**Man and Woman in Christ Core Seminar**

**Week 2 – Man and Woman in Creation: A Biblical Theology of Beautiful Difference**

**Introduction**

Last week, in addition to seeing what Genesis 1 and 2 teach us about the differences between men and women, we considered four key concepts that will guide us throughout the class: equality, complementarity, fertility, and diversity. (And mystery.)

Today we continue to consider man and woman in light of creation, and we’ll focus on two of those principles: complementarity and diversity. First, we’ll observe and reflect on characteristic differences between men and women. Then we’ll look at two ways that men and women’s complementary callings in the church and the home are rooted in creation. Then we’ll spend the biggest chunk of our time looking at some diverse ways in which godly womanhood comes to expression in Scripture.

You’ll see the three main headings on your handout: natural differences, complementary callings, and diverse expressions. Let’s jump in.

**I. Natural Differences**

First, natural differences. Today it is a strangely politicized and controversial statement to say that men and women are different. But reality has a funny way of fighting back. Countless feminists have declared that they would have gender-neutral children, with gender-neutral clothes and toys and interests, only to find their 2-year-old girl wrapping a fire truck in a blanket and tucking it into bed, and their 4-year-old boy using a baby doll as a machine gun.

As we consider natural differences between men and women, it’s important to keep a few main ideas in mind. First, these differences are not absolutes.[[1]](#footnote-0) Many show up as overlapping bell-curves. For instance, as a population-wide generalization, it is true that men are more aggressive than women. But what that means is, most men are more aggressive than most women. Some women are more aggressive than some men. Exceptions do not negate general trends. As British journalist Louise Perry has recently written, “We can insist simultaneously that there are plenty of exceptions to the rule, and moreover that there is *nothing wrong* with being an exception to the rule, while also acknowledging the existence of the rule.”[[2]](#footnote-1)

Further, relative strengths are typically tied to a corresponding weakness. As the Cambridge professor of psychology Simon Baron-Cohen has shown, “The female brain is predominantly hard-wired for empathy. The male brain is predominantly hard-wired for understanding and building systems.”[[3]](#footnote-2) Typically, men are better at systematizing then empathizing, and women, vice versa. In other words, many differences between the sexes are tradeoffs.

Finally, sexual differences do not *determine* every aspect of our lives and callings. The fact that each of us is a man or woman is an inextricable aspect of our humanity, but that fact that each of us is human is even more basic to who we are.

Briefly, then, let’s consider some characteristic differences between men and women.

One overarching difference that integrates many others is that men are more “agentic” and women are more communal.[[4]](#footnote-3) That is, men are more innately oriented toward activity and achievement, and women are more oriented toward forming intimate bonds and ties. Again, these are relative differences, not absolute.

Further, consider physical differences. As Louise Perry summarizes,

Adult women are approximately half as strong as adult men in the upper body and two-thirds as strong in the lower body. On average, men can bench press more mass than women can by a factor of roughly two and a half and can punch harder by a similar factor. In hand grip strength, 90 per cent of females produce less force than 95 percent of males. In other words, almost all women are weaker than almost all men.[[5]](#footnote-4)

Another physical difference is in men and women’s skin. As the German biblical scholar Werner Neuer points out,

The woman’s skin is much softer, more tender, and smoother than a man’s. Women are therefore more aware of the pleasures of touch. This greater sensitivity of the skin matches the greater sensitivity of women in the psychological realm, their ability to approach matters carefully, their greater adaptability and sympathy, their capacity to give and take and to go along with situations; whereas the man tends to try to alter reality by changing it.[[6]](#footnote-5)

Socially, men favor large groups and institutions, while women favor smaller groups and more intimate relationships.[[7]](#footnote-6) Men are characteristically more assertive, and women more nurturing. Men compete openly, while women tend to compete in more indirect, subtle, hidden ways. Men form same-sex friendships more quickly, women more slowly. Male friendships tend to be held together by a shared activity or goal; women’s friendships tend to be held together by talking, specifically talk focused on more emotionally intimate matters.

In terms of what men and women characteristically value and seek: men value being capable, women value being lovable. The scarce commodity men seek to attain is respect; the scarce commodity women seek to attain is love.[[8]](#footnote-7)

Men are far more prone to take risks; women are more risk-averse.[[9]](#footnote-8)

In communication, men are more concerned to achieve status and avoid failure; women are more concerned to achieve involvement and avoid isolation.[[10]](#footnote-9) And, as Harvard biologist Joyce Benenson observes, “Women keep an eye on others more than men do. They figure out faster and more accurately what others’ intentions are. They do so even without language. . . . Women are more accurate than men at decoding nonverbal emotional cues, and it does not matter whether the nonverbal cues are visual or auditory, or come from the face, body, or voice.”[[11]](#footnote-10)

Around the world, men and women also differ in how manhood and womanhood are socially recognized. As psychologist Roy Baumeister puts it, speaking specifically of America and Western culture, “Our culture has a long tradition of treating women as automatically worthy of respect. . . . Put simply, a woman is entitled to respect until and unless she does something to lose it. A man is not entitled to respect until and unless he does something to gain it.”[[12]](#footnote-11)

A girl who grows up automatically becomes a woman, but a boy who grows up does not automatically become a man.[[13]](#footnote-12) He must prove himself by undergoing some kind of test. He must establish that he can produce more than he consumes. Manhood is something that has to be achieved and proved, while womanhood is not.

**II. Complementary Callings**

Now we’ll briefly sketch two ways in which men and women’s complementary callings are rooted in God’s creation order and our natural differences. Here we’ll just touch on matters that we’ll discuss more fully in future weeks. The point now is simply to show that creation’s built-in trajectories are fulfilled in our complementary callings.

We’ll consider two of them. First, marriage, then, church leadership.

In Ephesians 5:22–24, Paul writes, “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.” Then he goes on at length to exhort husbands to love their wives in the same way that Christ loves the church.

[SLOWLY] Our point for now is simply this: In Paul’s teaching that wives are to submit to their husbands, the order of creation is perceived and preserved. This order of authority between husband and wife is not arbitrarily jammed on top of creation. Nor is it a result of the fall, as we’ll see in more detail next week. Instead, this relational order fits with, and derives from, the very fabric of creation. As we saw last week, in Genesis 2, Adam’s primary calling is to keep and guard the garden, to uphold God’s order and to derive the means of sustaining human life from it. Eve’s primary calling is to assist Adam in that task, and to nurture, fill, unite, and beautify human life. Here’s how Alastair Roberts describes the link between the creation order and men and women’s relationship in marriage:

In Genesis 1 and 2, the differences between men and women are chiefly focused upon their wider callings within the world, rather than upon their direct relationships with each other. The woman has to submit to the man’s leadership, not so much because he is given direct authority over her, but because his vocation is the primary and foundational one, relating to the forming that necessarily precedes the filling in God’s own creation activity. She is primarily called to fill and to glorify the structures he establishes and the world he subdues. . . . As the man forms, names, tames, establishes the foundations, and guards the boundaries, she brings life, communion, glory, and completion. Neither sex accomplishes their task alone, but must rely upon, cooperate with, and assist the other.[[14]](#footnote-13)

Second, leadership within the church. And the point here is, in the trajectory from Genesis 2:15 to the church’s male elders, the creation order is discerned and developed.

In 1 Timothy 2:12, Paul restricts public teaching, and by implication the pastoral office, to men. To understand something of the rationale for this, we need to begin at creation. We saw last week that, according to Genesis 2:15, God put Adam in the garden to keep it and guard it. That is, Adam was to both develop the garden and protect it. So it’s no surprise that a virtually universal, cross-cultural job description for manhood is to procreate, provide, and *protect*.[[15]](#footnote-14)

From the beginning, Adam’s task of *protecting* the garden involved both a physical and a spiritual element. What was the spiritual aspect? He was to communicate God’s command to Eve. And he was responsible to ensure that they both obeyed it.

It’s telling that the same two words used in Genesis 2:15, “keep and guard,” or “work and protect,” are used of the priesthood in Numbers 18. That’s what the priests and Levites were charged to do with God’s tabernacle. In Numbers 18:6–7, the Levites are tasked with “serving” or “working” at the tent of meeting, and with “guarding” or protecting it against all impurity.

Adam’s priestly task of protecting God’s dwelling is picked up in a specific way by this all-male priesthood.

Now, in new covenant churches, elders aren’t priests. Christians have only one priest, our Lord Jesus Christ. But this task of *guarding the holiness of God’s people* is a core element in elders’ job description. Consider, for instance, the very metaphor of being a shepherd. Shepherds definitely feed, care, and nurture. They guide and direct. But they also *guard and defend the sheep against all threats*. And that’s exactly what Paul charges the Ephesian elders to do, in Acts 20:29–31, “I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.”

Through faithful teaching of the word of God, personal exhortation, and wise oversight, elders must fend off threats to the unity, the health, and even the existence of the church. To be an elder is to enlist in spiritual combat on behalf of the bride of Christ. In spiritual terms, being an elder is a martial task that calls for martial virtues: courage, strength, self-sacrifice, endurance. The ability to defend and guard. In other words, there is a fit between the distinct calling God has given men with respect to creation and the specific new-covenant office of church elder. That doesn’t mean that all men can or should be elders, but it helps us to discern why only men may be elders.

The relational order that God has ordained for men and women in different spheres is not invented out of thin air. It’s not arbitrary. God couldn’t have just flipped a coin and decided that, instead, wives would be the heads of their husbands, or that women could be elders.

It’s not that God’s command creates a difference where none existed. Instead, God’s commands channel and direct the natural differences that already exist.

[SLOW:] The Bible’s teachings on sexual difference are descriptive before they are prescriptive. And the Bible’s prescriptions are *based on* its descriptions. The Bible reveals to us a reality of sexual difference, and its *rules* for sexual difference are rooted in that reality.

***Any questions about what we’ve discussed so far?***

**III. Diverse Expressions (Or, an Old Testament Theology of Female Strength)**

In the whole second half of the class, we’re going to consider a series of Old Testament women who disprove any notion that the Bible’s teaching on sexual difference is an oppressive straitjacket. The point of the Bible’s prescriptive teachings is not to *hinder gifts by constraining their use*, but to both *channel gifts into fitting natural developments and tend gifts to cultivate a rich diversity of fitting fruits.*

There is ample room for diversity in applying what it means to be a man or a woman, and in the legitimate forms that manhood and womanhood can take in diverse circumstances.

To illustrate this point, we’re going to sweep through an Old Testament theology of female strength. We’ll consider Old Testament women who exercised various forms of power to glorify God and serve others.[[16]](#footnote-15) One principle we’re trying to operate by here: “It takes a whole Bible to make a whole Christian man or woman.”[[17]](#footnote-16) You’ll see on your handout that our whistle-stop tour of the Old Testament’s strong sisters will consist of five stops, followed by three brief lessons.

***First, saviors of the Exodus.*** Before Moses is ever used by God to save the Israelites, he is himself saved, repeatedly, by a long series of women. In Exodus 1–2, the Egyptian ruler, Pharaoh, is ruthlessly trying to eliminate the people of Israel. He orders all male Israelite children to be killed, but two Hebrew midwives, named Shiphrah and Puah, rightly and courageously disobey him. They defied Pharaoh, saved infant lives, and God blessed them for it.

But then Pharaoh raised the stakes. He commanded every male Hebrew infant to be cast into the Nile. In Exodus 2, Moses is born. When his mother can no longer hide him, she obeys the letter of the law but not its spirit, and sends Moses floating down the Nile in a mini-ark. In Exodus 2:5–10, Pharaoh’s own daughter spies Moses and has compassion on him. Moses’ sister steps in and offers to get the baby a nurse, calling her own mother to the job and ensuring that she gets to raise her son.

Moses’ mother, Exodus 2:1 tells us, is a daughter of Levi. Her son is rescued by Pharaoh’s daughter. And her own daughter formed the crucial link in the chain. As the Jewish Old Testament scholar Tikva Frymer-Kensky puts it, “And so Moses is born, and saved to be reborn, by the collaboration of this triad of daughters, who begin the redemption of Israel. . . . Three subversive daughters have foiled the plans of men and shaped the destiny of the world.”[[18]](#footnote-17)

But then Moses is redeemed by yet one more woman. After being summoned by God to return to Egypt and liberate his people, while Moses is traveling back to Egypt with his family, we read in Exodus 4:24-26,

At a lodging place on the way the LORD met him and sought to put him to death. Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son’s foreskin and touched Moses’ feet with it and said, “Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!” So he let him alone. It was then that she said, “A bridegroom of blood,” because of the circumcision.

This is a mysterious passage, but it seems to preview the Passover. Because of Moses’ disobedient failure to have his son circumcised, God threatened him with death. It was only the application of blood that could avert that threat. The foreskin of Moses’ son previews the Passover lamb; the blood is spread on Moses at night; and Moses is saved.

But who does God use to bring about Moses’ salvation? Not Moses, but his wife, Zipporah. She takes decisive, unprompted action to rescue her husband. How did she know what to do? Who knows, but the point is, she did it. Frymer-Kensky reflects,

Zipporah acts to prevent a killing. In this experience of the frightening aspect of divine power, Moses’ wife grows into a savior. She becomes a surrogate parent, protecting Moses as well as her children. Moses’ Israelite ‘biological’ mother and his Egyptian ‘foster’ mother are now joined in a triad of saviors by this Midianite ‘ritual’ mother. Now Moses will turn from being the rescued to the rescuer, from the saved to the savior.[[19]](#footnote-18)

***Second, Rahab.*** In Joshua 2, as the Israelites are about to conquer Canaan, they send spies into Jericho to scout out the land. The spies come to Rahab for lodging. The local ruler hears of it. Rahab hides them and sends his scouts in the wrong direction. And then she confesses her faith in Yahweh, in verse 9: “I know that the Lord your God has given you the land.” In verse 10 she tells us that she learned what the Lord did in the Exodus, and so, in verse 11, she confesses, “For the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.”

Rahab is acting as the “midwife” of embryonic Israel.[[20]](#footnote-19) Just as the Hebrew midwives’ defied Pharaoh, so Rahab defies the king of Jericho. Just as Moses’ mother hid her baby, so Rahab hides the spies. The daughter-saviors of the Exodus have met their successor in Rahab. Not only that, but Rahab becomes the first of the inhabitants of the land to declare allegiance to the one true God. She becomes the first foreigner to convert to faith in Yahweh and join the people of Israel.

***Third, Deborah and Jael***. In Judges 4–5, Israel is suffering from a leadership vacuum. There was no king. And even the man whom God charged to fight Israel’s battles refused to. We learn in Judges 4:4 that Deborah was a prophetess, and she was then judging Israel. In verse 6, she prophetically reminded Barak that God had personally commanded him to take up arms against Sisera, the general of Jabin’s army. And God even promised him victory! But Barak was fearful. He agreed to go only on the condition that Deborah would go with him. So she says in verse 9, “I will surely go with you. Nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.” God is going to raise up a woman to do what a man should have done. We can celebrate her feminine courage and lament masculine failure at the same time.

In the following battle, the Lord routed Sisera’s army, and Sisera fled away. He came to Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, who was a political ally of Sisera’s king. We read in verses 18 to 22,

And Jael came out to meet Sisera and said to him, “Turn aside, my lord; turn aside to me; do not be afraid.” So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. And he said to her, “Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty.” So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. And he said to her, “Stand at the opening of the tent, and if any man comes and asks you, ‘Is anyone here?’ say, ‘No.’” But Jael the wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand. Then she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple until it went down into the ground while he was lying fast asleep from weariness. So he died. And behold, as Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael went out to meet him and said to him, “Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking.” So he went in to her tent, and there lay Sisera dead, with the tent peg in his temple.

In the next chapter, Judges 5, Deborah, along with Barak, sings a song to celebrate God’s deliverance. In verse 7 Deborah says that she arose as “a mother in Israel.” Her motherhood consisted in directing the battle and supplying the courage that Israel’s male leaders lacked. But she’s not the only one that these two chapters portray as a mother. Jael offered Sisera hospitality, fed him milk, and covered him like a child in bed. Deborah’s prophetic motherhood rebirthed Israel to life; Jael’s savage, military motherhood rebirthed Sisera to his death, and thereby delivered Israel to life.[[21]](#footnote-20)

***Fourth, Abigail***. In 1 Samuel 25, when David has been anointed king but Saul is still seeking to kill him, David asks for hospitality and provision from a rich fool named Nabal. David’s men had protected Nabal’s shepherds, so Nabal owed David more than usual hospitality. But instead of offering David hospitality, Nabal effectively spits in his face. In response to the insult, David determines to slaughter Nabal and all his men. But Abigail, Nabal’s wife, learns of the incident and David’s intended response, and she takes matters into her own hands.

Abigail loads up supplies on donkeys, sends servants ahead, says nothing to her husband, and then approaches David humbly yet boldly. Verses 24 to 26,

She fell at his feet and said, “On me alone, my lord, be the guilt. Please let your servant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your servant. Let not my lord regard this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and folly is with him. But I your servant did not see the young men of my lord, whom you sent. Now then, my lord, as the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, because the LORD has restrained you from bloodguilt and from saving with your own hand, now then let your enemies and those who seek to do evil to my lord be as Nabal.

Abigail doesn’t command David but appeals to him. She reasons with him based on his on good and the Lord’s promises. Her wisdom wins his assent and wins the day, delivering David from a sin he otherwise would’ve stained himself with. Abigail’s courage and wisdom saved David from himself.

***Fifth and finally, one wise woman who saved a city***. During the rebellion against king David in 2 Samuel, in chapter 20 one of the leaders of the opposition, named Sheba, took refuge in a city called Abel of Beth-Maacah. Joab pursued him there, cast up a siege mound against the city, and threatened to destroy the entire city to capture his one foe. Then one wise woman intervened, in verses 16 to 22:

Then a wise woman called from the city, “Listen! Listen! Tell Joab, ‘Come here, that I may speak to you.’” And he came near her, and the woman said, “Are you Joab?” He answered, “I am.” Then she said to him, “Listen to the words of your servant.” And he answered, “I am listening.” Then she said, “They used to say in former times, ‘Let them but ask counsel at Abel,’ and so they settled a matter. I am one of those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel. You seek to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why will you swallow up the heritage of the LORD?” Joab answered, “Far be it from me, far be it, that I should swallow up or destroy! That is not true. But a man of the hill country of Ephraim, called Sheba the son of Bichri, has lifted up his hand against King David. Give up him alone, and I will withdraw from the city.” And the woman said to Joab, “Behold, his head shall be thrown to you over the wall.” Then the woman went to all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri and threw it out to Joab. So he blew the trumpet, and they dispersed from the city, every man to his home. And Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.

This woman does not appear to hold office, but she knows how to get things done. She’s not in charge, but she does have power. She doesn’t have authority of command, but boy does she know how to wield authority of counsel. She boldly intercedes for her people, reasons sharply and shrewdly with Joab, and then, when she learns the nub of the issue, she promises to take care of it: “Behold, his head shall be thrown to you over the wall.” Note her casual assumption of effective authority. She simply declares that a man’s head will soon sail over the wall, confident that her word will make it so.

***Three Lessons:***

To close, here are three brief lessons that this Old Testament overview of female strength teaches us.

***1. First, there are different types of power, authority, and influence***. Soft power is still power. Influence is still power. [This is a good place to recommend Jonathan Leeman, *Authority.*] As Alastair Roberts has put it, “The quest for wisdom is about the party to whom you will give your heart. As men give their hearts to women and Wisdom, women have a tremendous power to move and inspire them.”[[22]](#footnote-21) Authority is not a zero-sum game. Those with wisdom and gifts and chutzpah can turn the wheel of history, even if they’re not the captain of the ship.

***2. Being a helper does not mean being passive or being a doormat!*** Deborah challenged and shamed Barak. Jael took the fate of a general into her hands. Abigail threw herself between David and a whopping sin he intended to commit. Strength is not the exclusive possession of men.

***3. Scripture frequently commends those who step in when appointed leaders fail, who refuse to be complicit in injustice, and who speak truth to power.*** A repeated theme in this brief survey is the legitimacy of defying an unjust order. Another repeated theme is using wisdom and persuasion to avert disaster by turning someone in authority away from harming others. Pharaoh commands killing; the Hebrew midwives defy him. David is set on murder; Abigail dissuades him. A wise counselor is a powerful influence. Through persuasion, wisdom can triumph over the sinful exercise of power.

***Questions about anything we’ve covered?***

1. For this point and some of the following reflections, see Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ* (Servant Books, 1980), 375–77. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Louise Perry, *The Case Against the Sexual Revolution* (Polity Press, 2022), 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. Simon Baron-Cohen, *The Essential Difference: Men, Women and the Extreme Male Brain* (Penguin, 2003), 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. See Roy Baumeister, *Is There Anything Good About Men?* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 101; also Eagly and Wood, “Explaining Sex Differences in Social Behavior,” *PSPB* 17 (1991), 309. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. Perry, *The Case Against the Sexual Revolution*, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. Werner Neuer, *Man and Woman in Christian Perspective* (Crossway, 1991), 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. For the points in this paragraph see, in order, Baumeister, *Anything Good*, 89, 175, 101; Joyce F. Benenson, *Warriors and Worriers: The Survival of the Sexes* (Oxford University Press, 2014), 11, 48, 58; Deborah Tannen, *You Just Don’t Understand: Men and Women in Conversation* (HarperCollins, 1990), 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
8. For the points in this paragraph see Baumeister*, Anything Good*, 102, 206. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
9. Benenson, *Warriors and Worriers*, 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
10. Tannen, *You Just Don’t Understand*, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
11. Benenson, *Warriors and Worriers*, 147, 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
12. Baumeister, *Anything Good*. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
13. See Stephen L. Nock, *Marriage in Men’s Lives* (Oxford University Press, 1998), 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
14. Alastair Roberts, “Music and the Meaning of Male and Female,” 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
15. See David Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 222-23. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
16. Though we disagree with some of her ethical presuppositions and some of the details of her exegesis, our discussion of Old Testament women in this section is informed and enriched by, and borrows some phrasing from, Tikva Frymer-Kensky, *Reading the Women of the Bible: A New Interpretation of their Stories* (Shocken, 2002), Part I. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
17. Patrick Schreiner, “Man and Woman: Toward an Ontology,” *Eikon* 2.2 (2020), available at <https://cbmw.org/2020/11/20/man-and-woman-toward-an-ontology/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
18. Frymer-Kensky, *Reading the Women*, 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
19. Ibid., 32 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
20. This paragraph draws closely on ibid., 36-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
21. Here following ibid., 52. See also Jack M. Sasson, *Judges 1–12: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, ed. John J. Collins, vol. 6D, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2014), 275. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
22. Roberts, “Natural Complementarians.” [↑](#footnote-ref-21)