Women's spirituality and feminist theology: A hermeneutic of suspicion applied to 'patriarchal marriage'

Author:
Yolanda Dreyer[1]

Affiliation:
[1]Department of Practical Theology, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Correspondence to:
Yolanda Dreyer

Email:
yolanda.dreyer@up.ac.za

Postal address:
Department of Practical Theology, University of Pretoria, Lynnwood Road, Pretoria 0083, South Africa

This article focused on feminist theory, feminist theology, the origins of the patriarchal marriage, and hermeneutics of suspicion. It aimed to provide language for articulating past and present experiences of women from a theological and hermeneutical perspective. The article discussed women's spirituality and the failure of the patriarchal marriage to nurture self-perception (how I see myself), life orientation (where I am in the world) and identity (who am I in the world), with regard to women's spirituality. The article also gave details about the variety of feminisms that exist in theology both in the past and in the present.

Introduction

Old Testament scholar Esther Fuchs' (2008) article, 'Biblical feminisms: Knowledge, theory and politics in the study of women in the Hebrew Bible', gives an overview of feminist theology – why feminist discourse was necessary and what its underlying epistemology is, what the current issues are, and what the future holds. She emphasises that it is no longer possible to refer to feminism as though it were a monolithic phenomenon; rather, she uses the term 'feminisms'. Feminist theory, feminist theology and biblical interpretation elucidate what is going on in the world and in doing theology. It provides language for articulating past and present experiences of women in this world. It helps them to see where they are now and how to envision the future. I dedicate this article on women's spirituality and feminist theology to Theuns Dreyer, my relative and colleague. My perspective is that of a hermeneutic of suspicion applied to 'patriarchal marriage'.

According to Fuchs (2008:205–226), feminists have returned to *the reason why* they have been doing what they have been doing for the last two decades – searching for the theories underlying their practice. The answer to the why question is *gender.* How does gender affect women?

Returning to theory inevitably raises the question: how does one know – the question of epistemology. What are women's *ways of knowing*? Different ways of knowing lead to different *methods of doing*. The traditional historical approach aims to explain shifts in politics, for example, the shift from colonial to postcolonial (see eds. Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin 2009). However, long before postcolonial studies came into vogue, feminist theories had already done much work on power relations and could contribute to the language by means of which postcolonial theories explain the present-day context (see, *inter alia*, Dube 2000; Pui-lan 2005; eds. Vander Stichele & Penner 2005); *knowing* the world, *experiencing* the world and *spirituality* are connected.

This article focuses, firstly, on how women's experiences have led to different approaches to knowing in feminist theology. Secondly, from the approach of a hermeneutic of suspicion, I will investigate the mythological origins of marriage as a case study, with, finally, a view to the future.

Women's experiences

Spirituality forms the *core of meaning* in a person's life (what is important to me). This core of meaning is connected with *self-perception* (how I see myself). Self-perception has to do with *life orientation* (where I am in the world), which, in turn, is connected with a person's *identity* (who am I in the world) (cf. Kiesling *et al.* 2006:1269–1277).

Spirituality is a comprehensive life orientation that determines one's identity. Spirituality includes every dimension of human life. It is about one's entire human existence as an authentic person in God's presence. The question is: can authentic existence in God's presence be at all possible for women (see, *inter alia*, Enzner-Probst 1995; Wagner-Rau 1992)?

One problem in this regard concerns maturity (see Conn 1986a:3–4, 1986b:9–30). Maturity is generally considered to be a movement away from conformity and prescribed role expectations,

towards a greater measure of autonomy. This means that individuals choose their own direction in life, make their own decisions, accept and affirm themselves as valuable persons and provide for themselves. In a male-dominated patriarchal world this never used to be possible for women. Today, it has become somewhat possible for women but there is still a plethora of restrictions. Restricted roles go hand in hand with a reduced identity (cf. eds. Chopp & Greeve Davaney 1997:198–214; Schulenburg 1993:84).

In a similar manner to Islamic practice, Christianity has contributed to the restriction of women rather than helping them to develop. Women are taught to sacrifice themselves for the sake of others and, in doing so, they disappear into the background. In male-dominated societies women are socialised to accept negative images attributed to them by others (weak, passive, submissive or evil and wild – virgin or slut) and internalise this in the form of a negative self-perception which detracts from the possibility of having a meaningful life.

Methodological approaches

Women's responses to this situation led to the development of different approaches to feminism. Each of the following approaches has made its contribution to the feminist movement, but also has its flaws:

Liberal feminism

Liberal feminism focused on political reform, equal rights for women and the improvement of women's work environment. However, this approach did not address the hierarchical system of male dominance and power. The focus on *equality* was a valuable contribution, but did not address the heart of the problem.

Socialist or Marxist feminism

Socialist or Marxist feminism focused on equality in the workplace. This, however, led to the creation of a double work load for women. They then had an equal responsibility in the work place, but remained solely or mostly responsible for household and child-rearing tasks.

Romantic feminism

Romantic feminism emphasised the *differences* between men and women. Women were seen as inherently good because of traits such as sensitivity, creativity, intuition and purity. The ideal was to transform the male world to the higher female ideal. However, ideal as these traits may be, they would never become the mainstream ideal, leaving those who adhere to them on the margins of society. The solution to the problem of women's negative experiences could not be found in a female utopia; rather, the causes for these experiences had to be found and addressed.

Liberation-hermeneutical feminism

With 'liberation-hermeneutical feminism' New Testament scholar Carolyn Osiek brings the best of the three categories

together: the liberal ideal of *equality*, the *social criticism* and ideal of a more just society of socialist feminism, as well as the ideal of better human *values* proposed by romantic feminism. In order to be truly liberating, feminism would have to focus on the experience of women, expose the problems caused for women by those distortions in society that are the consequence of power discrepancies. The damage done by patriarchy would have to be investigated.

A similar liberation is needed in the Christian faith community. The norm for such a liberating practice will depend on one's view of Scripture. Feminist interpretation of the Bible has also taken different directions. Osiek (1997:955–967) identifies three approaches to feminist biblical interpretation:

- The *Bible* is part of human history and has been used as an instrument of power. The church should recognise this and eliminate the abuse.
- Biblical *hermeneutics* is not just an abstract academic enterprise; understanding the Bible should therefore happen in constant interaction with the experience of faith communities.
- Biblical texts originated within specific *traditions* and continue to function within specific traditions. Tradition determines how people understand their reality in light of a specific biblical text and, consequently, biblical texts are understood in light of the specific situation in which people find themselves. Contemporary hermeneutics should therefore focus equally on *experience* and *theory*.

Narrative of the journey

Philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1970:123–141, 1978:177–202, 1984, [1986] 1991, 1991:53–74, 1992, [1989] 1995:303–315, 1995) points out that understanding a text gives birth to a new story for the reader. For women, the new story ideally would be an authentic life in the presence of God.

In the *history of interpretation* there have been three ways of looking at a text, (1) understanding what lies *behind* the text, (2) understanding what is *in* the text, and (3) placing oneself *in front of* the text. When the three are in balance, the birth of a new story becomes possible:

- Looking for what lies *behind* the text is the search for its history and origin. If one can figure out the historical overlays and content of a text, then it can have meaning for that person.
- Searching for the meaning *in* the text is about finding the connections and understanding the structure – finding one's place in the system.
- Placing oneself *in front of* the text means meeting the text rather than controlling the text by analysing and understanding it. One does not approach the text as a blank, neutral or empty entity, but rather contributes to the process of meaning making. For women, this means that their stories and lives with which they stand in front of the text, can contribute to the meaning of the text.

If any of these is overemphasised at the expense of the others, it can lead to a distortion of the text. Balance is necessary for a fusion of horizons to take place: our world fusing with the world of the text.

When all three are in balance that can bring us to a *hermeneutics of suspicion*, which is important to feminist biblical interpretation. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:36–37) indicates the difference between a modern and postmodern hermeneutics of suspicion. The *modern* way would be critical of the text out there – a cold and clinical approach, whereas the *postmodern* way would be to be critical of the text as a partner – in relationship. Postmodern philosophers such as Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas (see Parker 2006:153–157) have also emphasised the necessity to be self-critical, suspicious of what I bring to the text – my interests, my presuppositions which may even be prejudiced.

This balance in interpretation applies not only to the interpretation of a text from antiquity within the context of contemporary society. It applies also to our understanding of concepts derived from the Bible, which have an impact on our everyday lives: for example, marriage as a socio-religious construct. The meaning, relevance and potential harm of a phenomenon such as marriage should also be interpreted from the perspective of a hermeneutic of suspicion. We should also be reading 'behind the concept' (its mythological origins) and 'in front of the concept' (the experience we bring to it). Such a reading allows us to view the role of marriage in people's lives critically and build a bridge between the past and the present.

Feminist hermeneutics has created a critical awareness of the patriarchal context and mythological origins of marriage. The tight connection between sexuality and religion, as embedded in marriage as a social construct, is therefore exposed as being outdated. Feminist criticism has also exposed the victimisation of women in marriage as a patriarchal institutional belief system.

'Patriarchal marriage' as a case study
A critique of the concept of 'unchangeability'

Traditions are social constructs which keep societies in balance. When traditions change, the social balance is disrupted. Some traditions, such as dress and eating habits, change rapidly, whereas others change so slowly that they seem immutable. This is especially the case regarding traditions of identity, sex, language and ethnicity, which all change very slowly (see Dreyer 2008:499–527). The more fixed traditions are often regarded as so fixed that they are part of the order of creation – God-given rather than socially constructed. Because these fixed traditions contribute to the formation of identity, they also help to determine social roles. Marriage forms are such traditions, as marriage provides a metaphorical language by means of which faith is communicated. The consequence is that sexuality, marriage and religion function in an interconnected manner.

Though sexuality and marriage form part of fixed traditions that change very slowly, they do change and have changed since biblical times. The social environment of the biblical world can be distinguished in the Eastern Mediterranean (Semitic) and the Western Mediterranean (Graeco-Roman) contexts. These contexts first functioned separately but later merged because of Hellenisation. In both these Mediterranean contexts, religion, sexuality and marriage were interconnected, though the values attributed to them differed. This means that even the Bible does not portray one clear understanding of marriage and sexuality with one set of values attached to these concepts. The process of change can already be indicated in the Bible.

The Bible originated in a premodern world and therefore contains premodern perspectives on sexuality and marriage. These concepts were understood quite differently in the modern era and, today, evidence points to a radical shift yet again from the modern to the postmodern era. The interconnection between religion, sexuality and marriage is no longer obvious. The challenge today is to live in the presence of God within the context of the faith community, but without blind submission to outdated social constructs. The mythological origins of the institution of marriage and the changes in marital forms and models should be taken into account. A critique of the 'sacramental unchangeability' of marriage is therefore necessary.

Mythological origins

In the Bible, marriage is used as a metaphor for the relationship between Yahweh and Israel/God and the church (Batey 1961:22–24), for example, by the prophet Hosea. Yet, there are different theories regarding the origins of the use of marriage as a metaphor for the relationship between God and God's people. One explanation is that Hosea adopted the Eastern Mediterranean idea of *hieros gamos* (Greek for 'holy marriage'). The divine and the earth marry and, through this union, creation comes into being. A cycle of seasons, of death and recreation (dying and rising), perpetuates. The myth of 'holy marriage' functions to sanction the human sexual union as a God-given or God-willed act (cf. Franke 1999:73–77).

The single most important social necessity of marriage is procreation – to perpetuate the divine act of creation. Hosea replaced the goddess, or earth, with Israel as Yahweh's consort (see Adler 1990:393–394). The message is that it would be 'adultery' if the people of the city were to worship another god.

There is sufficient evidence that the idea of *hieros gamos* in the Eastern Mediterranean fertility cults influenced not only Israelite culture (see Winter 1983:313–368) but the Christian understanding of marriage as well (cf. Osiek 2002:32). It confirms that an interconnection between sexuality, marriage and religion was prevalent in Israel and early Christianity.

A variety of marital models

Four perspectives on marriage are prevalent in the Western Christian Church – a naturalist, social, contractual and religious perspective (Witte 1997:2–15):

- From the *religious* perspective, marriage is seen as a spiritual or sacramental union, which is regulated by the creed and practices of the faith community.
- From a *social* perspective, there are certain social expectations and privileges bound with marriage, some of which are regulated by law.
- From a *contractual* perspective, marriage is seen as a voluntary association into which people enter voluntarily and tailor to their own needs.
- From a *naturalistic* perspective, marriage is seen as a created institution, subject to the natural laws of reason, conscience and the Bible.

The idea of marriage as a spiritual sacramental union comes from Ephesians 5, where the *hieros gamos* between God and humanity (symbolised by the relationship between Jesus and the church) is described as a *mysterion* (in Greek). In the 4th century, the Greek *mysterion* is translated into Latin as *sacramentum*, which means 'pledge of fidelity'. This changes the original meaning of Ephesians because the connotation of *sacramentum* is with the Roman military. A life-long commitment [*sacramentum*] was expected from a soldier when he was sworn into a military unit (Thatcher 1999:40). This is the origin of the notion of marriage as indissoluble because of its sacramental status.

Marriage as a 'sacrament' ties in with the naturalistic perspective of marriage as an institution ordained by God and as a part of the order of creation. This results in the establishment of a theology of marriage. God created humankind as male and female and therefore the union of the two sexes has religious significance – those who participate in the sacrament experience God's presence and salvation. Such a theology of marriage is a naturalistic theology because religious meaning is derived from creation rather than faith. If marriage is seen as a sacrament, it cannot be broken. It is regarded as an unchangeable institution and divorce is prohibited. Marriage as a sacrament is seen as an act of salvation, because it was supposed to heal (reconcile sinners with God) and save from sin (see Mackin 1982:32; Schüssler Fiorenza 1991:316). It serves as 'medication' [*medicinum*] and remedy [*remedium*] against the 'deadly disease' of fleshly lust (concupiscence), which is sex that does not intend procreation (cf. Brooten 2003:187, n. 11).

Protestant views on marriage concurred with the Catholic *naturalistic* perspective, in that the union of man and woman was also seen as being created by God for the purposes of procreation and protection. The *contractual* facet of marriage as a mutual agreement between individuals was also accepted. Where the Protestant view differed from the Catholic was on the points of marriage as a sacrament and marriage as subordinate to celibacy (Witte 1997:5). Celibacy was not seen as having any spiritual merit and therefore was not a prerequisite for clergy. Rather than as a sacrament, marriage was seen as a social institution, albeit one ordained by God. As such, it had responsibilities similar to those of other social institutions, such as the church and the state.

From the 18th century onwards, the emphasis was placed increasingly on the *contractual* aspect of marriage. Enlightenment thinkers saw the essence of marriage not as a sacrament, covenant or service to the social community, but as the choice of two people entering into an intimate relationship. What this relationship should look like, was not preordained by God or nature, or prescribed by the church, state, tradition or community, but by the parties themselves. They would obey the general rules and norms of civil society, such as respect for life, liberty, property, safety, health and the general welfare of people (Witte 1997:10). For the rest, the finer points of their relationship and life together would be worked out by themselves.

Seen from this angle the traditional Western (religious) idea of marriage came under fire. Pertinent issues were:

- parental consent
- the role of the church
- the requiring of formal witnesses
- the absolute position of heterosexual monogamy
- the full equality of men and women.

These ideas were too radical to transform really the inheritance of the 19th century (Witte (1997:11–12). They did, however, lead to greater protection for women and children, with regard to both their bodies and their property and they formed the basis of marriage reform in the 20th century. The emphasis was increasingly placed on what the parties who enter into marriage wanted. No external authorities such as the church, parents or the community had the primary say any longer. Consequences of these shifts were matters such as:

- prenuptial contracts
- no-fault divorces
- the right to privacy concerning sexual matters.

Similarly, sexual orientations other than heterosexuality have increasingly been accepted. Nonconsensual conduct has become punishable by law, up to the point where the issue of rape in marriage has been accepted by the state.

Vision for the future

From the perspective of a hermeneutic of suspicion, one would have to criticise the centrality of sexual difference in the 'theology of marriage'. This emphasis on difference is tantamount to a 'dual anthropology'. Rosemary Ruether (1975, 1983, 1991) is known for her feminist critique on dual anthropology. She proposes a 'one nature' anthropology. The difference between the two views is described by Coll (1994) as follows:

> Dual-nature anthropology suggests that women and men are of different natures determined by God and that these different natures determine what is appropriate for each sex ... Single-nature theory ... holds that most differences between women and men are culturally defined and therefore open to change.
>
> (Coll 1994:70)

According to the single-nature theory, what is termed 'masculine' or 'feminine' has actually been culturally

constructed (cf. Mead 1939). Dual-nature theory is inherently patriarchal.

Emphasising sexual difference as central to the theological discussion on sexuality and marriage perpetuates the view of a dual anthropology. In order for human beings to create a 'humane' society, critical theologians find it important to remain suspicious of a dehumanising status quo. In order to open up the possibility of authentic humanity for all people, it is necessary to be aware that constructs and social patterns are human creations, not God-given structures. Therefore they have the potential to do harm or be evil (see Howe 1995:23). A dehumanising system will affect those with less and those with more power:

> When the systems operative in a culture are demeaning and dehumanizing, a vicious circle is set in motion in which women and men are prevented from developing the full humanity to which they are called. At the same time fractured humanity is incapable of creating a society that is truly human.
>
> (Coll 1994:82)

Postmodern philosophy and theology create awareness of harm that is done when human constructs are purported to be God-given and unchanging.

We are still engaged in feminist work because the future has not yet arrived. The future will have arrived and the feminist task will be over when all human beings are valued equally and have the equal opportunity of leading healthy lives – being who God made them to be, living authentic lives in the presence of God.

Acknowledgements
Competing interests

References

Adler, E.J., 1990, 'The background for the metaphor of covenant as marriage in the Hebrew Bible', PhD dissertation, UMI Dissertation Services, University of California.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G. & Tiffin, H. (eds.), [1995] 2009, *The post-colonial studies reader*, 2nd edn., Routledge, London.

Batey, R., 1961, *The church, the bride of Christ*, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, MI.

Brooten, B.J. 2003, 'Nature, law, and custom in Augustine's *On the good of marriage*', in S. Matthews *et al.* (eds.), *Walk in the ways of wisdom*: *Essays in honor of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza*, pp. 181–193, Trinity Press International, Harrisburg, PA.

Chopp, R.S. & Greeve Davaney, S. (eds.), 1997, *Horizons in feminist theology*: *Identity, tradition and norms*, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, Minneapolis, MN.

Coll, R.A., 1994, *Christianity and feminism in conversation*, Twenty-Third Publications, Mystic, CT.

Conn, J.W., 1986a, 'Introduction', in J.W. Conn (ed.), *Women's spirituality: Resources for Christian development*, pp. 1–8, Paulist Press, New York, NY.

Conn, J.W., 1986b, 'Women's spirituality: Restriction and reconstruction', in J.W. Conn (ed.), *Women's Spirituality: Resources for Christian development*, pp. 9–30, Paulist Press, New York, NY.

Dreyer, Y., 2008, 'The "sanctity" of marriage – Archaeology of a socio-religious construct: Mythological origins, forms and models', *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies* 64(1), 499–527.

Dube, M.W., 2000, *Postcolonial feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, Clearance Center, Danvers, MA.

Enzner-Probst, B., 1995, *Pfarrerin: Als Frau in einem Männerberuf*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart.

Franke, E., 1999, '"Die Göttin neben dem Kreuz": Zur Entwicklung und Bedeutung weiblicher Gottesvorstellungen bei kirchlich-christlich und feministisch geprägten Frauen in der Bremischen Evangelischen Kirche', PhD dissertation, Universität Hannover, viewed 04 June 2011, from http://www.ithrw.uni-hannover.de/.../pdf/.../Dissertation_Franke_Archiv.pdf

Fuchs, E., 2008, 'Biblical feminisms: Knowledge, theory and politics in the study of women in the Hebrew Bible', *Biblical Interpretation* 16, 205–226. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/156851508X262957

Howe, L.T., 1995, *The image of God*: *A theology for pastoral care and counselling*, Abingdon, Nashville, TN.

Kiesling, C., Sorell, G.T., Montgomery, M.J. & Colwell, R.K., 2006, 'Identity and spirituality: A psychological exploration of the sense of spiritual self', *Developmental Psychology* 41(6), 1269–1277. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.42.6.1269

Mackin, T., 1982, *Marriage in the Catholic Church*: *What is marriage?*, Paulist Press, New York, NY.

Mead, M., 1939, *Sex and temperament in three primitive societies*, Morrow, New York, NY.

Osiek, C., 1997, 'The feminist and the Bible: Hermeneutical alternatives', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 53(4), 955–967.

Osiek, C., 2002, 'The bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:22–33): A problematic wedding', *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 2(1), 29–39.

Parker, B., 2006, 'Critical resistance: From poststructuralism to post-critique', *SubStance* 35(3) 153–157.

Pui-lan, K., 2005, *Postcolonial imagination and feminist theology*, Westminster John Knox, Louisville, KY.

Ricoeur, P., 1970, 'The function of fiction in shaping reality', *Man and World* 12, 123–141. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF01252461

Ricoeur, P., 1978, 'The narrative function', *Semeia* 13, 177–202.

Ricoeur, P., 1984, *Time and narrative, I*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, IL.

Ricoeur, P., [1986] 1991, *From text to action*: *Essays in hermeneutics, II*, transl. K. Blamey & J.B. Thompson, Athlone Press, London.

Ricoeur, P., 1991, 'The task of hermeneutics', in P. Ricoeur (ed.), *From text to action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, transl. K. Blamey & J.B. Thompson, pp. 53–74, Athlone Press, London.

Ricoeur, P., 1992, *Oneself as another*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.

Ricoeur, P., [1989] 1995, 'Pastoral praxeology, hermeneutics, and identity', in P. Ricoeur (ed.), *Figuring the sacred: Religion, narrative and imagination*, pp. 303–315, transl. D. Pellauer, ed. M.I. Wallace, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN.

Ricoeur, P., 1995, *Figuring the sacred*: *Religion, narrative and imagination*, transl. D. Pellauer, ed. M.I. Wallace, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN.

Rossiter, G.M., 2001, 'Reasons for living: Religious education and young people's search for spirituality and identity', in B. Roebben & M. Warren (eds.), *Religious education as practical theology: Essays in honour of Prof. Herman Lombaerts*, Annua Nuntia Lovaniensia Series, Peeters Publishing, Leuven, viewed 01 June 2011, from http://rel-ed.acu.edu.au/ren2/gr04.html

Ruether, R.R., 1975, *New woman/New earth*: *Sexist ideologies and human liberation*, Seabury, New York, NY.

Ruether, R.R., 1983, *Sexism and God-talk*: *Toward a feminist theology*, Beacon Press, Boston, MA.

Ruether, R.R., 1991, '*Imago Dei*, Christian tradition and feminist hermeneutics', in K.E. Børresen (ed.), *Image of God and gender models in Judaeo-Christian tradition*, pp. 258–281, Solum Forlag, Oslo.

Ruether, R.R., 1997, 'Ecofeminism: First and third world women', *American Journal of Theology & Philosophy* 18(1), 33–45.

Schulenburg, A., 1993, *Feministische Spiritualität*: *Exodus in eine befreiende Kirche?*, Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart.

Schüssler Fiorenza, F., 1991, 'Marriage', in F. Schüssler Fiorenza & J.P. Galvin (eds.), *Systematic theology: Roman Catholic perspectives*, vol. 2, pp. 305–346, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN.

Schüssler Fiorenza, E., 1999, '*Rhetoric and ehtic*: The politics of biblical studies', Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN.

Thatcher, A., 1999, *Marriage after modernity*: *Christian marriage in postmodern times*, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield.

Vander Stichele, C. & Penner, T. (eds.), 2005, *Her master's tools? Feminist and postcolonial engagements of historical-critical discourse*, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA.

Wagner-Rau, U., 1992, *Zwischen Vaterwelt und Feminismus. Eine Studie zur pastoralen Identität von Frauen*, Gütersloher Verlag Haus Mohn, Gütersloh.

Winter, U., 1983, *Frau und Göttin*: *Exegetische und ikonographische Studien zum weiblichen Gottesbild im Alten Testament und in dessen Umwelt*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen.

Witte, J., 1997, *From sacrament to contract*: *Marriage, religion, and law in the Western tradition*, Westminster John Knox, Louisville, KY.