thus framed by *communal identity*. Before I examine how Paul conceptualizes “anxiety” as a tool of individual sexual ethics, I will first outline Paul’s general concept of sexual ethics in its communal setting.

### 3.1. Paul and sexual ethics: 1 Thess 4 and beyond

From his earliest letter-writing, Paul deals with sexual ethics. Like other topics of ethical discourse, questions about sexual ethics primarily result from discussions within the community, but they also emerge from communication with those “outside” (ἐξω) the community. Paul expresses his goals of general ethical teaching most clearly in 1 Thess 4, by stating: “we exhort you … to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we charged you; so that you may command the respect of outsiders, and be dependent on nobody” (v. 10-12pass.).

Like various other fields of ethical teaching – such as law, the economy, food and dress codes – in sexual ethics, the formal tools of Pauline rhetoric are also diverse. Hermut Löhr writes, “… Paul’s ethics seems to be on the border between ‘Gebotsethik’ (ethics based on commandments) and ‘Einsichtsethik’ (ethics based on insight or understanding);” the variety of ethical arguments indeed corresponds to the diversity of topics discussed; Paul frequently exposes something like “dispositional ethics”. In all ethical discourse, Paul is ultimately concerned with the “sanctification” or “holiness” (ἁγιασμός) of the community as a communal entity. This concern is *socio-politically* significant: Paul intends to strengthen the social attractiveness of Christ-believing communities and to organize communal life around a perfect “political environment,” as it is discussed in political theory in and beyond Aristotle (pol 9:1280b). By caring for the community’s sanctification, issues of sexual behavior seem to be most popular and most urgent – for the group *and* the individual (s. above).

Paul’s ethical admonitions are sometimes very concrete. This is most evident within the so-called catalogues of virtues and vices, for instance in 1 Cor 6:9: “… neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sexual perverts … will inherit the kingdom of God.” Here, by addressing groups of people, Paul almost exclusively incriminates what he believes constitutes sexual immorality:

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25 Hartmut Leppin identifies that, as opposed to the Roman widows, Christian widows, for instance, were not forced to re-marry. The law of marriage was much more liberal among Christian women than among Romans: “Das Christentum wertete die Jungfrauschaft oder das Witwentum höher als die Ehe, was manchen Frauen neue Freiräume erschloss,” FAZ 298 (23.12.2014), 40 (Rhein-Main Zeitung).
πόρνοι, ἀρσενοκοῖται. However, as early as 1 Thess 4, Paul proclaims: “... this is the will of God, your sanctification (ἁγιασμός): that you abstain from unchastity (πορνεία); that each one of you know how to take a wife for himself in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust (ἐν πάθει ἐπιθυμίας) like heathen who do not know God ... For God has not called us for uncleanness (ἀκαρθασία), but in holiness (ἁγιασμός) ...” (1 Thess 4:3-8pass.).

Paul’s approach to sexual ethics here is *exhortative*. It addresses the *collective* of community members. The discoursal frame is religious. Since Paul aims at the sanctification of communal sexual ethics, current exegesis tends to argue that, in his sexual ethics, Paul wishes to implement cultic purity. It seems as though Paul combines various traditions of ethical teaching, which are partly derived from Jewish instruction and partly analogous to Stoic ethics: When Paul wants the Thessalonians to “abstain” (ἀπέχεσθαι) in a general sense from “immorality” (πορνεία), he also uses a “technical term” — ἀπέχεσθαι — which “aimed at distinguishing Christian from pagan morality.”

It is thus common for current scholarship on Pauline ethics to emphasize how, in his teaching about sexuality, Paul combines Hellenistic moral philosophy and Jewish *parenesis*. Will Deming has worked extensively on this topic, especially in regard to 1 Cor 7.

Such a description of Pauline sexual ethics might be adequate. However, this description focuses on either the *collective or communal* or the *religious aspects* of Paul’s moral arguments. Thus, as much as scholars tend to neglect Paul’s concept of “anxiety” and “care,” they also tend to overlook the *individual* implications of Pauline ethics. In 1 Cor 7 in particular, Paul does not restrict himself to a collective moral exhortation; rather, he presupposes and enforces a human self-understanding according to which ethical discourse can be developed in—

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27 A. J. Malherbe, *Letters*, 225. Πορνεία itself is a broad polemical expression against various kinds of illegitimate sexuality, F. W. Horn, “Heiden,” 297. As Abraham J. Malherbe identifies, Paul’s teaching against ἀκαρθασία κτλ. “was [also] part of basic Jewish instruction in moral behavior”, ibid., 226. At the same time, some elements of Paul’s language, for instance the expression “not in lustful passion”, “was derived from the Stoics. They defined *pathos* ... as an irrational and unnatural movement of the soul, as an impulse in excess ... It is a troubled movement of the soul, an imtemperent longing, disobedient to reason, that may rightly be termed desire or lust” (229f.; with reference to, e.g., Cicero, *Tusc Disp* 3:7; 3:23f.; 4:11). However, there is a significant difference between the philosophical and the Pauline incrimination of *pathos*: “Instead of understanding lustful passion as opposition to reason, as the philosophers did, Paul asserts that its cause was ignorance of God. In this he was Jewish” (ibid., 230).
