

Women, Gender, and Religion

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Kephalē, Coverings, and Cosmology

The Impenetrable “Logic” of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

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Introduction

For man is not from woman, but woman from man; and man was not created on account of the woman, but woman on account of the man. Because of this the woman ought to have authority on her head, because of the angels (1 Corinthians 11:8-10).¹

[1] It is, in part, with the line of reasoning above that the apostle Paul seeks to persuade members of the Christian community in Corinth to change their behavior in the worship assembly. These three verses and the larger unit of which they are a part, 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, are among the most vexing verses in the New Testament. Indeed, one scholar has dubbed the unit an “an exegetical Rohrschach test” in which responses to Paul’s ink-blots reveal more about the imaginative powers and penchants of the interpreter than about Paul (MacDonald 1987: 89).

[2] For those of us who fix a studious gaze upon the inkblots, three major issues emerge: 1. the situation in the Corinthian community (Were both men and women acting inappropriately in the assembly? Was the problem head coverings or hair styles?); 2. the motivations of the people involved (If women were praying and prophesying with their

¹ All translations are the author’s own, unless indicated otherwise.

heads uncovered, why were they doing so? If it was hairstyles of both men and women that was the problem, how and why were they dressing their hair inappropriately?); and 3. the logic of Paul's argument which, as the opening quotation suggests, presents an enormous puzzle that continues to confound scholars.

[3] By this point in my study of this intriguing text I am persuaded that the problem was head coverings, not hairstyles, and that Paul is concerned above all with women's conduct, not men's. That women are praying and prophesying without their heads covered is clear. Clarity with respect to the logic of Paul's rhetoric, however, eludes us, the enormous amount of ink spilt on it by generations of biblical scholars notwithstanding. The major pieces of the text-puzzle that continue to vex us are as follows. First is the seeming contradiction between vv. 3-10 and vv. 11-12 regarding the relations between man and woman. Verses 7-9 seem to argue for female head-covering based on a gender hierarchy that is rooted in the divinely ordained order of creation, especially in light of v. 3. But in vv. 11-12 Paul's argumentation appears, at least to some, to shift to a more egalitarian understanding of the male-female relationship. The question arises, then, does Paul here back away from the gender hierarchy of vv. 3-10, as some commentators suggest, based on what seems an acknowledgement of the equal role of woman in procreation (v. 12)? Does he contradict himself here, or is there a logic, a cultural "logic" perhaps, to the thought of these verses?

[4] The other major puzzle-piece that has defied "fit" is the notorious *crux interpretum* cited above: "Because of this, the woman ought to have authority on her head, because of the angels" (v. 10). What does the reference to "authority on her head" mean? Does it refer to a veil, and if so, why does Paul refer to it as "authority" (*exousia*) rather than utilizing one of the Greek words for veil (e.g., *krēdemnon* or *kalumma*)? And whose authority does Paul have in mind? Is it the woman's own authority, perhaps as prophet, or her husband's authority? And most vexing of all, who are the angels, and what do they have to do with women's obligation to cover their heads in the assembly?

[5] I give Paul the benefit of the doubt and assume that his logic was not impenetrable for his intended audience, that even the cryptic v. 10, made sense to them. Our experience of the seeming impenetrability of his argumentation is undoubtedly due to our temporal and cultural distance from Paul. The challenge for modern interpreters, then, is to discover the missing cultural "keys" by which we might unlock his logic. Or, to return to the puzzle analogy, we need to discover a useful cultural "frame" that might permit us to assemble the pieces of this ancient puzzle into a meaningful whole.

[6] In recent years, biblical scholars and classicists have used comparative studies for precisely this purpose, drawing on anthropological investigations of Mediterranean cultures for models that afford guidance with which to assemble the often fragmentary and sketchy sources of information with which scholars of antiquity work (see especially the works of Malina and Neyrey, among others). This chapter will test whether anthropologists' work on honor and shame might provide a useful frame by which to put together the Pauline puzzle-pieces. More precisely, I propose to test the utility of the anthropological research of Carol Delaney whose study of a twentieth century Mediterranean village society discerns a link between villagers' veiling practice and their beliefs about divine creation and human procreation.

[7] The potential benefit of an interface with Delaney's work was suggested to me by specific elements of Paul's argumentation. These include 1. frequent references to glory (*doxa*, vv. 7, 15) and to dishonor or shame (*kataischynei*, *aischron*, *atimia*, vv. 4, 5, 6, 14); 2. allusions to the biblical creation stories (vv. 7-9) and to human procreation (v. 12); 3. Paul's use of the word *kephalē*, "head," which has the dual connotation of "ruler" and "source"; 4. the opening verse of the argument, which in setting forth a series of relationships (v. 3), evidences a concern to define the relationship of male and female "in the Lord" (vv. 8-12); and 5. the conclusion reached in the notorious v. 10, that a woman ought to have "authority on her head." Thus, the exploration that follows consists of three parts: 1. a presentation of Delaney's analysis of the Mediterranean honor-shame code; 2. a brief presentation of evidence of similar practices and assumptions in the ancient Mediterranean world in which Paul and the Corinthians lived; and 3. a reading of the "logic" of Paul's text in light of the comparative material that Delaney's study affords.

Honor and Shame in a Twentieth Century Mediterranean Culture

[8] Anthropologist Carol Delaney has studied the system of ideas and practices that constitute the honor-shame code considered pervasive in Mediterranean cultures, and gives particular attention to the nexus of gender, power, and religion. Through her study of a Turkish village, Delaney discerns, encoded in the honor/shame complex, a particular theory of sexuality and procreation, namely, a monogenetic construction of procreation that, in turn, is correlative with the religious concept of monotheism.

Monogenetic Procreation: Male Seed and Female Soil

[9] Within gender studies and feminist studies, it is generally recognized that the cultural construction of bodies and the cultural construction of gender go hand-in-hand. For humans, after all, bodies signify; they mean things; and the meanings of the body and of bodily differences, such as those of male and female bodies, are neither self-evident nor derived from the "facts" of reproduction. Rather, the meanings of those bodies and bodily differences are constructed within cultures. Thus, sexed bodies become gendered bodies (Delaney: 25-26). In the case of the Turkish village studied by Delaney, the construction of gendered bodies goes hand in hand with a particular construction of procreation, that is, with villagers' beliefs about how life comes into being at both the cosmic and the earthly level.

[10] Villagers understand and discuss procreation in terms of seed and soil, sometimes citing the Quran to support their view: "Women are given to you as fields, go therein and sow your seed" (*Sura* 2.223). The male role in procreation is to plant the seed. The Turkish word for the male role, *döllenmek*, which means literally "to plant the seed," incorporates the word *döl*, which means not only "seed" but also "fetus, child." Thus, the male role is conceived as far more than fertilizing the ovum or providing half the genetic contribution to the child. In planting the seed, the male provides the whole fetus or child, not just a part. His planting or sowing proceeds by way of the *döl yolu* ("seed-path," what we refer to as the vagina), resulting in the *döl* being deposited into the *döl yatağı* ("seed-bed," what we would call the uterus or womb) (Delaney 1991: 33). The female role, then, is to serve as the sower's seed-bed, the soil into which he deposits his life-giving seed. The female body, like soil, receives the seed and

provides the medium in which the seed grows and from which it will spring forth in the birthing. Although women's function is to provide the fertile soil, villagers more often use the word "field" to describe women's role. The important distinction between soil and field is that a field is enclosed, bounded by ownership and visibly marked-out as belonging to someone. Analogously, the female body is "soil" until marriage when it becomes a particular man's "field" (Delaney: 37-38).

[11] Delaney designates this theory of procreation "monogenetic" because it assumes that there is only one principle of generation, the male seed (*dōi*) in which resides the life, the fetus, the child (26-27). In the villagers' thinking only men have the power to generate life, and that life is theoretically eternal as long as men continue to produce sons in perpetuity. From father to son, father to son, the seed of life is transmitted through successive generations. If a man has no sons, villagers say that his hearth has extinguished, a fate worse than death; for without sons, the patrilineage dies (75-76). In this construction of human procreation, men give life; women give birth. Men are sowers of seed; women are fields for the man's sowing; hence, men are potent or impotent, women are fertile or barren. In short, men author life; women receive life from the authors.

Male Honor Requires Female Shame

[12] This construction of procreation defines not only what a man or a woman is but also honor and shame in the village. "Honor and shame are forms of social evaluation in which both men and women are constantly compelled to assess their own conduct and that of their fellows in relation to each other" (Malina and Rohrbaugh: 370). Throughout the Mediterranean, honor is gendered masculine, the prerogative of the male; shame is gendered feminine. Or, to put it differently, in this gendered division of labor, men embody honor; women are to embody shame. In the village male honor, that is, public acknowledgment of one's worth or social value, is built on the social perception of his ability to generate life, that is, his potency.² But the honor that is bound-up with a man's ability to create life, to perpetuate the family line (the patrilineage), also depends on his ability to insure the legitimacy of his paternity, i.e., that the fruit of his field is from his own "seed." Thus, male honor depends on the perceived exercise of power in two forms: the sexual potency to sow the life-giving seed, and the power by which to protect and control access to his "fields," the females of his household, both his daughters, who are "soil" that will someday become another man's "field," and above all his wife, who is his own "field" (Delaney: 39). Male honor, then, requires that measures be taken to insure that a man's "fields" are firmly bounded and closed.

[13] In this construction of procreation, women lack the capacity to author life, to project themselves outward. Therefore, they lack authority and do not embody honor as a man does. In addition, villagers perceive women as lacking firm boundaries; their bodies, in contrast to those of men, are thought to be somewhat amorphous, vulnerable, open,

² Paternity, the ability to generate children, especially sons, who can in turn perpetuate the family-line, is the source of pride for men, and it means far more than mere physiological link between a man and a child. "Paternity has meant begetting; paternity has meant the primary, creative, engendering role, and it *means* the same thing whether the male is a human or God the Father" (Delaney: 11).

penetrable, offering a kind of indiscriminate and desirable fecundity that can endanger a man's honor should another "sow seed" in his "field."³ Therefore, in Turkish village society, a woman's value depends not so much on her fertility, which is presumed of her until proven otherwise, but on her purity. It is her ability to guarantee the security of a man's seed that makes her valuable, hence, the emphasis placed on her virginity before marriage and her fidelity after marriage, both of which require specific social measures aimed at boundary maintenance. In the village, this guarantee is secured above all by covering men's "fields" by means of a code of female dress and conduct (Delaney: 40).

[14] Conscious that her reputation bears upon the patriarch's reputation, a woman or girl conducts herself with reserve, modesty, guardedness. In so doing, she embodies shame, that is, concern for and sensitivity to reputation, her own and that of the patriarch (see Malina and Rohrbaugh: 371; Cairn). Thus, in order to preserve her reputation a girl participates in her own enclosure by wearing the headscarf and other voluminous coverings over her body, averting her eyes when unrelated men are present, and staying at home and out of male sight. By doing so she demonstrates that she is closed and clean rather than open and defiled by another man's seed or even his potent, penetrating gaze. She is preserved in this closed state until marriage, when her husband exercises his power and the right to exercise it, that is, his authority, to open her and to plant his seed in her (Delaney: 42).

[15] Similarly, an adult woman, like land, must always be under the cover of a man, whether father, husband, brother, or son, and this is symbolized by wearing the headscarf. A woman who walks around uncovered (without a headscarf) is seen as open to sexual advances from men; it is as if she were openly exhibiting her private parts. The eye of desire, if not deflected, is thought to penetrate the woman, defiling her, and she will be blamed for having received and accepted it. In short, because there must be no doubt in the village about a man's authority in relation to his "fields," a girl's or woman's body must be closed and covered, for her reputation reflects honor on her husband or shames him in the public eye. Male honor, then, requires female shame, i.e., reserve, modesty, guardedness (Delaney: 38).

[16] Given the logic of female covering described above, it is unsurprising that absence of covering is the case for males. In this construction of procreation and gender, male sexuality is a source of pride, for by it, men author life. Not surprisingly, then, the generative organ, the penis, is a source of honor and is in fact the focus of attention in the circumcision ritual that marks the passage to manhood. In the village studied by Delaney, circumcision takes place between the ages of seven and twelve and is considered the first test of manliness; for a boy who survives this ordeal without crying gains a sense of pride that is focused on the generative organ, source and symbol of his potency, and so, too, of his honor. Whereas the female transition to womanhood requires covering with a headscarf, the ritual of

³ Male anxiety is heightened by the widespread assumption that female sexuality is inherently insatiable, or at least indiscriminate. In Delaney's Turkish village, it is believed that a woman, left to herself, has no resistance to men; therefore, that if a man and woman are alone together for more than twenty minutes, they have had intercourse, not because the woman has been overpowered by the man or her own desires, but because she is thought to have no power of discretion or resistance. It is because women are thought to be so vulnerable and open to persuasion that they must be socially closed or covered (41).

circumcision that marks the boy's transition to manhood involves the opposite, uncovering (84-88).

[17] These gendered practices of covering and uncovering are an expression of a larger cosmology and its "logic." Within the village, it is objects of value and beauty, of desirability, which need to be covered, hidden from view, protected. Men are not covered because their bodies are thought to be firmly bounded, self-contained, invulnerable, therefore, needing no protective cover. Moreover, men are not objects of desire or value; rather they are outward-directed agents of desire and valuation who exercise power and authority in relation to that which they value and desire. In the village, it is babies, girls, and women that evoke desire; and so, they are the objects that must be covered (Delaney: 65).

Divine Creation and Human Procreation: Masculine Monogenesis

[18] Finally, Delaney suggests that there is a correlation between the "monogenetic" theory of procreation and the theological doctrine of monotheism. In monotheistic religions, there is not a god and goddess whose sacred marriage brings forth the world. There is, rather, only one God, who is without divine partner; and that One God, Creator of all, is conceived of as male. Divinity itself is creativity and potency and is defined as masculine. The feminine element is subordinated and becomes symbolically equated with what is created (the world) rather than with the divine creative power (37). Here Delaney discerns in villagers' cosmology a correlation between divine creation and human procreation, and so, too, between monotheism and monogenesis. Monotheism implies a monogenetic rather than a polygenetic view of the creation of humankind, for the One God creates all that is. It also implies a monogenetic view of human procreation: God created the first man and created in men the means of transmitting life. Creation and procreation, the first divine, the latter human, are both monogenetic, and both are gendered masculine (288).

[19] The male role in human procreation is thought to reflect, on the finite level, God's power in creating the world (Delaney: 33). Villagers say, "A man is the second God after Allah." Just as God is the author of the world, men, as sowers of seed, are authors of children, and it is this that justifies and constitutes men's authority; the perceived creative, life-giving ability of men allies them symbolically with God, whereas the material sustenance provided by women associates them with what was created by God, namely, earth. Because of this structural and symbolic alliance between men and God, man's dominance seems natural and given in the order of things (Delaney: 33, 35).

[20] Thus, Delaney contends that monotheism and monogenesis are two aspects of the same thing – an ideology that contributes to and supports men's superiority in all things social. The value of both men and women lies not in what they do but in what, culturally speaking, they are; and what they are depends on their perceived role in procreation. Man is potent sower, author of life, and so, bearer of authority over others; woman is "soil," and upon her marriage, closed "field," under the authority of her husband, and so, too, under his "cover." This monogenetic theory of procreation, Delaney proposes, is the key to unlocking the male-female relations that are encoded in Mediterranean honor-shame cultures.

Honor and Shame in the Ancient Mediterranean

[21] One ought not simply *assume* that a twentieth century Mediterranean culture, such as Delaney's Turkish village, replicates the ancient Mediterranean in which Paul and the Corinthian community lived. Rather, the appropriateness of an interpretive interface between the two must be established by demonstration of a degree of continuity between them. Therefore, before adopting Delaney's analysis as a frame for working with Paul's puzzle-pieces, one must ask, do we have evidence of a similar practice and cosmology of covering in the ancient Mediterranean? Examination of ancient Greek and Roman sources reveals several points of contact between this Turkish village and the ancient Greco-Roman context in which Paul lived: 1. both are veiling societies; 2. the veiling practices of each are underwritten by similar assumptions about women and the female body; 3. both use the seed-soil metaphor for marital procreation and assume the pre-eminence of the male in procreation.⁴ Therefore, the use of Delaney's analysis in relation to the Pauline text is, in my judgment, appropriate. Whether and to what degree it proves useful will be considered in the final section of this paper.

The Ubiquity and Ideology of Veiling Practices

[22] Recent studies confirm that, from the archaic era through the Roman period, women of varying social strata in the ancient Greek world were habitually veiled, especially for public appearances or in the presence of unrelated men (Llewellyn-Jones; Blundell). That veiling was standard practice in the Greek world is amply attested in the artistic sources, which evidence a variety of veil-styles over a wide geographical area and a broad period, and is confirmed in literature. In the words of Menander, ". . . and she'll veil herself, for that's what women do" (*Perikeiromene* 311-12; cited in Llewellyn-Jones: 1).

[23] The function of this habitual veiling is suggested by Greek veil-terminology. *Krēdemnon* literally means "head binder," and together with other veil-words such as *kaluptrē* and *kalumma*, which have the general meaning "to conceal," accentuates the restrictive nature of the veil (though it permits a degree of freedom for women within the male world; see Llewellyn-Jones: 1). Analysis of ancient Greek cultural discourses indicates that this restrictive social practice was underwritten by a particular set of assumptions that constitute the Greek construction of woman and the female body. Based on her study of the ancient sources, Anne Carson summarizes these assumptions as follows:

Women are pollutable, polluted, and polluting in several ways at once. They are anomalous members of the human class, being imperfect men, as Aristotle informs us (*Generation of Animals* A728a18-20; 737a25-35; 775a15). They are intimate with formlessness and the unbounded in their alliance with the wet, wild, and raw nature. They are, as individuals, comparatively

⁴ Murphy-O'Connor rightly notes that Greeks and Romans differed in their attitude toward attire at prayer (1988: 267); therefore, one must inquire as to which practice was followed at Corinth. Because Corinth was on Greek soil but by the first century was a Roman colony whose official language at the time of Paul was Latin, it is difficult to determine whether the thought-world, customs, and practices of the people of Corinth were influenced primarily by Greek culture, Roman, or both. I assume the latter. For Paul and other Jews of the community, Hellenistic Judaism would have been an influence as well.

formless themselves, without firm control of personal boundaries. They are, as social entities, units of danger, moving across boundaries of family and *oikos*, in marriage, prostitution, or adultery. . . In sum, the female body, the female psyche, the female social life, and the female moral life are penetrable, porous, mutable, and subject to defilement all the time (158-59).

[24] Carson's analysis further suggests that the core of male alarm about woman is sexual. "Sexually the female is a pore," and this sexual porousness, combined with woman's supposed sexual voraciousness, poses a threat to the integrity of the household (*oikos*) of which she is a part (158-59). In a society that practices patrilocal marriage, woman is a mobile unit, whose movement into a husband's house is necessary for continuation of the *oikos*, but also dangerous due to the possibility for "illicit varieties of female mobility, for example that of the adulteress out of her husband's house, with attendant damage to male property and reputation" (Carson: 135-36; see duBois: 147). Therefore, because woman does not bound herself, she must be bounded; the pore must be closed.⁵ "Putting the lid on" female sexuality for the sake of purity is accomplished by marriage and various social measures prescribed for wives, most notably, veiling and other forms of enclosure that establish and maintain boundaries (Carson: 156). That veiling was a primary means of boundary-maintenance, hence, a pollution control strategy, has been illumined by recent analyses of the ancient wedding ritual in which the bridal veil plays a prominent role (Carson; Llewellyn-Jones; Oakley and Sinos).

The Ancient Greek Wedding Ritual: The Anakalyptēria

[25] The Greek wedding ritual by which a woman passed from the house of one man (her father) to another's (husband) involved a series of rites in which the bride was essentially a silent and passive object to be viewed: placed beneath the bridal veil and decked out like a goddess, the bride was led, picked-up, carried, and exposed by and for the groom, who was the primary ritual actor (Llewellyn-Jones: 241-43). The climax of this object-exchange between the bride's father and husband was the *anakalyptēria*, or "unveiling," which signified the official consecration of the marriage. Although the timing of the unveiling rite is debated,⁶ scholars concur that it was the highly symbolic covering and uncovering of the heads of brides that transformed them into wives and potential mothers. Carson observes, "At the moment of the unveiling, for the first time, the intact boundary of her person is penetrated by the male gaze. Ancient lexical sources leave no doubt that visual exposure was the function and official point of the ritual of the *analkalyptēria*" (163). On the significance of this visual exposure, Llewellyn-Jones adds, "The fact that she could be unveiled without

⁵ Carson suggests that the symbolic force of the most common Greek word for female headgear, *krēdemnon*, is indicated by its three-fold usage to mean female head covering, the battlements of a city, and the stopper of a bottle. A veiled woman, a fortified city, and a corked bottle are all vessels whose contents are sealed against dirt and loss (160-61; see also Martin: 234; Hanson: 325-26).

⁶ Carson concludes that one unveiling occurred as the "climax of the ceremony" (163). Llewellyn-Jones conceives of the *anakalyptēria* as a series of unveilings organized around three gazes that are analogous with the three bridal unveilings: the public *anakalyptēria* at the feast, the private *anakalyptēria* for the groom in his house, and finally the profoundly intimate unveiling of intercourse that confirms the bride's status as spouse (28-29, 240). It is likely that the rite varied somewhat over time and by locale.

her control, or even her consent, meant that she was sexually exposed and this sexual vulnerability found expression in the penetrating gaze of the groom (and male guests) onto the bride's face and into her eyes" (247). This first visual penetration of the bride by the groom at the lifting of the bridal veil was "but a forerunner of the events that were to take place in private later in the bridal chamber where the act of sexual penetration removed (physically or otherwise) the lower veil" (Llewellyn-Jones: 247). By means of this ceremonial veiling, then climactic unveiling, the woman becomes a sexualized being, the wife of a man who henceforth has exclusive rights to her reproductive potential. She is from this moment forward, for his "eyes" only, and so, too, as we will see below, for his exclusive "sowing;" therefore, she will be covered when in the presence of other men.

[26] Carson's study also clarifies the relationship of the bride's veiling to male honor:

The bride voluntarily abases herself at the *analkalyptēria*, exposing to the glance of her bridegroom the virgin state that veils have hidden until this moment. The relinquishing of her own honor lays a claim upon his honor. He is no less responsible than he would be to a suppliant or a guest to play out his side of the game by taking her into his hearth and restoring the honor that she has freely forfeited. She has opened to him her boundaries; it is his charge to take her in and seal them anew. He does so immediately by offering her gifts, then by leading her away to his own oikos and enclosing her there. (164).

Thus, through the wedding ritual the bride is embedded simultaneously in her husband's house and in his honor. The virgin emerges from the rite of passage as a sexualized being whose necessary but dangerous reproductive potential is now bounded by ownership, "put under wraps" by the one man who has exclusive rights to her reproductive potential (Llewellyn-Jones: 219). Henceforth, it is his duty to maintain the boundaries of his household (its integrity) by protecting the boundaries of his wife and daughters (their chastity and purity); and it is the wife's duty to veil herself in the presence of other men, for her "shame" (*aidōs*), visibly signaled by her veil, reflects honor upon her husband (see Cairns).

Human Procreation: Sowing Seed and Monogenesis

[27] Finally, do we find evidence of the seed-soil metaphor and of a monogenetic theory of human reproduction in ancient sources? Recent studies of the ancient Greek construction of marital sexuality and of ancient understandings of human reproduction (Carson; duBois; Dean-Jones) afford ample evidence that the procreative act of sex between husband and wife was constructed as the "work" of producing children (Carson: 149) and that this marital procreative "work" was analogized as "sowing" and "ploughing." DuBois argues, "Sexual difference is encoded in ancient Greece in terms . . . that are analogous to those used of agricultural production. . . The dominant metaphors of sexual reproduction in ancient culture . . . are based on metaphors analogizing sexual reproduction and agricultural production" (28). In tracing these metaphors in ancient Greek sources, duBois finds abundant evidence for the analogy between the earth and the female body (57). Though this analogy initially suggests that woman is the parthenogenetic source of life, as time goes by "The ideology of the woman's body as fruitful, spontaneously generating earth gives way . . .

to a cultural appropriation of the body that responds to and rewrites that primary image. Men claim that they must plough the earth, create fields, furrow them, and plant seeds if the earth is to bear fruit” (28). Thus, woman’s body becomes a field to be ploughed by her legitimate husband to produce a crop of children (see duBois for numerous examples in Greek literature).

[28] DuBois’ study demonstrates that the cultural metaphor of sowing is pervasive and persistent in ancient Greek culture. It should be noted, however, that ancient scientific discourses were divided on the question of the female contribution to human reproduction. Dean-Jones observes that, on the one hand, “some ‘scientific’ theories did support Apollo’s contention that only the father contributed seed to the child, while the mother simply provided the place and nourishment for its growth” (149; see also Sissa: 68-71,75). Other ancient scientists, however, theorized that women also produced and contributed seed to the embryo, in addition to the menstrual fluid without which the two seeds could not be nourished and grow (149). The Hippocratics, for example, seem to have championed the female seed theory because it afforded an explanation of a child’s resemblance to its maternal family (160). And yet, “The Hippocratic physicians, though prepared to conclude that all individuals, male and female, produce identical, androgynous seeds, nevertheless maintained that the female portion of the seminal substance is intrinsically less strong than the male portion” (Sissa 1992: 51).

[29] It is difficult to gauge the degree of familiarity with and access to scientific discourses among the general populace and the influence of scientific theories of reproduction on their thinking. Hence, given the pervasiveness of the sowing metaphor, there is reason to suspect that the general public perceived the woman’s body as merely a container of the embryo and nurse of the seed. Indeed, duBois maintains that the single-seed theory, although contested in some scientific discourses, implicitly dominates the codes defining sexual differences. She concludes, “Though the analogy between earth and the woman’s body initially suggests otherwise – that is, that woman is the parthenogenetic source of life – as time goes by the function of woman as nurse of the seed becomes the predominant one, and . . . the other metaphors used to describe the female body [furrow, oven, stone, tablet] partake of and reinscribe this dominant function of the woman” (33). Likewise, Dean-Jones acknowledges that in a patrilineal society such as ancient Greece, wherein children were part of the family of their father, not their mother, and a woman was not thought capable of perpetuating her father’s line without an infusion of the family’s male principle in her offspring, “theories of reproduction were bound to emphasize the importance of the male component over the female” (148).

Framing the Puzzle: The “Logic” of Paul’s Argument

[30] Having demonstrated continuity between the ancient and modern Mediterranean cultures with respect to veiling practice and the ideologies that underwrite them, I turn now to 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 and ask, do Paul’s gender-specific injunctions regarding head coverings reflect the honor-shame complex, with its encoded theory of creation, procreation, and sexuality? And can the preceding analysis of the honor-shame code assist us in discerning the logic of the more cryptic references in Paul’s argumentation, thereby helping

us to fit at least some of the more difficult pieces of the puzzle together? I propose both questions can be answered in the affirmative.

[31] That Paul's argumentation reflects the Mediterranean preoccupation with honor and shame is readily apparent. In vv. 4-6, Paul sets forth an argument from shame, warning that men and women who pray and prophesy with inappropriate covering or uncovering shame (*kataischynei*) their heads. This is followed immediately by an argument that in its use of the term "glory" (*doxa*) appeals to the honor obligations of men and women in relation to their respective heads (vv. 7-9). Somewhat less obvious but nevertheless discernible within the Mediterranean cultural frame are beliefs about creation, procreation, and sexuality similar to those Delaney detects encoded in the honor-shame complex. These emerge in vv. 7-10, where Paul defines the honor obligations of the man-woman relationship based on the order of creation in Genesis 1-2, and in v. 12 with its obvious reference to human procreation. The remainder of this chapter examines Paul's gender-specific injunctions regarding head covering within the frame of the Mediterranean honor-shame code in order to illumine the cultural "logic" of Paul's argument.

1 Corinthians 11:2-12: An Overview

I praise you because you remember me in everything, and, as I handed them to you, you hold fast the traditions (1 Corinthians 11:2).

[32] Rhetorically, Paul's opening commendation of the Corinthians serves as a *captatio benevolentiae*, seemingly aimed at securing his audience's goodwill as he turns to a matter about which he anticipates contentiousness (v. 16). That this is a kind of compliment before correction is indicated by the immediately following "But I want you to know . . ." (v. 3), which suggests that the instruction on head coverings is a clarification, probably of a tradition that Paul himself had passed on to them.⁷ In support of his injunctions – that in praying and prophesying men are not obliged to cover their heads but women are – Paul sets forth three arguments: a theological argument that appeals to the order of creation in Genesis (vv. 3-12), an argument from nature (vv. 13-15), and an argument from custom (v. 16). Due to constraints of space, I will confine my analysis to the first of these, which, as its length and theological nature suggests, is clearly his primary argument.

[33] In 11:3-12 Paul's argument proceeds in three stages: first, an opening statement of three parallel relationships that defines the man-woman relationship in terms of difference (v. 3); next, parallel statements regarding the behavior of men and women who pray and prophesy

⁷ This is further suggested by the fact that Paul's major argument (11:3-12) is theological, appealing to the order of creation, when it would have been sufficient to argue a case for women's veiling simply on the basis of cultural convention. Wire suggests that the theological weight of Paul's argument makes it likely that the women who prophesied without head covering chose to do so with theological justification, as that would explain Paul's appeal to theological tradition (123). It is widely thought that the particular tradition that might have led to women's unconventional conduct is Galatians 3:28, which proclaims a new baptismal identity in Christ ". . . no longer male and female" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1987: 397; Murphy-O'Connor 1980: 490). Some recognize that Genesis 1:27, which plays a role in Paul's argumentation, was a subtext for Galatians 3:28. Jervis proposes that Paul's initial teaching had relied on the Genesis 1 creation account, but in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 Paul draws on Genesis 2 in order to correct the practical problem with head coverings that arose due to misunderstanding of what he had originally taught the Corinthians.

in the assembly, each using shame language (vv. 4-6); and lastly, a climactic argument from the order of creation (vv. 7-12), which includes, once again, parallel statements regarding man and woman. On my reading, the foundational building blocks of the cosmology that grounds the different practices Paul enjoins for the sexes are the two definitions of the man-woman relationship that Paul reads out of the Genesis creation narrative. In the first, Paul defines the man-woman relationship in terms of “headship” (v. 3), and in the second, in terms of the *doxa*, the honor obligations, that attend the previously defined headship (v. 7).

Stage 1. An Argument From Definition: Who is and has a “Head” (Kephalē)?

But I want you to know that of every man the head is Christ, the man head of woman, and God head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3).

[34] This opening verse of the argument proper introduces the word *kephalē* that is central to the problem Paul addresses, namely, the physical heads of men and women, and so, too, to the cosmology that undergirds the practice that Paul enjoins in response. In this initial three-fold occurrence of *kephalē*, it is not the literal meaning – physical head of a person or animal – that is intended but rather a metaphorical meaning, the identification of which has been a matter of debate. The contested issue is whether “head” here connotes “ruler,” that is, one in authority over another/others, with its implication of hierarchy, or, alternatively, “source” as in source of being or life, which, in the estimation of some, bears no suggestion of rank, superiority, or hierarchy (see, e.g., Murphy-O’Connor; Mickelsen and Mickelsen). It is my view that in the context of Paul’s larger argument, the meaning of *kephalē* in v. 3, “head,” combines both metaphorical connotations, that is, someone who, as source of the life or being of another, stands in a relation of authority over that other. *Kephalē* clearly connotes authority or rulership in a number of Septuagint texts (Fitzmyer 1993), therefore, it is conceivable that Paul, a Hellenistic Jew, intended that connotation of the word here; and although *kephalē* as “source” is not well-attested (Grudem contra Bedale), some Pauline occurrences have been shown to bear this connotation (Colossians 1:18; 2:19; Ephesians 4:15; see Mickelsen and Mickelsen; cf. Payne). That it likely does so here is suggested by Paul’s assertion later in the argument, “For man is not from woman, but woman from man” (v. 8), an obvious allusion to the creation of the first woman from the rib of ‘adam (see also D’Angelo; Jervis; Schüssler Fiorenza).

[35] Reflective of this dual connotation of *kephalē*, Paul’s opening statement defines a series of analogous source-relationships in which each source bears authority in relation to the one “outsourced.” Woman, the only member of the series not defined as a *kephalē*, is “odd man out.” Although she has a *kephalē* (man), she is not herself a *kephalē* (head) of anyone. Because Paul simply asserts that this is so, without explanation or elaboration, the basis of this three-fold definition is unclear at this early stage of the argument, but emerges later when Paul sets forth the second of the two definitions of the man-woman relationship on which his argument rests.⁸ That this series of source-relationships (from Christ, man; from

⁸ Paul does not explain or elaborate because rhetorically this is an argument from definition, which claims the authority of universal meaning without providing specific evidence (Wire: 117). That in Paul’s mind the man’s headship of woman might have something to do with God’s punishment of Eve after the Fall (Genesis 3:16) is plausible, especially in light of the obvious allusions to Genesis later in the argument (vv. 7-10), but, in the absence of textual evidence, doubtful. To my mind, Paul defines the man-woman relationship as he does based

man, woman; from God, Christ) is not only a hierarchy of headship but a hierarchical chain of being in which man and woman have a somewhat different “being-status” is indicated by that second definition: “man is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man” (v. 7; see the recent discussion in Schüssler Fiorenza 2007: 91-101). Here at the rhetorically significant opening of his argument, Paul’s definition constructs woman as different; for, unlike man, woman is not a head (*kephalē*), rather, she is headed by another. Moreover, in the series of analogous relationships, she stands in a different relation to God and Christ than does man, with man seemingly as mediator. This Pauline statement of anthropology – man is *kephalē* (“head,” as source and ruler) of woman – is consonant with the gender constructions characteristic of the Mediterranean honor-shame complex, according to which man embodies the power that makes him honorable and woman, who is embedded in a man’s household and honor, is under his authority. That this opening definition of social order – man’s headship of woman – has deeper cosmological roots that include beliefs about creation, procreation, and sexuality, emerges later in the argument (vv. 7-9). Thus, this gendered hierarchy of headship affords an initial glimpse of an order of creation, being, and authority that Paul reads out of the Genesis creation narratives that are the cosmological “source” of (or ideological “undertext” that underwrites) the gendered obligations regarding head coverings upon which Paul insists in subsequent verses (while this study focuses on Paul’s cosmology, see Martin for a focus on Paul’s ideology).

Stage 2. An Argument from Shame: “Thou Shalt Not Shame Thy Head”

... every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered shames his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered shames her head, for it is one and the same thing as having been shaved. For if a woman does not cover herself, she may as well be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaven, then she should be covered (1 Corinthians 11:4-6).

[36] Paul’s opening definition of headship is followed immediately by an argument from shame that appeals to the obligations that attend headship relationships. The argument begins with an injunction for men who pray and prophesy (v. 4), which is then complemented by one addressing women who do likewise (vv. 5-6), the latter being more fully elaborated, presumably because it is Paul’s predominant concern (see also Wire: 118). Here the word *kephalē* is used for the physical head, but not without a pun upon the metaphorical meaning introduced in the preceding hierarchy of headship. In each of the parallel injunctions, the first occurrence of “head” obviously refers to the physical anatomical head of the man or woman who prays or prophesies, while the second, “shames his (her) head,” refers to his or her figurative head, as defined in the preceding verse. Thus, a man who covers his (physical) head shames Christ, whereas the woman who fails to cover her (physical) head shames her man-head, that is, her husband.

[37] The logic of Paul’s assertion, “every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered shames her head” (v. 5), can be illumined within the frame of the Mediterranean honor-shame code according to which male honor depends on the perceived exercise of power in two forms: the sexual potency to sow the life-giving seed and the power by which

on the material that *precedes* the story of the Fall, i.e., the creation narrative (Genesis 1-2) to which he clearly alludes in vv. 7-9.

to protect and control access to his “fields,” the females of his household. Thus, male honor in the eyes of others requires female shame, i.e., sensitivity to reputation, her own and that of her father or husband, which is expressed in covering and guardedness when in the presence of other men. Therefore, a woman praying or prophesying in the Christian assembly without head covering “invites” the penetrating gaze of other men, betraying a lack of respect (*aidōs*) for her husband that dishonors him in the public eye.

[38] Following immediately upon the three-fold definition of headship (v. 3), this argument from shame is a logical extension of the preceding hierarchy of headship and its honor obligations, one of which is “Thou shalt not shame thy head (God, Christ, or man) in public”; in other words, one should not act in a way that causes one’s “head” to lose honor in the public eye. In the case of a woman, this means she should not act in such a way that her husband’s power and authority relative to her is undermined in the estimation of others. Within the Mediterranean cultural matrix, shame (*aidōs*) is wedded to honor (*timē, doxa*); and so, it is unsurprising that in the next stage of the argument (vv. 7-10), Paul shifts from this admonition against shaming one’s *kephalē* to the pre-eminent commandment of the honor-shame code: “Thou shalt honor thy head.”

Stage 3. An Argument from the Order of Creation

A man, on the other hand, ought not cover his head, being the image and glory of God. But the woman is the glory of man, for man is not from woman, but woman from man; nor was man created on account of the woman, but woman on account of the man. Because of this, the woman ought to have authority on her head, because of the angels. In any case, neither woman without man nor man without woman in the Lord. For just as the woman [is] from the man, so the man [is] through the woman; but all things [are] from God (1 Corinthians 11:7-12).

[39] Like the preceding argument from shame (vv. 4-6), the sequence of thought here proceeds from an injunction pertaining to men (v. 7) to a more elaborately argued injunction for women (v. 10), then ends with an insistence on their divinely ordained coupling (vv. 11-12). In verses 7-9, Paul justifies different head covering practices for the sexes by appeal to the Genesis creation narrative and, so, to the created order already glimpsed in the opening definition of headship (v. 3). In order to grasp the logic of Paul’s argumentation, then, we must look closely at how he reads the Genesis text.

[40] Here Paul builds upon a second definition of the man-woman relationship that, like the first (v. 3), affirms their difference: man is “the image and glory of God,” and woman is the “glory of man” (v. 7). The phrase “the image of God,” an obvious allusion to Genesis 1:27, is clear indication that Paul draws the anthropology that grounds his insistence on different covering practices for the sexes from the Genesis creation cosmology. To the modern interpreter, however, the assertion that man is “the image and glory of God,” but, by implication, woman is not, appears to be a blatant misreading of the biblical text, which states, “God created humankind (Hebrew: *ha’adam*; Greek: *ton anthrōpon*), in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.” How, then, could Paul possibly define man, but not woman, as “image of God”?

[41] Paul’s reading of the text is clearly not that of modern biblical scholarship, but it is also not simply arbitrary. In his study of Paul’s exegetical practices, Watson (1992) demonstrates

that the Pauline reading is in fact a possible reading of Genesis 1:27 due to linguistic ambiguities in the first chapters of Genesis that permit the text to be read more than one way. One of these is the peculiar shift from the singular, “in the image of God he created *him*,” to the plural, “male and female he created *them*.” The latter phrase permits one to deduce that woman also is created in the divine image. However, since the singular is used in the first phrase, with the inclusive “them” qualified by “male and female” occurring in second position, one could also read the two phrases as a kind of preliminary summary reflective of and preparing for the creation sequence found in the more detailed account that follows in Genesis 2: God created the man (*ha’adam*) first (2:7-8), who is the “him” created “in the image of God”; then, since it was not good for the man to be alone (Genesis 2:18), “male and female he created them” (1:27) by the addition of the woman (2:21-23). Alternatively, the latter phrase “male and female he created them” may also be read as implying that woman is somehow contained *within* the “him” of the first phrase, which is still far from an unequivocal assertion that woman *as woman* is “the image of God.” Thus, the peculiar use of singular and plural in Genesis 1:27 (with singular sequentially *first*) leaves women’s status as image of God ambiguous.

[42] Some interpreters argue that the *ha’adam* (Greek: *ton anthrōpon*) who is created first in Genesis 2:7 is not a male but rather a sexually undifferentiated or androgynous being out of which two sexed beings are then created (Trible; for a critique, see Simkins in this volume). Granted, the Hebrew and Greek words used in Genesis 1:26-28 and 2:7 are the generic and inclusive term for human, not the specific terms for man and woman or husband and wife. Nevertheless, linguistic developments later in Genesis 2-5 might well incline readers to construe the original human as male. For example, the ambiguity created by the switch from singular to plural pronoun, discussed above, is compounded by the equally awkward (and confusing) use of the word *’adam* in the narrative. In the Hebrew text, the original human is designated *’adam* or *ha’adam* previous to the sexual differentiation (1:26-27; 2:5; 2:7-8; 2:15-16); but after the sexual differentiation (2:21-22), the same word *’adam* is used as a proper name for the male character (a similar linguistic peculiarity is found in the Septuagint). Therefore, that there is a being called *’adam/anthrōpon* before the arrival of woman, and then later in the narrative a being of the same name has intercourse with his wife and begets a son (4:25; 5:3), might well incline the reader to construe the original human as male. These kinds of linguistic ambiguities provide a textual basis for Paul’s assertion that man, and by implication, not woman, is the image and glory of God; for as Watson observes, “the text passes over her status in silence, refusing either to confirm or to deny her equal participation in the divine likeness. She is included in *’adam*, for *’adam* comprises ‘male and female’; and yet she appears only within this pairing, without independent being, over-protectively chaperoned to the point of invisibility by the male whose infinitely greater claim to the term Man is indicated by the fact that it is his proper name” (1992: 95). Woman’s status as “image of God” is, I suggest, linguistically and narratively veiled from view, covered by the man in and under whom she is subsumed.

[43] But what does it mean to be “image” (*eikōn*), that is, likeness, of God, and how does the man “image” God in a way that apparently woman does not? The logic of this differentiation may be discerned in the prior definition of the man-woman relationship in v. 3 and in the explanatory vv. 8-9. The definition in v. 3 suggests a likeness between God,

Christ, and man: each is *kephalē*. Woman is unlike the three in that she herself is not a “head” (*kephalē*). That headship connotes source or origin of life is suggested by vv. 8-9, which set forth a two-fold explanation for Paul’s assertion “but woman is the glory of man” (v. 7b), with its implication “and not the image of God, as man is.” First, because “man is not from woman, but woman from man” (v. 8), an allusion to God’s creation of woman out of the rib of ‘*adam*’ (Genesis 2:21-23); and second, “nor was man created on account of the woman, but woman on account of the man” (v. 9), a further allusion to the Genesis creation narrative, according to which the woman is given to ‘*adam*’ by God as a “helper” or “companion” (Genesis 2:18, 20). The nature and purpose of the help or companionship for which woman was created “on account of man” is above all sexual and procreative, as suggested by four elements of the larger narrative complex: 1. the command to “be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28; also 9:1); 2. the narrator’s comment immediately following her creation (“therefore, a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh,” Genesis 2:24), which suggests that the woman was created for marriage and for the sexual union that restores the oneness lost upon her separation out of man; and 3. Adam names his companion Eve, “mother of all the living” (Genesis 3:20); and 4. focus on her child-bearing as the consequence of eating the fruit of knowledge (Genesis 3:16). According to Genesis, then, the woman is created to be wife and sexual helpmate in the man’s generation of progeny. In Watson’s words, “Her creation and her marriage are virtually simultaneous; unlike the man, she has no existence prior to her marriage” (1992: 99).

[44] Thus, the meaning of “image of God” in Genesis 1:27 is clarified by the narrative context: the story of God creating the world, determining its order, and blessing it with the original life-forms, plant, animal, and human. To this point in the narrative, God is potent and sovereign Creator. For the man to be “image of God,” then, is to be, like God, a potent source of life, a sovereign progenitor or pro-creator; hence, the original and originating commandment addressed to ‘*adam*’ (Genesis 1:28) and later to Noah and his sons (9:1-2, 7): “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”⁹ From the originating *kephalē*, God, comes a sexual and procreative order in which man, who possesses generative power (like God), begets, with the cooperation of his helpmate, the generations, clans, and nations traced in Genesis 4-11. Thus, man is the “image of God” in his potent generativity and in his exercise of dominion in relation to all living things; in short, he is the image of God in being a *kephalē* (source and ruler).

[45] It is the distinct “being-status” of man and woman – man as image of God, woman as helpmate – that determines their *doxa*, that is, the “honor” obligations that further define them. In Greek, *doxa* is the power and splendor that bring honor and renown; it can also mean “reflection.” Here the one who comes from the other is the *doxa*, the reflected glory, of the source. Thus, man is the visible reflection of the power and splendor of God in whose

⁹ Significantly, after the flood God’s command “be fruitful and multiply” is directed only to men, Noah and his sons, not to men and women (9:1). As in Gen. 1:27-28, the command is followed immediately by a reference to their dominion over other creatures. Hence, Genesis provides a cosmological basis for the understanding of *kephalē* as source and as authority or dominion.

“image” he is made; that is, man’s potent being redounds to the glory of God. Woman, who is apparently neither the image of God nor the image of man, is rather, “the glory of man” (v. 7b).¹⁰ That is, because she comes from man and was created for man (vv. 8-9), the woman can and should reflect honor upon man (her husband), the one who is her *kephalē* (her “head”). How she does so is suggested by the creation narrative, which defines her as “helpmate” (Genesis 2: 18, 20): the woman reflects glory upon the man, her “head,” when she respectfully acknowledges and assents to the man’s headship. Indeed, it is as faithful “helpmate” that she gives glory to the one who is her *kephalē*.

[46] Therefore, the “logic” of Paul’s injunctions for the uncovering and covering of the heads of men and women, which is informed by the Genesis creation cosmology, is consistent with the honor-shame complex discussed above. Man, as “image” (*eikōn*) and “reflection” (*doxa*) of the generative and sovereign potency of the Creator-God, is honor-worthy; therefore, since honor requires visibility to the public eye, man should not conceal that glorious potency by covering himself. Rather, he should be uncovered, for he is, like God (and Christ) a “head” capable and worthy of public recognition, that is, honor. Woman, on the other hand, lacking the generative potency and sovereignty that is the source of honor, is not herself a *kephalē*. As man’s “helpmate,” embedded in his household and his honor from the moment of her wedding, she is covered by and for him. Therefore, she ought to be covered when in public.

[47] The notoriously difficult v. 10 states the conclusion that follows from the preceding train of thought (vv. 7b-9); thus, the reason woman ought to have authority on her head has to do with the order of creation. Leaving aside for the moment the startling “fall” of angels into the argument, the gist of v. 10 is: because, in the order of creation, the woman is “from man” and was created “on account of man,” which makes him her “head” (*kephalē*, v. 3) and she his “glory” (*doxa*, v. 7b), she ought to be a source of honor for him in the eyes of others. And now the conclusion regarding how she does so: by having “authority on her head.” Oddly, though the argument to this point uses the language of covering in reference to women (vv. 5-6), here Paul uses the peculiar phrase “authority (*exousia*) on her head” rather than a Greek term for veil, as one might expect.

[48] Since *exousia* is power and the right and freedom to exercise it, what does it mean to have “authority on one’s head”? If Paul has in mind a veil, why the peculiar use of the word “authority”? Some recent interpreters propose that *exousia* refers to the woman’s own authority, either her own power, honor, and dignity as a woman or her authority as a prophet (Hooker; Wire; Watson 2000). Neither of these proposals strikes me as plausible, however, in view of the preceding argumentation which began with a definition of the man-woman relationship in terms of the headship of the man/husband and his precedence in the

¹⁰ Despite being, in the words of the first man, “bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh” (Genesis 2:23), woman is not, according to Paul, the image or likeness of man, their shared humanity notwithstanding. This suggests that the “likeness” conceived of here is defined by maleness and masculinity and by cultural perceptions and constructions of male sexuality. The Genesis creation narratives encode potent generativity or origination and dominion, and so, headship (*kephalē*), as divine and masculine. After God, the man is first and so, source or origin of another; the woman is second, “outsourced”; thus the man is “head” (*kephalē*), the woman not “head” but under the man’s headship.

order of creation (vv. 8-9). It is far more likely that Paul refers here to the woman's veil as a visible sign of the *exousia* of the one who is her *kephalē*, i.e., her husband (cf. Fitzmyer 1957-58: 50-53).

[49] The objection typically raised against this interpretation, however, is philological, namely, that it attributes to *exousia* a passive sense that is otherwise unattested; *exousia* should indicate a power that the woman herself possesses or exercises, not one to which she is subjected (Fitzmyer 1957-58: 51). Given what we know of the Mediterranean cultural matrix, however, it is, in my view, plausible that here *exousia* means the authority of the man/husband as well as its active exercise. The opening definition (v. 3), which defined the man as "head of woman," implies his authority in relationship to her. Moreover, according to the Genesis cosmology that informs Paul's argumentation, upon woman's creation (Genesis 2:21-22) she becomes "one flesh" with the man (Genesis 2:24). If man and woman are "one flesh," woman's own head is subsumed under their one "head," namely, the man, for the purposes of their shared procreative work (to be fruitful and multiply).

[50] The plausibility of this reading of the "logic" operative here is furthered by evidence that *exousia* means the authority of husband over his wife or of the father over his children in the papyri and in Sirach (Fitzmyer 1957-58: 51). Furthermore, that a wife was conceived of as *under* the authority of her husband is suggested by the Greek phrase – *hē hypandros gynē*, literally, the wife under husband – found in biblical texts (Numbers 5:20, 29; Proverbs 6:24, 29; Sirach 9:9; 41:23), including in Paul (Romans 7:2). Thus, in public space such as the Corinthian worship assembly, the veil functions as a visible sign of "authority" by which the "head" of the "one flesh" (the couple) *actively* asserts his exclusive right to his helpmate before the eyes of men, and by which she *actively* assents to and respects his authority by wearing it, thereby reflecting *doxa* upon him. In cultural context, it is an assertion made necessary by a particular construction of the man-woman relationship – woman as sexual and procreative helpmate under the authority of her husband – and directed to the men of the assembly who have occasion to lay eyes on his woman when she prays or prophesies in the assembly. This visible marker of her *aidōs* (shame, active concern for reputation) redounds to his *doxa* (honor) insofar as it signals her respect (*aidōs*) for his authority as "head" of the household that he is honor-bound to perpetuate and protect.

[51] But what does the mysterious reference "because of the angels" have to do with a woman's obligation to wear this symbol of authority on her head? Interpreters have variously identified the angels as guardians of the order of creation, or, alternatively, based on the Qumran scrolls, guardians of cultic order who would punish any infraction, especially a physical defect such as a woman's unveiled head, tantamount to a shorn or bald head (Fitzmyer 1957-58: 56-57). Based on the *dia touto* ("Because of this . . .") with which v. 10 begins, on my reading the identity and role of the angels in relation to veiling must have something to do with the belief that woman is "from man and for man" (vv. 7-9); that is, the angels must have something to do with the sexual, procreative order established at creation. Moreover, since the subtext of Paul's argument is the creation narrative, the identity of the angels of v. 10 ought to be sought in connection with the Genesis narrative rather than the more distant Qumran scrolls. Therefore, far more likely is a reference to Genesis 6:1-4, where the sons of God, angelic beings, upon eyeing the beautiful daughters of men, take them as wives, who then bear them children. In narrative context, this strange mating

episode – a match hardly made in heaven! – serves as a prelude to the flood, which is precipitated by the increasing wickedness upon the earth (Genesis 6:5-6). Familiarity with and elaboration of the story, which afforded an explanation of evil, is attested in Jewish texts of the first centuries BCE and CE as well as in the New Testament (Jude 6; 1 Peter 3:19-20; 2 Peter 2:4) and early non-canonical Christian texts (e.g., Justin Martyr and Tertullian) (see Prusak). Tertullian (early third century), who uses 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 to argue his case for the veiling of virgins, identifies the angels of v. 10 with the fallen angels of Genesis 6 (*De virginibus velandis*).

[52] This is not to say that Paul is concerned above all, or even at all, about a sexual assault by angels, and so, threatens the women with “the angelic phallus” (contra Martin: 244-45). If Paul considers angels to be a real and present danger, I suspect they would feature more prominently in his argument. Furthermore, reference to angels elsewhere in his letters gives no indication that he considers them malevolent or threatening beings. The ample evidence of sexual immorality elsewhere in the letter (e.g., 5:1-13; 6:9-20) suggests that Paul had reason to be far more concerned about red-blooded Corinthians than about angel-watchers present in the assembly. On my reading Paul alludes to the well-known story of a “fall for women” as a kind of biblical *exemplum* to warn of the cosmic disorder that can result when women, whose erotic appeal attracted even the gaze of heavenly beings, are not covered by the veil that signals the boundaries of the marital relationship to which they belong. Unsurprisingly, the story to which Paul refers here reflects one of the fundamental assumptions of the veiling ideologies in the Mediterranean (see above): that women are notorious confounders of the boundaries of order. Rhetorically, the allusion to this story allows Paul to add still more scriptural weight to his argument from the order of creation.

[53] In the final two verses of the argument Paul sets forth a kind of summary conclusion of the essential point that flows from the preceding train of thought: “neither woman without man nor man without woman in the Lord” (v. 11). In other words, man and woman, created by God to become “one flesh” as husband and wife (Genesis 1-2), belong together; this remains the case “in the Lord,” that is, in the community of faith in which salvation by Christ is experienced and proclaimed. Therefore, a woman ought not appear to be separate from or without her “head” by removing the veil that clarifies her status under his “authority” (*exousia*). As has been his pattern, Paul follows the point with a word of explanation that reiterates points made in the preceding argument: “for just as the woman [is] from the man, so the man [is] through the woman; but all things [are] from God.” The initial “for just as woman from the man” recalls once again, as in v. 8, the divinely wrought order of creation: woman comes from the man’s rib. But here at the climax of the argument, that affirmation is complemented by a reference to human procreation (“so the man through the woman”) to which creation was “ordered” and for which woman was given to man as helpmate.

[54] Based on this recognition of woman’s contribution to human procreation (v. 12), some commentators read Paul as retreating from or at least softening his hierarchical argument by a more egalitarian sentiment. Within the cultural frame that Delaney’s analysis and the Genesis narrative affords, I suggest, rather, that this concluding affirmation is the “logical” extension of the preceding argument and hierarchic conceptuality. Granted, “For just as woman from man, so man through woman,” insofar as it acknowledges woman’s necessary

role in human procreation, is an affirmation of man's and woman's interdependence in the procreative work. That this interdependence does not, however, nullify the gendered hierarchy of headship (v. 3) is indicated by the different prepositions (*ek* and *dia*) used to express the man's and woman's roles. In the order of creation, woman is "from man" (*ek tou andros*), a point previously made (v. 8) and here reaffirmed; in the order of human procreation that results, however, the man is not "from" (*ek*) woman, which would imply "source," and so, too, "head," but "through the woman" (*dia tēs gynaikos*). Linguistically, this change in preposition, from *ek* to *dia*, serves to differentiate woman's role from that of man. This differentiation implies not equality but hierarchy, as indicated by use of the preposition *ek* in the final affirmation of the argument, "all things are from God," *ek theou*), thereby creating a correlation between man and God, replicating that in v. 3, where both man and God, but not woman, are defined as "heads." In Greek, *ek* indicates immediate origin or agent regarded as source, while *dia* plus the genitive, the form used here with reference to the woman, is used of an agent employed to bring about an intended result, that is, for instrumental cause (the same use of *ek* and *dia* is also found in 1 Corinthians 8:6). Thus, man, like God, is source or origin, "first cause," if you will, whereas woman is an instrumental cause, not herself the origin or source in the way man (or God) is. Within the Mediterranean cultural "frame" these different procreative roles are perceived in terms of male agency (the man as sower of seed, begetter of life) and female receptivity (the woman as nurturant soil). This understanding of the hierarchic interdependence of man and woman in procreation reflects the Genesis cosmology according to which woman is created "for the sake of man," as the necessary and indispensable instrument for his being fruitful and multiplying.

[55] Rhetorically, the final statement, "but all things are from God," amounts to a theological trump card or clincher to the argument. It may be read as affirming that man and woman are only relative causes of each other (Watson 2000: 532), for God is the ultimate cause of each and all. More importantly, it implies that the relationship of man and woman – with man as "head" (*kephalē*) and woman under his authority (*exousia*) for the purposes of procreation – has its origin, its source, in the Creator-God, who made it so "in the beginning." Thus, the original order of creation is an order of procreation, the boundaries of which are inscribed on the bodies of men and women, or more precisely, on the "one flesh" that man and woman become in marriage. That order has not, in Paul's view, been abrogated by the new creation "in the Lord," and it is the boundaries of that sexual, procreative order, established "in the beginning" (Genesis 1-2) and violated shortly thereafter (Genesis 6:1-4), that Paul sees threatened by the uncovered heads of women prophets.

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