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A Queer Reading of Galatians 3:28: Equality of All People in Christ Jesus¹

Abstract: There is a connection between Gal 3:28c and the first created human beings in the Septuagint LXX Gen 1:27 and LXX Gen 5:1–2 on the basis of identical words. From a feminist perspective, the simultaneous divine creation of man and woman and their equality is derived from these verses in the Septuagint. Paul could have already perceived the egalitarian aspect in these passages on creation and therefore asserted the original equality of all created human beings in Christ Jesus. From today's queer perspective, where discrimination against so-called "homosexuals" is often still a reality in Christian communities and where the distinction is not only between homosexual and heterosexual people, but also between queer and straight people, the abolition of other different forms of discrimination are read into this Pauline saying in Gal 3:28 in connection with baptism – in addition to the abolition of religious discrimination against non-Jews, social discrimination against slaves and sexual discrimination against women.

Introduction:

"A Queer Reading of Galatians 3:28" is part of my research on queer readings of the Hebrew Bible and has been written in the course of my work on queer readings of Adam's androgyny. That is the reason why I will expand a little in my introduction and start my argumentation with my queer readings of the biblical creation accounts in the book of Genesis. It will be shown that Gal 3:28 is partly related to a verse of the first creation account.

¹ This article has been presented at the Annual Conference of the European Association of Biblical Studies on June 27, 2025 at the University of Uppsala in Sweden. I have been awarded a travel grant from the European Association of Biblical Studies 2025 and have also received additional funding from the Catharina Halkes Fonds.

My queer readings of Adam's androgyny are already published in my German book *Studien zu queeren Lesarten der Hebräischen Bibel* (*Studies on Queer Readings of the Hebrew Bible*), Biblical Interpretation Series 235, Brill 2025, and in *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*, Volume 38, Number 2 in 2024.²

Queer readings focus on non-normative sexualities in the Tanakh or the Old Testament and related Jewish and Christian exegetical traditions as well as works belonging to the visual arts. Queer readings are developed within the framework of intertextuality. Not only certain passages of the Hebrew Bible are read queerly but also selected rabbinic sayings that build on these passages.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, queer readings of the Hebrew Bible as well as other Jewish and Christian writings have been offered. Various queer persons – lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders, intersexuals and others who question their sexual orientation or their identification with the sociocultural gender assigned to them – have begun to scientifically investigate ancient religious sources such as the Bible from their own perspectives. These people took the previously abusive word “queer” – which means “strange” or “odd” – for their affirmative self-designation and use it in the sense of “positive perverse”. An affirmative reinterpretation of swear words like the term “queer” is not new, for example “Quaker”, French *huguenots* or Dutch *geuzen* (as self-designation of Dutch freedom fighters in the Eighty Years' War which have been reviled as French *gueux*). In linguistics such words are called – in connection with the last-named example – *geuzennaam*.

Queer readings show tensions and contradictions in the biblical descriptions of the creation of humankind due to the two different creation accounts in the book of Genesis. In contrast to the first creation account, there is *no* reference to a binary sexual division in a *man* and a *woman* in the second creation account at the beginning of the creation of humankind, but the creation of the *human* is depicted.

² Cf. Karin Hügel, *Studien zu queeren Lesarten der Hebräischen Bibel*, Biblical Interpretation Series 235, Brill, Leiden/Boston 2025, <https://brill.com/display/title/72360>, and my PhD dissertation with the same title (Vienna 2022, <https://hdl.handle.net/11245.1/096f67eb-8359-42f1-9b91-ee39be73fb19>). Cf. also Karin Hügel, „Queere Lesarten von Adams Androgynie“, in: *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*, Volume 38, Number 2, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, Abingdon, Oxon/London 2024, 328–57, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09018328.2024.2339284>.

Today, queer biblical exegesis in connection with the first creation account focuses on the totality of what God has created: The creation of heaven and earth in the first verse of the Hebrew Bible in Gen 1:1 refers to the creation of the entire universe, and the creation of man and woman in Gen 1:27 also refers to the whole of humanity – in its range of different genders and sexualities.³ The first creation account is undoubtedly interested in dualities: light and darkness, water and land, the sun as the light of day, the moon as the light of night. But duality (twoness) does not enforce dualism (oppositeness). There is also the twilight and the beach, where land and sea meet; and the moon sometimes appears during the day, too.⁴ Therefore, from a queer perspective, according to which gender identities are fluid, it is obvious that God did not create fixed gender identities with “man and woman”, but rather a whole spectrum of gender possibilities.

Following Rabbi Margaret Moers Wenig,⁵ my queer rereading of the Bible verse Gen 1:27 from the first creation account regarding the creation of humanity is therefore as follows: “God created the human being in his image, in the image of God he made him_her, male and female *and every combination in between* he created them”.

Following feminist interpretations of the biblical creation accounts, I discuss Adam as an androgynous creature and the division of the double-faced first human in the course of my queer readings of Adam’s androgyny. Within rabbinic literature two Jewish traditions are found that are based on Plato’s unique, strange myth of the circle-men in his work *Symposium*: Firstly, it was imagined that the first human combined both genders in himself. Queer readers, if they associate themselves in one way or another with androgyny, can find themselves as parts of the creation, made by G*d who can also be conceived as androgynous. Secondly, it was suggested that two persons were created in one. This was illustrated by the double-faced image of the first human who finally was divided. A queer reading

³ Thus “man and woman” in Gen 1:27 is also understood as a merism (i.e. as a biblical stylistic device in which a totality is expressed by two opposing terms).

⁴ Cf. Andreas Krebs, *Gott queer gedacht*, Echter Verlag, Würzburg 2023, 19.

⁵ “God created human kind [...] male and female *and every combination in between*”. Margaret Moers Wenig, „Male and Female God Created Them: Parashat Bereshit (Genesis 1:1-6:8)“, in: Gregg Drinkwater / Joshua Lesser / David Shneer (eds.), *Torah Queeries: Weekly Commentaries on the Hebrew Bible*, New York University Press, New York / London 2009, 11–18, here: 16.

questions a heterosexist view of the origin of the gender difference based on rabbinic interpretations of the ideas of the creation in relation to the division of the double-faced first human.

The terms *avndro,gunoj* (“androgynous”) or *pro,swpa du,o* (two faces) used by Plato in his myth of the circle-men do not occur in the Septuagint, i.e. in any of the ancient Jewish translations of the Hebrew Bible into Greek,⁶ nor in the New Testament. It is questionable whether the statement “there is no longer male and female” (*ouv̄k e;ni a;rsen kai. qh/lu*) by the apostle Paul in the baptismal formula⁷ in Gal 3:28c in his epistle to the Christian community in Galatia,⁸ located in the central plateau of Asia Minor, is actually related to the original androgyny of Adam, as claimed by biblical scholar Wayne A. Meeks.⁹

⁶ This Greek translation of the Torah was originally produced by 70 or 72 Jewish scholars in Alexandria under Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–247_{BCE}), from which the name “Septuagint” (LXX) derives. Cf. Alfred Rahlfs (ed.), *Septuaginta, Duo volumina in uno*, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart 2006, xxxv. In reality, the Septuagint was produced successively over a period of more than three hundred years in Alexandria, Egypt, almost exclusively by unknown translators: First, around the middle of the 3rd century _{BCE}, the Pentateuch, then the historical books and the Prophets (to which the book of Daniel was added secondarily) as well as the Psalms, and finally the other writings (last, already in the 1st century _{CE}, the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes). Cf. Folker Siegert, *Zwischen Hebräischer Bibel und Altem Testament. Eine Einführung in die Septuaginta*, Münsteraner Judaistische Studien. Wissenschaftliche Beiträge zur christlich-jüdischen Begegnung 9, LIT Verlag, Münster 2001, 30–31.41–42.

⁷ Compare the mention of baptism in Gal 3:27, where there is talk of becoming partakers of Christ by “putting on” Christ: “For all of you who were baptised into Christ have put on Christ.” This implies the idea that the “old man” is “put off” and the “new man” is “put on”, just as Gal 6:15 speaks of the “new creation” (*kainh. kti,sij*) in Christ Jesus. Cf. Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 1979, 189, or Hans Dieter Betz, *Der Galaterbrief. Ein Kommentar zum Brief des Apostels Paulus an die Gemeinden in Galatien*, Ein Hermeneia-Kommentar, Aus dem Amerikanischen übersetzt und für die deutsche Ausgabe redaktionell bearbeitet von Sibylle Ann, Christian Kaiser Verlag, München 1988, 333.

⁸ Betz, *Galatians*, 1, or Betz, *Galaterbrief*, 34.

⁹ Cf. Wayne A. Meeks, „The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity“, in: *History of Religions*, Volume 13, Number 3, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois 1974, 165-208, here: 185.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free wo_man [literally translated: free man], there is no longer male and female [ouv k e;ni Vloudai/oj ouvde. {Ellhn(ouv k e;ni dou/loj ouvde. evleu,qeroj(ouv k e;ni a;rsen kai. qh/lu], for you are all one in Christ Jesus [pa,ntej ga.r u`mei/j ei-j evste evn Cristw/| Vlhsou/].¹⁰ (Gal 3:28)

Gal 3:28a–c consists of a mixture of Greek nouns (ouv k e;ni Vloudai/oj ouvde. {Ellhn(ouv k e;ni dou/loj ouvde. evleu,qeroj) and adjectives (ouv k e;ni a;rsen kai. qh/lu) in the singular. One could translate the first two short sentences in Gal 3:28a–b in inclusive spelling in the plural: “There are neither Jews nor Gentiles,¹¹ there are neither slaves nor free wo_men.” But the wording in Gal 3:28c “there is no longer male and female” is formed somewhat differently. If the text of the New Testament cancels discrimination against women here, then women will also be included with regard to the groups of people mentioned in the verse above, which justifies my inclusive spelling. Theoretically, Gal 3:28c could even have referred to the dissolution of the binary conception of gender, which is what my spelling with the gender gap expresses. However, the subsequent idea of unity in Christ Jesus in Gal 3:28d rather points to the equal inclusion of women from Paul's perspective. Today, queer believers may also claim to be equal members of the church. The idea of unity in Christ Jesus is one of inclusion and not one that consists of the elimination of differences – sexual or otherwise.¹²

Only in the words ouv k e;ni a;rsen kai. qh/lu (“there is no longer male and female”) in Gal 3:28c are the two elements connected by kaí (“and”) and are in the

¹⁰ My translation from ancient Greek according to Barbara Aland / Kurt Aland (eds.), *Nestle-Aland. Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28. revidierte Auflage, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart 2014, 584. All the other translations from the Old Greek of passages from the New Testament from this edition are also mine.

¹¹ The term {Ellhn (“Greek” or “Gentile”) in the context of Gal 3:28 refers to all people under the influence of Greek, i.e. pagan, culture. Cf. Walter Bauer, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, 6., völlig neu bearbeitete Auflage herausgegeben von Kurt Aland und Barbara Aland, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin/NewYork 1988, 507.

¹² Cf. Bernard C. Lategan, „Some Remarks on the Origin and Function of Galatians 3:28“, in: Jan Krans / Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte / Peter-Ben Smit / Arie Zwiep (eds.), *Paul, John, and Apocalyptic Eschatology: Studies in Honour of Martinus C. de Boer*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 149, Brill, Leiden 2013, 15-29, here: 18.

neuter, while the previous ones in Gal 3:28a–b are in the masculine and are connected by *ouvde* (“nor”). This formulation in Gal 3:28c is therefore often regarded as a secondary addition, which is also not found in the parallel passages in 1 Cor 12:13 and Col 3:11.¹³ But couldn’t we even know the source of these words and didn’t Paul himself deliberately interweave them here in Galatians? Due to the identical Greek vocabulary *a;rsen*¹⁴ *kai. qh/lu* (“male and female”),¹⁵ a connection between Gal 3:28c and the first created human in the Septuagint in LXX Gen 1:27 or LXX Gen 5:1–2 is obvious:

God created the human being [*kai. evpoi,hsen o` qeo.j to.n a;nqrwpon*], according to the image of God he made him_her [*katV eivko,na qeou/ evpoi,hsen aucto,n*]; male and female he created them [*a;rsen kai. qh/lu evpoi,hsen auctou,j*].¹⁶ (LXX Gen 1:27)

On the day God created Adam [*h-| h`me,ra| evpoi,hsen o` qeo.j to.n Adam*], he made him according to the image of God [*katV eivko,na qeou/ evpoi,hsen aucto,n*]. Male and female he created them and blessed them [*a;rsen kai. qh/lu evpoi,hsen auctou,j kai. euvlo,ghsen auctou,j*] and gave them the name “Adam” [*kai. evpwno,masen to. o;noma auctw/n Adam*], on the day he created them [*h-| h`me,ra| evpoi,hsen auctou,j*]. (LXX Gen 5:1–2)

¹³ E.g. Betz, *Galatians*, 182, or Betz, *Galaterbrief*, 321.

¹⁴ In contrast to the Attic form *a;rren&*, *a;rsen* is used both in the New Testament and the Septuagint. Bauer, *Wörterbuch*, 219. The author of Gal 3:28 has in mind LXX Gen 1:27 because of *a;rsen*. Cf. Friedrich Blass/Albert Debrunner, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, Studienausgabe, Bearbeitet von Friedrich Rehkopf, 19. Auflage, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2020, § 34,2.

¹⁵ The two Greek adjectives in the neuter singular *a;rsen kai. qh/lu* (“male and female”) in LXX Gen 1:27 and LXX Gen 5:2 are the equivalent translations of the Hebrew nouns Substantive *hb'qen>W rk'z* in Gen 1:27 and Gen 5:2. The Septuagint translates *hb'qen>W rk'z* not only in the context of creation in Gen 1:27 and Gen 5:2, but also in the context of the Flood narrative in Gen 6:19 and Gen 7:3.9.16 with *a;rsen kai. qh/lu*. The words *ATv.aiw> vyai* are also rendered with *a;rsen kai. qh/lu* in Gen 7:2. Due to the context of baptism in Gal 3:28, however, a connection of *a;rsen kai. qh/lu* with the creation is more plausible.

¹⁶ My translation from ancient Greek according to Rahlfs (ed.), *Septuaginta*, 1:2. From now on, this edition of the Septuagint will be abbreviated as LXX.

Theoretically, in this saying in Galatians, which had its place and function in the early Christian baptismal liturgy,¹⁷ Paul could be alluding to an androgynous interpretation of Adam, the first created human, in these passages of the Septuagint. Hypothetically, it can be claimed that Gal 3:28c is based on the doctrine of an androgynous Christ figure. However, there are no other comparable parallels to this in the New Testament and thus there is no explicit evidence for such a Christology.¹⁸ The statement in the baptismal formula in Gal 3:28c therefore most probably has nothing to do with an androgynous figure like Adam, but rather represents a new religious view focussed on Jesus Christ, without any reference to androgyny.

If a connection between Gal 3:28c and the first created human beings in the Septuagint in LXX Gen 1:27 or LXX Gen 5:1–2 is assumed in principle, then the new identity of the baptised believers in Galatians is tantamount to the “new creation” in Christ Jesus.¹⁹ If such a connection between Gal 3:28c and these texts of the Greek translation of the first creation account and its parallel in the book of Genesis actually exists, then it is very striking that Paul radically changes the biblical assertion of the divine creation of man and woman in Galatians so that manhood and womanhood are no longer relevant in the course of the unity of believers in Christ Jesus. Feminist interpretations regard the first creation account as egalitarian on the basis of Gen 1:27. For example, the feminist rhetoric critic Phyllis Trible²⁰ concludes with regard to Gen 1:27 from the first creation account and the parallel in Gen 5:1–2, that humankind (~d"a') existed from the beginning as two creatures – namely as man and woman (hb'qen>W rk'z") – and not as one creature with a double sex. With this feminist argumentation in connection with Gen 1:27, she emphasises the equality of

¹⁷ Betz, *Galatians*, 181, or Betz, *Galaterbrief*, 320.

¹⁸ Betz, *Galatians*, 197–200, or Betz, *Galaterbrief*, 347–52.

¹⁹ Cf. Martinus C. de Boer, *Galatians: A Commentary*, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky 2011, 246.

²⁰ Cf. Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, Overtures to Biblical Theology, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 1978, 18, or Phyllis Trible, *Gott und Sexualität im Alten Testament*. Mit einer Einführung von Silvia Schroer. Aus dem Amerikanischen übersetzt von Marianne Reppekus, Gütersloher Verlagshaus Mohn, Gütersloh 1993, 39.

the sexes in the first creation account.²¹ Finally, a vision of radical egalitarianism is also found in Gal 3:28 from a feminist perspective, for example by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza.²² According to this feminist New Testament scholar,²³ this biblical passage from the New Testament not only advocates the abolition of religious-cultural divisions and of the domination and exploitation wrought by institutional slavery, but also of domination based on gender divisions.

With regard to LXX Gen 1:27 and LXX Gen 5:1–2, egalitarianism from a feminist perspective is derived from the simultaneous divine creation of man and woman. Paul could have already recognised the egalitarian aspect in this passage of the Septuagint from the first creation account and its parallel. Paradoxically, he could therefore have asserted the original equality of all created human beings in Christ Jesus for Christian believers on the basis of the preceding words *ouvk e;ni* (“there is no [longer]”) – corresponding to the characteristic linguistic style in Gal 3:28 – together with the subsequent scriptural quotation *a;rsen kai. qh/lu* (“male and female”) in Galatians.

Can the idea of unity in Christ Jesus in Gal 3:28d really be decisive for an interpretation of this whole Bible verse? The reference to unity in Christ Jesus in Gal 3:28d (*pa,ntej ga.r u`mei/j ei-j evste evn Cristw/| Vlhsou*) is controversial. The alternative reading *u`mei/j evste Cristou/ Vlhsou/* (“you belong to Christ Jesus”), which is represented by the Papyrus Chester Beatty II (P⁴⁶), dated around 200 CE, and

²¹ Cf. Phyllis Trible, „Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation“, in: *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Volume 41, Number 1, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1973, 30–48, here: 35, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/XLI.1.30>.

²² Cf. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, „Gal 3,28 im Brennpunkt feministischer Hermeneutik“, in: Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Grenzen überschreiten: Der theoretische Anspruch feministischer Theologie. Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, Theologische Frauenforschung in Europa 15, 2. überarbeitete Auflage, LIT Verlag, Berlin, 167–84, here: 184.

²³ Cf. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*, SCM Press, London 1983, 213, or Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Zu ihrem Gedächtnis ... Eine feministisch-theologische Rekonstruktion der christlichen Ursprünge*, Aus dem amerikanischen Englisch übersetzt von Christine Schaumberger, Christian Kaiser/Matthias Grünewald, München/Mainz 1988, 265.

by the Codices Sinaiticus (ⲡ*)²⁴ und Alexandrinus (A), is explained by the harmonisation with the following verse Gal 3:29: “But if you belong to Christ, you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to the promise [eiv de. u`mei/j Cristou/(a;ra tou/ VAbraa.m spe,rma evste,(katV evpaggeli,an klhrono,moi]”.²⁵ I therefore also translate the majority text of Gal 3:28d as follows: “[...] for you are all *one* in Christ Jesus”. Both readings of Gal 3:28 are ultimately about the *equality* of status of the church members in view of their relationship with Christ, which is established through baptism. In the reading of the majority text, the *unity* of believers in Christ Jesus is additionally stated. In other Pauline epistles, such as Rom 12:5, this is similarly described by the existence of believers as “one body in Christ” (e]n sw/ma, @)))# evn Cristw/)).²⁶

Galatians 3:28 thus abolishes various forms of discrimination, religious discrimination against non-Jews,²⁷ social discrimination against slaves and sexual discrimination against women, by making an impressive reference to the unity in Christ Jesus in connection with baptism.²⁸ However, discrimination with regard to queer people is not explicitly addressed in such an ancient Christian text. At that time, Paul does not describe people with comparable self-images of today’s lesbian, gay, bisexual and other queer people. From today’s queer perspective, where discrimination against so-called “homosexuals” is often still a reality in Christian communities and where the distinction is not only between homosexual and heterosexual persons, but also between queer and straight persons, the abolition of

²⁴ In fact, the Codex Sinaiticus can also be used as a source for this reading, because later corrections can be recognised even in this manuscript. Cf. Jens Herzer, „Alle Einer in Christus‘ – Gal 3,28b und kein Ende? Ein Vorschlag“, in: Michael Labahn (ed.), *Spurensuche zur Einleitung in das Neue Testament. Eine Festschrift im Dialog mit Udo Schnelle*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 271, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen/Bristol, Connecticut 2017, 125-42.

²⁵ Betz, *Galatians*, 200, n. 157, or Betz, *Galaterbrief*, 352, n. 151.

²⁶ Betz, *Galatians*, 200–201, or Betz, *Galaterbrief*, 352–53.

²⁷ Gal 3:28 refers to the inclusion of non-Jews in the course of unity in Christ Jesus. Gal 6:15, for example, writes about circumcision: “For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a new creation is everything”. Cf. also the parallel to Gal 3:28 in Col 3:11: “[...] where there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free wo_man, but Christ is all and in all”.

²⁸ Betz, *Galatians*, 200, or Betz, *Galaterbrief*, 352.

different forms of discrimination is also read into this Pauline statement in Gal 3:28 in connection with baptism.²⁹ According to the current queer reading of Gen 1:27, God created the whole of humanity in its range of different genders and sexualities in the first creation account.³⁰ From a queer perspective, it therefore makes sense to regard the unity in Christ Jesus mentioned in the baptismal formula in Gal 3:28 today as a unity that includes all Christian people, including all Christian queer people. Unfortunately, Galatians does not say anything more about the real consequences in terms of social gender relations. Thus, as in the case of the idea of androgyny following Adam, there are actually no comparable parallels with regard to the emancipation of women or even queer emancipations in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.³¹

According to Galatians 3:28, from Paul's point of view, all of a person's religious, social and sexual determinations have lost their meaning in the course of Christian baptism.³² This assertion by Paul may seem more than strange in view of other statements by this apostle – in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, for example, a clear hierarchy between man and woman is described in 1 Cor 11:2–16 in derivation from the second creation account and therefore possibly the end of discrimination against women is not mentioned in the baptismal formula in 1 Cor 12:13, in contrast to Gal 3:28. Even in Paul's case, the two different creation accounts in Genesis may therefore have contributed to such fatal, diverging views on the question of women in early Christianity.

In early Christian circles, not necessarily in the New Testament, but for example in the works of Aurelius Augustinus, the greatest Latin Doctor of the Church of Christian antiquity, there is evidence of androgynous persons. In his commentary

²⁹ Cf. Patrick S. Cheng, „Galatians“, in: Thomas Bohache / Robert E. Goss / Deryn Guest / Mona West (eds.), *The Queer Bible Commentary*, SCM Press, London 2006, 624–29, here: 626–27.

³⁰ Cf. my introduction in this article.

³¹ However, Paul's arguments against the Christians who want to adhere to the Jewish ritual of circumcision as a sign of obedience to the Torah are prominent in Galatians. Concerning an introduction to this cf. Betz, *Galatians*, 31, or Betz, *Galaterbrief*, 81–82.

³² Cf. Kurt Niederwimmer, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments. Ein Grundriss*, Evangelischer Presseverband, Wien 2003, 217.

The Literal Meaning of Genesis (De Genesi ad litteram),³³ completed in 415 CE, he polemicised against the creation of the androgynous human being. In his view, people should not believe that, according to Gen 1:27, both sexes are expressed in a single person, “just as here and there people are born who are called hermaphrodites [androgynos]”.³⁴

Conclusion:

It is questionable whether the saying “no [more] men and women” of the apostle Paul in the baptismal formula in Gal 3:28c in his letter to the Christian church in Galatia is actually related to the original androgyny of Adam. There is a connection between Gal 3:28c and the first created human beings in the Septuagint LXX Gen 1:27 and LXX Gen 5:1–2 on the basis of the identical Greek words *arsen kai. qh/lu*. From a feminist perspective, the simultaneous divine creation of man and woman and their equality is derived from these verses in the Septuagint. Paul could have already perceived the egalitarian aspect in these Septuagint passages on creation and therefore asserted the original equality of all created human beings in Christ Jesus for Christian believers in Galatians. From today’s queer perspective, where discrimination against so-called “homosexuals” is often still a reality in Christian communities and where the distinction is not only between homosexual and heterosexual people, but also between queer and straight people, the abolition of other different forms of discrimination are read into this Pauline saying in Gal 3:28 in connection with baptism – in addition to the abolition of religious discrimination against non-Jews, social discrimination against slaves and sexual discrimination against women. From a queer perspective, it is obvious to regard the unity in Christ Jesus mentioned in the baptismal formula in Gal 3:28 today as a unity that includes Christian queer people.

³³ Cf. Aurelius Augustinus, *Über den Wortlaut der Genesis, De Genesi ad litteram libri duodecim*, Der große Genesiskommentar in zwölf Büchern, 1. Band: Buch I–VI, Übersetzung von Carl Johann Perl, Schönigh, Paderborn 1961, 1, xx.

³⁴ *Gen. litt., lib. 3, 22*. My translation from Latin according to Augustinus, Aurelius Augustinus, *La Genèse au sens littéral en douze livres (I–VII). De genesi ad litteram libri duodecim*, Traduction par Paul Agaësse/Aimé Solignac, Œuvres de Saint Augustin 48, Série 7: Exégèse, latin et français, Institut d’Études Augustiniennes, Paris 2000, 268.