

## In 1 Timothy 1:9, does *androphonos* mean ‘manslayers’?

### THE CLAIM

‘Ephesus was a centre for the worship of Artemis (“Diana of the Ephesians”) – “she whom all Asia and the world worship” (Acts 19:27). **According to Greek mythology, the city of Ephesus had been founded by the Amazons, famous women leaders who had slain their men-folk. Hence they had the epithet “manslayers”.**

Artemis herself was a huntress and had engineered the death of the hunter Actaeon who came across her when she was bathing. According to mythology she slew many others. Originally Artemis to the Greeks was a different goddess to Artemis in Ephesus, but the qualities attributed to each became assimilated. **Paul’s criticism of prevailing attitudes at Ephesus echoes these myths. Is it simply a coincidence?**

... the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for **manslayers**. (1 Timothy 1:9)

**“Manslayers” is the exact word used of the Amazons who gloried in their defeat of the men.**

In mythology Artemis exercised power over men. Artemis was also the goddess to whom women appealed to save them through childbirth . **It is not surprising that believers in Ephesus risked being influenced by this pagan atmosphere, nor that problems arose over women dominating men.**<sup>1</sup>

### THE FACTS

Ian and Averil do not tell readers that their argument with regard to the Greek word here translated ‘manslayers’ is not supported by any standard modern Bible translation, and is contradicted by standard professional lexicons.

Readers will note that whereas Ian and Averil typically quote from a modern gender neutral translation to support their arguments (usually the TNIV), in this case they have deliberately quoted from the KJV. The KJV’s rendering of the Greek word *androphonos* in 1 Timothy 1:9 is ‘manslayers’, because the KJV uses the masculine gendered language of its era. The Greek word does not mean ‘man slayers’ as opposed to ‘woman slayers’.

The translation of the KJV is misleading, and creates precisely the false impression which Ian and Averil criticize in their work.

‘The preface to the NIV 1995 Inclusive Language edition (page vii) **gives further reasons for using inclusive language**: “A major challenge facing the Committee is how to respond to the significant changes that are taking place within the English language in

regard to gender issues. **The word ‘man’, for example, is now widely understood to refer only to males, even though that is not the intention of the corresponding Greek or Hebrew words.**”<sup>2</sup>

Ian and Averil actually correct this language where it occurs elsewhere in the KJV:

“In understanding **be men**” (1 Corinthians 14:20)

This verse should not be used to suggest that brothers think in a better or superior way to sisters. The contrast is between being children and being grown up. The King James Version reads:

Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding **be men**.

**Most modern translations say “mature or “adult”:**

Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; be babes in evil, but in thinking be mature. (RSV)

Brothers and sisters, do not be children in your thinking; rather, be infants in evil, but in thinking be adults. (1 Corinthians 14:20, NRSV)<sup>3</sup>

In 1 Timothy 1:9 Ian and Averil do not correct the KJV’s error; they quote it as if it were accurate, and rely on it for their argument.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>1</sup> ‘All One’, p. 77 (March 2009).

## LEXICAL EVIDENCE

The following list shows how *androphonos* is defined in standard lexicons.

- ‘άνδροφόνος, ου, ό (s. άνήρ, φόνος; Hom. et al.; OGI 218, 99 [III B.C.]; Kaibel 184, 6 [III B.C.]; POslo 18, 4 [162 A.D.]; 2 Macc 9:28; Philo, Just.; Ath. 35, 1; Iren. 1, 6, 3 [Harv. I 55, 14] adj.) **murderer** (lit. ‘man-slayer’; Lex. Vind. p. 192, 13: **a murderer of women and children as well as of men**) **1 Ti 1:9**.—DELG s.v. άνήρ A, θείνω. M-M.’<sup>4</sup>
- ‘άνδροφόνος, ου, ό androphonos **murderer\* 1 Tim 1:9 in a vice catalog with reference to the fifth commandment of the Decalogue**; → άνδραποδιστής.’<sup>5</sup>
- ‘άνδροφόνος,-ου+ N2M 0-0-0-0-1=1 2 Mc 9,28 **Murderer**’<sup>6</sup>
- ‘20.85 φονεύς, έως m; άνδροφόνος, ου m; άνθρωποκτόνος, ου m: **a person who murders another person—‘murderer’**: άπώλεσεν τούς φονεΐς έκείνους ‘he destroyed **those murderers**’ Mt 22:7. άνδροφόνος: πατρολώαις και μητρολώαις, άνδροφόνοις **‘murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, and murderers of people’ 1 Tm 1:9**. άνθρωποκτόνος: ήν άπ’ άρχής ‘he was a

**murderer** from the beginning’ Jn 8:44.’<sup>7</sup>

- ‘☉ άνδροφόνος, ου, **man-slaying**, Homeric epith. of Hector, Il.24.724, etc.; of Achilles, χείρες ά. 18.317; **homicide**, Pl.Phil.114a; **generally, murderous**, ά. την φύσιν Theopomp.Hist.217:—in Hom. **usu. of slaughter in battle**, but in Od.1.261 φάρμακον ά. **a murderous**; άνδροφόνους .. Ίλιάδας E.Hec.1061; **drug**:—epith. of αίμα, Orph.H.65.4. 2. **of women, murdering their husbands**, Pi.P.4.252. II. **as law-term, one convicted of manslaughter, homicide**, Lys.10.7, D.23.29, cf. ib.216:—hence as a term of abuse, τούς ά. ίχθυοπώλας Ath.6.228c, cf. Amphis30. III. ά. Κώνος, a landmark at Athens, IG3.61 A ii 15.’<sup>8</sup>

Readers will note that the word is defined consistently as ‘murderer’.<sup>9</sup> Three of the lexicons specifically identify the word as meaning ‘murderer’ in the context of 1 Timothy 1:9.<sup>10</sup> One explains that it means ‘**a murderer of women and children** as well as of men’ and identifies this as the meaning in 1 Timothy 2:9,<sup>11</sup> and another similarly says ‘**a person who murders another person... murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers,**

**and murderers of children**’, identifying this as the meaning in 1 Timothy 1:9.<sup>12</sup>

## BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Although the two component words which make up the word *androphonos* mean ‘man’ and ‘killer’ respectively, when these words are put together to make the word *androphonos* the meaning is not ‘manslayer’ with the sense ‘someone who kills men as opposed to women’.

Ian and Averil are not only following the inaccurately gendered translation of the KJV, they are also committing the root fallacy by interpreting the word according to its root meaning rather than its cognate and contextual meaning.

Standard modern Bible translations such as the CEV,<sup>13</sup> ESV,<sup>14</sup> GNB,<sup>15</sup> HCSB,<sup>16</sup> Message, NASB95,<sup>17</sup> NCV,<sup>18</sup> NET,<sup>19</sup> NIV,<sup>20</sup> NIRV,<sup>21</sup> NLT,<sup>22</sup> TLB,<sup>23</sup> and TNIV,<sup>24</sup> all render this word with an ungendered translation in 1 Timothy 1:9.

(Jonathan Burke, 2010)

<sup>7</sup> Louw & Nida, ‘Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: Based on semantic domains’, volume 1, p. 237 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1989)  
<sup>8</sup> Liddell, Scott, & Jones, ‘A Greek-English Lexicon’, p. 129 (rev. and augm. throughout, electronic ed., 9th ed. with supplement, 1996).  
<sup>9</sup> Ian and Averil provide no lexical evidence supporting their understanding of this word.  
<sup>10</sup> BDAG, EDNT, Louw/Nida.  
<sup>11</sup> Arndt, Danker, & Bauer, ‘A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature’, p. 76 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2000).

<sup>4</sup> Arndt, Danker, & Bauer, ‘A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature’, p. 76 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Balz & Schneider, ‘Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament. Translation of: Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testamen’, volume 1, p. 96 (1990-c1993).

<sup>6</sup> Lust, Eynikel, & Hauspie, ‘A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint (electronic rev. ed. 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Louw & Nida, ‘Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: Based on semantic domains’, volume 1, p. 237 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1989).

<sup>13</sup> ‘those who would even kill their own parents’.

<sup>14</sup> ‘those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers’.

<sup>15</sup> ‘those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers’.

<sup>16</sup> ‘those who kill their fathers and mothers, for murderers’.

<sup>17</sup> ‘those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers’.

<sup>18</sup> ‘those who kill their fathers and mothers, for murder’.

<sup>19</sup> ‘those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers’.

<sup>20</sup> ‘those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers’.

<sup>21</sup> ‘It is for those who kill their fathers or mothers. It is for murderers’.

<sup>22</sup> ‘who kill their father or mother or commit other murders’.

<sup>23</sup> ‘attack their fathers and mothers, and murder’.

<sup>24</sup> ‘those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers’.