*, VIII (vol. 1; Brussels: A. M. Lamertin, 1929), 177.7–8. Cumont (*Codicum*, 20, 32, 172–175) entitles the work "Hermetis Trismegisti methodus mystica" and identifies three manuscripts of it. Cumont (*Codicum*, 172) identifies this passage as possibly being "from the book of mysteries in the *Catalogo Apomazaris* column 799 that is attributed to Hermes. Its attribution to Hermes indicates that it cites a far earlier Hermetic tradition."

126. Walter Scott, ed., *Hermetica Part 1: The Ancient Greek and Latin Writings Which Contain Religious or Philosophic Teachings Ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus* (Introduction, Texts and Translation; 4 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1924–1936), 1:10. His work does not analyze or date the astrological texts attributed to Hermes.

127. Osburn, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 6. Scott, *Hermetica* 1:76 states, "The earliest evidence for the writings of similar character to our religious and philosophic *Hermetica* is that of Athenogoras, AD 177–80."

128. July 21, 1993 letter from Werner to Payne, page 3, confirmed in a January 27, 2006 email to Payne. A letter from Werner to Knight dated April 8, 1980 translated it "exercises authority"

John Chrysostom, *In Joannem* (PG 59), writes ca. AD 386–407 about Greeks asking to see Jesus, "But neither does he [Philip] at once assume authority (αὐθεντεῖ); for he heard, 'Go not in the way of the Gentiles.' Therefore, having communicated with the disciple [Andrew] he brings it up to the Teacher [Christ]" (John 12:21). Chrysostom *Hom. in ep. ad. Col.* 11.2 (11.406E) uses αὐθεντεῖν similarly, "Do not then wish to assume authority for yourselves, but redeem the time. And he said not simply, 'buy,' but 'redeem,' making it your own after another manner."¹²⁹

Hesychius of Alexandria, the fifth-century AD lexicographer, who reportedly based his work on earlier lexicons, states: αὐτοδικεῖ = αὐθεντεῖ ὅταν αὐτός λέγῃ¹³⁰ "he takes independent jurisdiction = he assumes authority when he speaks for himself."

Council of Chalcedon¹³¹ 2,1,3.48.12, AD 451, states, "While this reckless deed was being done, they assumed authority [ἡϋθένησαν] and broke into my room and seized me."¹³² Council of Chalcedon 2,1,3.131.26, states, "During these acts, hunting down the notably pious as dangerous criminals, he seized authority [ἡϋθένησεν] and broke into the prisons in order to put in his power the facility to release those subject to trial, that is to say, to offend the guiltless."¹³³

Lampe's PGL 262 cites many fifth-century AD passages where αὐθεντέω meant "assume authority; act on one's own authority," including Ammonius Alexandrius, *Fragmenta in Acta apostolorum* 10:18 (PG 85:1537B): "It is not necessary for one to assume authority¹³⁴ [αὐθεντεῖν] to oneself and to introduce innovations into the faith." Eusebius of Alexandria, *Sermones* V (PG 86:348D), "So the deacon ought to practice based on discernment of the elder[']s intention] ... not to assume authority [αὐθεντεῖν] over the

but explained, "He has simply taken it [authority] upon himself." Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 148, quotes Werner's translation but omits his key explanation.

129. NPNF¹ 13:309, but NPNF translates αὐθεντεῖν with the equivalent "to have your own way."

130. Latte, *Hesychii*, 2:A8049.

131. E. Schwartz, ed., *Concilium universale Chalcedonense anno 451* (vol. 3; Berlin: deGruyter, 1935; repr., 1965).

132. The translation of ἡϋθένησαν is by the present author. The rest of the passage is cited from Baldwin ("αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCA 292–93), who translates ἡϋθένησαν as "they exercised their own initiative."

133. The translation of ἡϋθένησεν is by the present author. The rest of the passage is cited from Baldwin ("αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCA 293), who translates ἡϋθένησεν as "he assumed his own jurisdiction."

134. Baldwin ("αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCA 293) translates it, "to act independently."

people, but to do everything by the command of the elder. When the elder is present, neither does he have authority to banish or to do other things." Victor Antiochenus, *Catena in Marcum* 2:25–26,¹³⁵ says: "For if a prophet assumes his own authority against the law ... should you be vexed and judge the law?"¹³⁶

Ἀὐθεντέω occurs again with the sense of assumed authority in "an arbitration in a family dispute concerning an inheritance" in P. Lond. 1708, line 38, written in AD 567 or 568. Bell, in the following summary of the paragraph containing Ἀὐθεντέω, translates the words αὐθεντήσαι ἐκμισθώσαντα, "took to his own uses":

Apollos died after Heraïs leaving to the children all his own and his wife's property, but Psates, being the eldest brother, deprived and defrauded us of the inheritance, and took to his own uses [αὐθεντήσαι] all the rent ... of the houses; this although he had promised me when I married his sister that immediately after the solemnization of the marriage he would hand over all her share of household utensils inherited from her parents and also my share, in right of my wife, of the house-property to live in ... but up to the present he has given us nothing of all this, though we have grown weary first of demand and then of reproaches.¹³⁷

The award given by the arbitrator confirms that Psates unfairly commandeered the inheritance: "Psates is to hand over whatever he has received from his parents for the general division. The houses too are to be divided equally and also whatever may be left from the rent after the payment of the cost of building. ... Psates is ... not to make further claims on them."¹³⁸ Clearly, Ἀὐθεντέω in this case does not mean a neutral or warranted authority, but rather an unauthorized seizing of assets. This is further confirmed by the two verbs with which it stands in parallel in this sentence, "deprived us [of the inheritance]" and "defrauded us." Consequently, note 38 (5:119), which gives two alternative reconstructions of the word following Ἀὐθεντέω, was not intended to translate Ἀὐθεντέω as a posi-

tive activity at all,¹³⁹ but rather to show that this phrase taken together explains how Psates took control of income from the houses: "αὐθεντήσαι ἐκμισθώσαντα: 'seized authority and leased.'"

Werner wrote regarding this passage to Knight, "It seems to me that this one works against you. The words reported are those of the plaintiffs, and from their point of view the defendant was acting wrongly when he assumed authority over their parents' buildings, i.e., he 'usurped' that authority."¹⁴⁰ This case, like many others, demonstrates that Baldwin is incorrect to allege, "Not a single example can be evidenced from anywhere that Ἀὐθεντέω is ever used of anything other than the exercise of authority."¹⁴¹ Psates never had authority to do what he did. He did not abuse authority. He wrongly seized authority.

The meaning "to assume authority" continues in the sixth-century AD Evagrius Scholasticus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 2.18 (PG 86:2564C), which states, "For this fellow took upon himself the communion ... having been legally deposed by his own bishop—the one we among the saints think of as our father, even the archbishop Flavian—assuming his own jurisdiction [= taking authority upon himself] without regulation in order to receive communion before sitting in council in Ephesus with the God-loving bishops."¹⁴² Leontius Hierosolymitanus, *Contra Nestorianos* 4.49 (PG 86:1720D), writes, "We will not assume authority (αὐθεντήσομεν) to call the Mother of Jesus, 'Theotokos,' since the Holy Scriptures nowhere address her thus, nor any of the Fathers."¹⁴³

Also in the sixth century AD (PGL xxxii) Johannes Malalas' *Chronographia*¹⁴⁴ repeatedly used Ἀὐθεντέω to identify the assumption or seizing of authority:

- "The army ... proclaimed Albinus emperor, assuming authority over the senate" (*Chron.* 291.12).

139. Pace Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 147, 155, "a negative nuance which is not found in any of the documents."

140. Pace Knight, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 155, "the now evidently erroneous usage of the K.J.V. 'to usurp authority'; repeated by Baldwin, 'Difficult Word,' WCFA 67–68. Cf. above, pp. 385–86.

141. Baldwin, "Important Word," WCA 201 n. 31.

142. Translation by Baldwin, "αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCFA 295. PGL 262 cites this to mean "assume authority; act on one's own authority."

143. Baldwin ("αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCFA 296) translates αὐθεντήσομεν as "act on our own authority." PGL 262 cites it to mean "presume on one's own authority."

144. Translations of αὐθεντέω are in each case by this author. The rest of each translation is from Jeffreys, *John Malalas*, whose translations of αὐθεντέω are respectively: "overruling" (155), "flouting the authority of" (185), "seized" (196), "on his own authority" (235–6), and "on his own initiative" (270). Each implies the assuming of authority.

135. John A. Cramer, ed., *Catena in Evangelia S. Matthaei et S. Marci ad fidem Codd. MSS. (Catena Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum 1; Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1840; repr., Hildesheim: Olms, 1967), 292.29.*

136. Translation by Baldwin, "αὐθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCFA 297.

137. F. G. Kenyon and H. I. Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum: Catalogue, with Texts* (5 vols.; London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1893–1917), 5:114–15.

138. Kenyon and Bell, *Greek Papyri*, 5:117.

- "The army made a man named Eugenios emperor, *assuming authority* over the senate. He reigned twenty-two days and was immediately assassinated" (*Chron.* 341.15).
- "At that time the Alexandrians, given free rein by their bishop, *seized authority* and burnt on a pyre of brushwood Hypatia the famous philosopher, who had a great reputation and who was an old woman" (*Chron.* 359.13).
- "Theodotos, *assuming authority*, put him [Theodosios, who held the rank of illustis] to death without reporting this to the emperor. This met with the emperor's anger and he was dismissed from office, deprived of his rank and ordered into exile in the East" (*Chron.* 416.14).
- "Belisarios was angry with Sounikas because he had attacked the Persian army, *assuming authority on his own*" (*Chron.* 462.12).

The sixth- to seventh-century AD BGU 103.3 twice uses the related word ἄυθεντιζω meaning "assume authority."¹⁴⁵ In this papyrus, a "lower church official [village headman, Abraam] lets the higher official decide whether he will assume authority over the case of the heirs, or refuse to assume authority by referring the case back to the judicial authority of the minor official."¹⁴⁶

Since the brothers of the blessed Enoch have come to us saying, "We want to go to law with his wife," please be so good, Your [pl.] Godhelp, if you will assume authority [ἄυθεντισεις] over the matter and receive them in the city, and they will come to terms with each other; but if not, please be so good as to have both sides come here and we shall have them come to terms in accordance with justice. . . . But do not defer, Your [pl.] Piety-to-the-Father, because of a deposit, to send them forth; but if, again, you assume authority [ἄυθεντις] and receive them in the city, fine.¹⁴⁷

The ninth-century AD Photius, *Library* 80.62b.31¹⁴⁸ states that when the emperor died, "a certain Joannes *assumed authority* [ἄυθεντήσας] and ruled tyrannically."¹⁴⁹ The tenth-century AD Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *About Strategy* 159.33¹⁵⁰ quotes, "the army made him emperor, *assuming authority* over [ἄυθεντήσας] the senate,"¹⁵¹ and his *About Virtues and Vices* 1.160.18¹⁵² quotes, "He [Emperor Decius] published his godless decree so that the ones finding those called Christians *assumed authority* [ἄυθετοῦντας] and murdered them and seized all their goods with impunity."¹⁵³

In each of these uses of ἄυθεντέω, the authority that is assumed is an authority that had not been properly granted, so it usually carries a negative connotation. Werner concludes, "The common element . . . is the taking of authority upon oneself, deciding to act authoritatively, and doing so, whether or not one has the legitimate authority (*exousia*) to do so."¹⁵⁴ Werner goes so far as to say that "initiative, lack of delegation from above, is a common component in all the examples, contradicted only by Hesychius' *exousiazein*."¹⁵⁵ He notes that "3 of the 4 Patristic definitions involve undelegated authority."¹⁵⁶ Similarly, the noun ἄυθεντία has the meaning "arbitrarily, on one's own responsibility, unauthorized" in various passages cited by PGL 263, including Basil (d. AD 379).

This understanding of ἄυθεντέω reflects Paul's central concern in 1 Timothy: to counteract false teachings. On this interpretation, Paul is not permitting a woman to assume authority that she had not been properly delegated. "Assume authority" fits naturally with the following reference to Eve's deception and fall. Eve took it on herself to eat the forbidden fruit and to offer it to Adam. John Chrysostom (d. AD 407) explains Paul's

148. R. Henry, ed., *Photius: Bibliothèque* (8 vols.; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1959–1977).

149. The translation of ἄυθεντήσας is by the present author. The rest of the passage is cited from Baldwin ("ἄυθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCFA 301), who translates ἄυθεντήσας "took charge."

150. C. de Boor, *Excerpta historica iussu imp. Constantini Porphyrogeniti confecta*, vol. 3: *excerpta de insidiis* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1905).

151. The translation is by the present author.

152. T. Büttner-Wobst and A. G. Roos, *Excerpta historica iussu imp. Constantini Porphyrogeniti confecta*, vol. 2: *excerpta de virtutibus et vitiis* (vol. 2, pt. 1; Berlin: Weidmann, 1906).

153. The translation of ἄυθετοῦντας is by the present author. The rest of the passage is cited from Baldwin ("ἄυθεντέω in Ancient Greek," WCFA 303), who in n. 27 suggests "took justice into their own hands" to translate ἄυθετοῦντας.

154. July 21, 1993 letter from Werner to Payne, page 4, referring to BGU 1208, BGU 103, and fragment 21 of Codex Paris gr 2419.

155. April 8, 1980 letter from John R. Werner to George W. Knight III, p. 4.

156. Ibid.

145. Berlin: *Griechische Urkunden*, 1:122. Cf. Ulrich Wilcken, ed., *Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyrskunde* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1912], 1: ii. p. 160), who translates ἄυθεντισεις τὸ πρᾶγμα, "die Sache selbst in die Hand nehmen" ("take in hand"); cf. LSJ 275; MM, 91. Knight properly renders these "assume authority" in "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ," 147. Nägeli (*Wortschatz des Apostels Paulus*, 49–50), without warrant, cites it as an example of the meaning κρατεῖν τινος ("to dominate someone").

146. July 21, 1993 letter from Werner to Payne, p. 3.

147. Werner provided the translations, "assume authority" in a letter to Payne dated July 21, 1993, p. 3. The rest of the translation is from Werner's March 18, 1980 letter to Knight, where he rendered the verbs, "accept jurisdiction."

statement, "I am not permitting a woman to teach." Why? She taught [Ἐδίδασκε] Adam once wickedly. 'Nor to assume authority over a man.' Just why? She assumed authority [ἡὐθεντήσεν] once wickedly."¹⁵⁷ Here αὐθεντέω cannot mean "exercised authority"¹⁵⁸ since she had no authority to eat the fruit; God had forbidden it. The narrative makes it clear that she assumed authority but says nothing about her dominating Adam. "Assumption of authority" perfectly fits Paul's contrasting statements, "but [ἀλλ'] to be in quietness [ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ]" in 2:12b and its structural parallel "in full submission" (ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ) in 2:11, which together bracket 2:12a. Taking authority is aggressive. Being "in quietness" is the opposite of being aggressive. Accordingly, the Syriac Peshitta's translation of αὐθεντέω in 1 Tim 2:12 is the Aphel infinitive of *mrh*, meaning "to venture, dare, be rash, hasty, headstrong, presumptuous,"¹⁵⁹ or "to be assuming."¹⁶⁰

The component parts of αὐθεντέω, "self-achieving," make the meaning "to assume authority" easy to understand. The earlier one gets to the coining of words, the more important etymology becomes for identifying that word's meaning. Based on the number of words that occur first in Paul's letters, he was fond of coining expressions. In these cases one can almost always identify the meaning from the word's component parts. This is obviously the case in such Pauline words as "teachers of what is excellent" (καλοδιδάσκαλος) in Titus 2:3;¹⁶¹ "regions beyond" (ὑπερέκεινα) in 2 Cor 10:16; "super abundantly/most earnestly" (ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ) in Eph 3:20 and 1 Thess 3:10 and 5:13; "super intercedes" (ὑπερεντυγχάνω) in Rom 8:26; and "over abounded" (ὑπερπερισσεύω) in Rom 5:20 and 2 Cor 7:4.

The assuming of authority for oneself is directly confronted by 1 Tim 2:14 and its reference to the fall. The original sin of the woman in the garden was not her teaching with authority but her taking authority unto herself to take the fruit in spite of God's prohibition. Grasping for authority was also part of the temptation "to be like God" (Gen 3:5). It is this grasping of authority for oneself that Paul prohibits. It led to the fall in the garden and it threatened the fall of the church in Ephesus. Bruce Winter

highlights just such a seizing of authority on the part of "new women" who had "a desire to dominate in the Forum and the courts" to conclude "that here [in 1 Tim 2:12] the term carries not only the connotation of authority but also an inappropriate misuse of it."¹⁶² Part of women's justification for assuming for themselves authority to teach men may have been their overly realized eschatology.¹⁶³

If Paul intends this as a separate prohibition from "to teach," then, because of the false teaching he "is not permitting" a woman "to teach" or "to assume authority over a man." The goal of this double prohibition would be to stop women, the major source of the false teaching, both from teaching and from assuming authority over a man. This view has three key weaknesses. First, it does not fit the normal pattern of Paul's use of οὐδέ to convey a single idea. Second, it results in an overly broad and difficult-to-apply prohibition of women teaching that conflicts with Paul's principles and practice. Arbitrarily importing the qualifier "man" from the second prohibition does not resolve this conflict.¹⁶⁴ Third, a separate prohibition of women assuming authority over a man does not relate to any known problem this letter addresses and appears unmotivated.

In light of Paul's usual use of the conjunction οὐδέ, it seems more likely that Paul is conveying a single idea that merges "to teach" and "to assume authority over a man." What Paul says is this: "I am not permitting a woman to teach and assume authority over a man," namely, to take for herself authority to teach a man without authorization from the church. Practically, this excluded women in Ephesus from assuming to themselves authority to teach men in the church. It would not, however, prohibit women with recognized authority from teaching men (e.g., Priscilla).

This restriction of women assuming authority for themselves to teach men is a change from Paul's earlier descriptions of teaching in the church as open to all believers. Formerly, Paul had appealed to all members of the body of Christ to teach one another.¹⁶⁵ The crisis of the false teachers' influence over women exposed a danger in the open approach to worship Paul had advocated earlier. It is because of this crisis that Paul describes the

157. Chrysostom, *In Genesim* (Sermons) ser. 1–9, PG 54:595.1.

158. Pace Baldwin, "Important Word," WCA 46.

159. J. Payne Margoliouth, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1903), 300.

160. James Murdock, *The New Testament: A Literal Translation from the Syriac Peshitto Version* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1851), 381.

161. Cf. above, pp. 329–30.

162. Winter, *Roman Wives*, 119.

163. As argued by Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 458–59; cf. 2 Tim 2:18.

164. Cf. above, pp. 353–56.

165. Cf. above, pp. 331–33, e.g., 1 Cor 14:26; Col 3:16. Paul viewed this as fully compatible with individuals' gifts such as wisdom (1 Cor 12:8) and God appointing teachers (12:28).

taking of authority with a verb that had negative associations in his day. The one imperative mode verb in this passage is "let women learn" in full submission. Paul's goal is that as they learn in submission to the church's teaching, they will repudiate the false teaching. Paul's use of the present indicative "I am not permitting"¹⁶⁶ gives evidence that he hopes that the danger of the false teaching will subside enough that once again the Ephesian believers can practice a more open form of worship.

In contrast to taking authority to teach men, Paul desires that women be tranquil. The meaning of *ἡσυχία* in the context of this passage's consistent desire for peace without self-assertiveness (e.g., 2:2, 8, 11, 12, 15) is not silence but quietness-peace.¹⁶⁷ This fits the pattern of word usage in 1 Thess 4:11; 2 Thess 3:12; and 1 Tim 2:2. "I am not permitting" is an inappropriate main verb for introducing "to be quiet" or "to be silent." Either the main verb in 1 Tim 2:8, "I desire" (*βούλομαι*), or in 1 Tim 2:1, "I urge" (*παρακαλῶ*) would be a proper fit.¹⁶⁸ This lack of smooth connection with the main verb of 2:12, known as *zeugma*, implies that "but to be in quietness" was an afterthought. In spite of its grammatical incongruity, it directly addresses the central problem of chapter 2—the need to bring peace, not more trouble, in the wake of the contentions raised by the false teachers. Thus, it should probably not be regarded as a parenthesis.¹⁶⁹

WHY PROHIBIT WOMEN FROM ASSUMING AUTHORITY OVER MEN?

Paul's restriction focuses on the most critical problem for the advance of false teaching in Ephesus, namely any woman under the sway of false teaching assuming for herself authority to teach a man. In the worship context implied by prayer (1 Tim 2:8), learning (2:11), and teaching (2:12), this most obviously applies to teaching in public assemblies of the church, where men would be present. Not only was this the place where the most people would be influenced, it is also the public face of the church. This restriction was necessary in order to keep the false teaching from being associated with church teaching. Paul does not establish a rule that would be impossible for Timothy to monitor, namely, teaching by women when no men were present.

In addition to Paul's concern about the spread of false teaching, a theme of 1 Timothy is the image of the church before the watching world. Chapter 2 is concerned throughout with propriety since impropriety detracts from the appeal of the gospel. Propriety is also the central theme of the requirements for church leaders in chapter 3. In 5:14, Paul counsels young widows "to give the enemy no opportunity for slander." For women to assume to themselves authority to teach, if it had never affected men, would not have caused particular social notoriety in Paul's day. But in Paul's day, for women to teach with self-assumed authority over men could bring shame to the church, especially if they teach the nonsense associated with false teaching.

CONCLUSION: THE MEANING OF 1 TIMOTHY 2:12

In order to limit the teaching of false doctrine that threatens the life of the church in Ephesus, in 1 Tim 2:12 Paul restricts the group most affected, "I am not permitting a woman to assume authority to teach a man." With only one exception, 1 Cor 14:34, which is widely regarded as an interpolation,¹⁷⁰ the verb "to permit" (*ἐπιτρέπω*) never refers to a universal or permanent situation in any of its uses in the LXX or NT. Especially its use in the first person singular present indicative makes it unlikely that Paul intended 1 Tim 2:12 as a universal or permanent prohibition. It is therefore best translated "I am not permitting." Since Paul typically uses *οὐδέ* to join together elements that reinforce or make more specific a single coherent idea, he probably intends 1 Tim 2:12 to convey a single prohibition: "to teach and [in combination with this] *ἄρθεντέω* a man."

This study has analyzed the three major interpretations of *ἄρθεντέω* in 1 Tim 2:12: "exercise authority," "dominate," and "assume authority." BGU 1208, a papyrus dated at 27/26 BC, uses *ἄρθεντέω* to mean "assume authority." Its first confirmed use to mean "dominate," is from 127–148 AD, Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* 3.13.10, and its first confirmed use to mean "exercise authority" is ca. AD 370 Saint Basil, *The Letters* 69, line 45. "To dominate" fits the immediate context better than "to exercise authority," but it is not obvious what would or would not be dominating teaching, nothing in the narrative of Gen 3:6 implies that Eve dominated Adam, and it is unrelated to women's deception in either Eden or Ephesus. The third alternative, "to

166. Cf. above, pp. 320–25.

167. Cf. above, pp. 314–15.

168. Cf. Perriman, "What Eve Did," 129–30, and above, p. 262.

169. Pace Perriman, "What Eve Did," 129–31; idem, *Speaking of Women*, 157–61.

170. Cf. above, pp. 225–67.

assume authority to teach a man" has the best lexical support and also fits the context best.

To teach with self-assumed authority is the opposite of the tranquility of being "in quietness" (2:11–12). It is what Eve did in leading Adam astray (1 Tim 2:14). It is something that would be particularly offensive in that culture. It is also the best fit in relation to the central problem of false teaching in Ephesus. The false teachers were teaching their own unauthorized doctrines with self-assumed, not delegated, authority. "Self-assumed authority" is based on readily recognized root meanings of the word αὐθεντέω, so Paul's readers could understand it. Furthermore, it fits Paul's theology best, and unlike "to teach and exercise authority over a man," it does not contradict Paul's principles and practice expressed elsewhere. Therefore, lexically, contextually, and theologically by far the most natural reading of 1 Tim 2:12's prohibition is: "I am not permitting a woman to teach and [in combination with this] to assume authority over a man."

Since false teaching is the occasion of this letter (1 Tim 1:3–11), and since false teaching influenced the women in Ephesus particularly, Paul first commands that women learn in quietness and full submission in order to turn deceived women away from the false teaching and to encourage them to embrace the true gospel. Combined with this, he institutes a present prohibition against any woman seizing authority for herself to teach a man. Paul's goal is to exclude any unauthorized woman from teaching men in the church. This prohibition does not, however, restrict teaching by authorized women, such as Priscilla (2 Tim 4:19), since just such teaching might be critical in influencing deceived women to reject error and embrace the truth.

Paul's prohibition of women with self-assumed authority teaching men does not imply that he approves men teaching with self-assumed authority, particularly if they also promote false teaching. Indeed, he had already commanded certain men not to teach false doctrine (1 Tim 1:3, 20). Paul's letters address current problems and their primary promulgators.¹⁷¹ He gives appropriate corrections to the groups who need them most. Because men were disputing and expressing anger, Paul commands men to "lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing." This does not imply that women are permitted to dispute and express anger. It is in light of

the particular influence the false teaching had on women in Ephesus that Paul temporarily prohibits them from assuming authority to teach men. Although one might properly apply this prohibition in analogous situations of deception and improper assumption of teaching authority by women, it is not worded as a universal rule and should not be treated as though it is one. Once the threat of false teaching has waned, Paul's preferred more open style of mutual instruction can again prevail.

171. Cf. above, p. 291.