

RECEPTION AS THE MASCULINE ROLE IN NIETZSCHE AND JOHN PAUL II

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Reception is often highlighted as a feminine trait, while active giving is thought to be characteristically masculine, not only on the biological level, but across a man's personality. Nietzsche, by contrast, identifies active self-gift as the specific feminine mode of love. John Paul II's reading of Genesis agrees with Nietzsche's intuition. In Genesis 2, the woman comes to the man as a gift, which places him in the position of recipient. It follows from this position of being the recipient that the man bears responsibility for the balance of the gift, for giving himself in answer to the woman's gift. This balance is both a matter of justice and of love. Nietzsche, by contrast, holds that a man who gives himself in love is simply—not a man. A man takes the gift and does not give himself in return. Two contrary images of masculinity.