

Veiling among Men in Roman Corinth: 1 Corinthians 11:4 and the Potential Problem of East Meeting West

PRESTON T. MASSEY

ptmassey@gmail.com

Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, IN 46953

Close attention to the original meaning of the words *κατακαλύπτω* (1 Cor 11:6) and *κατὰ κεφαλῆς ἔχων* (1 Cor 11:4) permits a translation only of a material head covering. These words do not describe the process of letting hair hang down loosely. These words are consistently used in Classical and Hellenistic Greek to describe the action of covering the head with a textile covering of some kind. In spite of sustained efforts by advocates, the long-hair theory still has not succeeded in gaining an entry into standard reference works. The original edition of BAGD in 1957, the revised edition in 1979, and the more recent edition of BDAG in 2000 all support the view that the text of 1 Cor 11:2–16 describes an artificial textile head covering of some kind.

In 1988, Richard Oster published a provocative article detailing the cultural practice of Roman men wearing head coverings in a liturgical setting.¹ His study called attention to the value of the artifactual evidence as well as the many literary texts documenting the widespread use of veiling among Roman men. His purpose was to establish the fact that it was obligatory for elite Roman men in certain ritual settings to wear a head covering. His article did not focus on the element of shame. He followed up this study with a second contribution in 1992, bemoaning the “little concern” that New Testament scholarship had shown with regard to the artifacts of the Greco-Roman world.² In a similar vein, David Gill in 1990 registered his own evaluation of Roman portraiture, arguing that texts in 1 Corinthians should be interpreted against the backdrop of Corinth as a Roman colony, not a

¹ Richard E. Oster, “When Men Wore Veils to Worship: The Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11.4,” *NTS* 34 (1988): 481–505.

² Richard E. Oster, “Use, Misuse and Neglect of Archaeological Evidence in Some Modern Works on 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 7,1–5; 8,10; 11,2–16; 12,14–26),” *ZNW* 83 (1992): 52–73, here 52.

Greek city.³ He applied this model to both male and female head coverings. The ongoing scholarly focus on cultural issues involving the appropriateness of women's dress, however, resulted in the neglect of the work of Oster and Gill. In 2010, Mark Finney took up the question again in a well-argued article.⁴ I believe that Finney's study shifts the interest away from an exclusive attention on veiling practice among women and draws attention to the neglected issue of male veiling. Finney provides scholarly documentation and references to ancient sources that make it difficult to discredit the thesis that some Roman men did, in fact, have the serious obligation of appearing before a deity with their heads covered. Finney acknowledges his debt to the previous work of Oster and Gill, as well as of Anthony Thiselton and Craig Keener.⁵ He takes exception to the works of Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, Richard Hays, and Gordon Fee, who all argued that the text is discussing long hair, not veiling.⁶ Although the issue of women's dress has dominated the discussion of this text, Oster anticipated the discussion of male head coverings by a margin of over twenty-five years. Finney, rather than avoiding the topic, as many have done, has faced the issue.

The present study is based on the foundational work of Oster, Gill, and Finney. These three scholars articulate the view that head coverings for a Roman male were for the specific purpose of prayer and offering a sacrifice to their gods. Finney states

³David W. J. Gill, "The Importance of Roman Portraiture for Head-Coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *TynBul* 41 (1990): 245–60, esp. 245. See also his follow-up article, "In Search of the Social Élite in the Corinthian Church," *TynBul* 44 (1993): 323–37, esp. 327: "The Romanness of the colony should not be underestimated." See also Michael D. Dixon, "A New Latin and Greek Inscription from Corinth," *Hesperia* 69 (2000): 335–42, esp. 338 n. 6: "of the 104 inscriptions datable prior to Hadrian's reign, only three were inscribed in Greek." See also the excellent article by R. A. Kearsley, "Women in the Public Life in the Roman East: Iunia Theodora, Claudia Metrodora, and Phoebe, Benefactress of Paul," *TynBul* 50 (1999): 189–211. For the argument that Roman Corinth was neither completely Greek nor completely Roman, see Benjamin W. Millis, "The Social and Ethnic Origins of the Colonists in Early Roman Corinth," in *Corinth in Context: Comparative Studies on Religion and Society*, ed. Steven J. Friesen, Daniel N. Schowalter, and James C. Walters, *NovTSup* 135 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 13–35.

⁴Mark Finney, "Honour, Head-Coverings and Headship: 1 Corinthians 11.2–16 in Its Social Context," *JSNT* 33 (2010): 31–58.

⁵Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 825; Craig S. Keener, *1–2 Corinthians*, NCBiC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 93. For David Gill, see Finney's references, "Honor, Head-Coverings," 35–37.

⁶Finney ("Honor, Head-Coverings," 36 n. 22, 41 n. 39, and 45 n. 55) cites Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "1 Corinthians 11.2–16 Once Again," *CBQ* 50 (1988): 265–74, esp. 267; Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians*, IBC (Louisville: John Knox, 1997), 186; and Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 507, where Fee writes: "There is almost no evidence (painting, reliefs, statuary, etc.) that men in any of the cultures (Greek, Roman, Jew) covered their heads." This is a rather astounding claim, perhaps one that Fee would like now to retract.

the prevalent view: “it may be reasonable to conclude that the *capito velato* is specific to those taking a central and active role in the service and, as such, stands as an unmistakable sign of status and honour.”⁷ Finney adds the word “specific” to his discussion, indicating that Roman men did not make it a practice to wear head coverings outside of the context of a worship setting.⁸ There may have been exceptions to this general practice depending on the particular situation. Although a material textile cloth (a Roman toga) would be the suitable and preferable covering for the head, the example of Julius Caesar shows that a helmet could suffice (Appian, *Bell. civ.* 2.104).

What more can be said that could possibly advance the discussion? In the present study, I will address the following three questions: (1) To what extent would male head-covering ideology in Greek and Roman cultures be at loggerheads with the text of 1 Cor 11:4? (2) To what extent would wearing a veil for a man create tensions of shame and conflict in the church in Roman Corinth? And (3) what is the specific issue regarding male sartorial practice? I will first address the controversial and long-standing issue of whether the verse refers to veils, long hair, or both.

I. DEFINING THE TERMS OF THE DISCUSSION: THE VOCABULARY OF VEILING

The context of 1 Cor 11:2–16 concerns proper dress while at worship. The etiquette of proper head coverings during the act of prayer suggests that veiling is in view, not the everyday styling of hair or the length of hair.⁹ Roman liturgical settings would be emotionally charged with specific requirements for ritual dress and behavior. There is little evidence to suggest that hairstyles were a factor in formal sacramental activity. I could find no text involving prayer to Greek or Roman gods in which hairstyles or length of hair was ever a matter of concern.¹⁰

⁷ Finney, “Honor, Head-Coverings,” 37. See also Bruce Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 122: “This evidence of the material culture patently demonstrates that the practice of men covering their heads in the context of prayer and prophecy was a common pattern of Roman piety and widespread during the late Republican and early Empire.”

⁸ Both Oster (“When Men Wore Veils,” 501 n. 1) and Finney (“Honor, Head-Coverings,” 37 n. 26) cite the text of Lucretius, *De rerum natura* 5.1198: *nec pietas ullast velatum saepe videri* (“It is no piety to show oneself with covered head”). What does Lucretius mean by this? Lucretius is faulting hypocrisy by asserting that the wearing of a proscribed religious dress does not guarantee the true spirit of Roman religion.

⁹ Plutarch makes a distinction between the appearance of head and hair by using different verbs and adjectives: ἀπαρακαλύτω τῇ κεφαλῇ for veiling or unveiling the head; καὶ ταῖς κόμαις λελυμέναις for describing the hair (*Quaest. rom.* 13–14 [266F–267A]).

¹⁰ Furthermore, it is rare to find a case among Roman men in which the hair is specifically

For example, a rare exception in which hair is actually mentioned is the text of Vergil's *Aeneid* 3.405: "purpureo velare comas adopertus amictu" ("veil your hair with a covering of purple robe").¹¹ Most likely the word *comas* ("hair") is poetic metonymy for *caput* ("head"). There is no concern for a proper hairstyle in the devotional rite.

By contrast, head coverings were a critical issue. Care was taken with regard to the fabric used for the head covering: it must have the color purple and it must be capable of blocking out hostile faces.¹² In *Aen.* 3.545, Vergil mentions that the first prayers to Juno were made with heads covered in a Phrygian mantle ("capita ante aras Phrygio velamur amictu"). When a Roman is about to pray, he first draws a cloak over his head before raising his hands to heaven.¹³ His hair is typically not mentioned in the ritual, only his head. Even Josephus mentions covering the head as the customary practice for Roman leaders in the act of praying.¹⁴ I argue, therefore, that the occasion of prayer with head coverings is the issue in 1 Cor 11:4. *κατακαλύπτω* is never used in ancient Greek to describe the covering of either a man's or woman's head with hair; neither is the expression *κατὰ κεφαλῆς ἔχων* ever

mentioned as covered in a nonliturgical context. The only one that I could find was in Vergil's *Aeneid* (11.77), which describes the funeral of Pallas: Aeneas, desiring to give Pallas an honorable burial with the proper last rites ("supremum ... honorem"), covers the hair of the deceased with a mantle ("comas obnubit amictu"). A possible second text is in Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 24.26.18, where some soldiers, while they eat, are forced to wear their hair fashioned with white woolen headbands ("pilleati aut lana alba velatis capitibus").

¹¹In *Aen.* 3.174, the gods (*deorum* in 3.172) have their heads (*comas*, their "hair") covered. It may be that Vergil conceives this in his vision and then transfers it to humans. Perhaps this was to distinguish Roman men from the Greeks, who do not veil their heads. Macrobius states that sacrifice is done with "uncovered head" ("aperto capite") owing to its foreign origin (*Sat.* 1.10.22); he identifies the original rite of Saturnalia as coming from Greece and, therefore, as being administered "aperto capite" (1.8.2). See also *Aen.* 2.721–723, in which a yellowed lion's skin is used to cover a "bowed neck" ("subiectaque colla"); 11.100 states, "Iamque oratores aderant ex urbe Latina, velati ramis oleae veniamque rogantes" ("And now pleaders/ambassadors came from the city of Latin, veiled with olive boughs and pleading for favor"). This seems to be the Roman way: when asking for grace and favor, either from gods or men, you veil your head in some appropriate fashion. Similar texts are found in *Aen.* 7.154 and 8.260–290.

¹²Michael D. Goulder argues just the opposite: the veil or hood is drawn down over the face for both males and females (*Paul and the Competing Mission in Corinth*, Library of Pauline Studies [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001], 136–37).

¹³See Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 15.9.2: μέλλων δ' ἀπιέναι τήν τε περιβολήν κατὰ κεφαλῆς εἴλκυσε καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἀνασχών εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, "As he was about to depart, he drew his cloak down over his head and raised his hand(s) to heaven" (my translation).

¹⁴In the *Jewish War* (7.128), Josephus describes Vespasian covering most of his head while praying: τὸ πλεόν τῆς κεφαλῆς μέρος ἐπικαλυψάμενος εὐχὰς ἐποιήσατο τὰς νευνομισμένας, "[with his cloak/mantle] he veiled most of his head [the greater part] and then prayed the customary prayers" (my translation). Vespasian's prayer is then followed by Titus praying in like manner.

used in ancient Greek to describe hair coming down. On the contrary, these words describe the covering of the head with a material veil.¹⁵

Turning now to the Latin side, there are four principal verbs to describe the action of covering or uncovering the head of Roman men: *caput obnubere*, *caput adopenire/apertire*, *caput obvolvere*, and *caput velare*.¹⁶ Generally speaking, the safe assumption is that the verb alone describes adequately the action of covering or uncovering for men; with women, however, additional nouns normally accompany the verbs. Exceptions may be found for each case.

What can be said other than pedestrian documentation?¹⁷ I begin with the Roman historian Livy. His *Ab urbe condita* contains seven specific references to *caput velare*.¹⁸ Counting up all other alternative terms for veiling, the total number comes to fourteen references to head coverings in Livy,¹⁹ and all of these texts describe only men.²⁰ This is a striking and important consistency. Not one single text refers to a woman.²¹ One clear implication is that head coverings for Romans were not only an accepted part of their culture but also a requirement in ritual settings.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HEAD COVERINGS FOR ROMAN MEN

What meaning or meanings did Romans attach to the wearing of a head covering by males? The following five rubrics will categorize the various nuances of head coverings for Roman men. The three principal studies mentioned above

¹⁵For detailed discussion of the vocabulary of this text, see Preston T. Massey, "The Meaning of κατακαλύπτω and κατὰ κεφαλῆς ἔχων in 1 Cor 11.2–16," *NTS* 53 (2007): 502–23, esp. 511–12.

¹⁶For a listing of these terms, see Heinrich Freier, *Caput Velare* (inaugural diss., Tübingen, 1963), 36–38. See also his conclusion (174): "Abschließend darf festgestellt werden: Der Ausdruck *caput velare* ist weithin ein *terminus technicus* für die Verhüllung des Hauptes, wie sie am häufigsten bei Gelübde, Gebet, und Opfer *Romano ritu* zu finden ist."

¹⁷For documentation not discussed elsewhere in this article, see Valerius Flaccus, *Argon.* 2.254, 5.97; Ovid, *Metam.* 1.382, *Fast.* 3.362; Velleius Paterculus, *Hist. rom.* 2.4.6; Plautus, *Amph.* 1095; Plutarch, *Num.* 7.2; Seneca, *Herc. fur.* 355; Suetonius, *Cal.* 51.1; Vergil, *Aen.* 8.277–279.

¹⁸Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 1.18.7; 1.32.6; 1.36.5; 8.9.5; 10.7.10; 23.19.18; 24.16.18.

¹⁹Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 1.18.7; 1.26.6, 11, 13; 1.32.6; 1.36.5; 2.39.12; 2.54.5; 8.9.5; 10.7.10; 22.1.4; 23.10.7; 23.19.18; 24.16.18.

²⁰Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 1.18.7 (an augur: *augur*); 1.26.6, 11, 13 (Horatius); 1.32.6 (an envoy: *Legatus*); 1.36.5 (a statue of Attus); 2.39.12 (priests: *sacerdotes*); 2.54.5 (those doomed to death); 8.12.11 (plebeians: *multi ex plebe*); 8.9.5 (Decius); 10.7.10 (a man: *qui*); 22.1.4 (perhaps a wig on Hannibal: *tegumenta capitis*); 23.10.7 (Decius Magius); 23.19.18 (Marcus Anicius); 24.16.18 (soldiers). I have not included the freedman's cap (30.45.5: *pilleo capiti*) as part of this count.

²¹Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 35.34.7 may be an exception. What undermines confidence and creates doubt is that this family of wife and children are described as "tenentes velamenta supplicum" ("carrying or holding," not wearing). Further, it is not just the wife but also the children who are carrying these objects.

(Oster, Gill, and Finney) focused mainly on the cultural fact of male headdresses; less attention was paid to the specific issue of shame. This section will devote more attention to the various aspects and nuances of shame involving head coverings among Roman males.

A. Voluntary Veiling Can Indicate a Desire to Conceal Feelings of Shame

Whether Greek, Roman, or Jewish, under certain conditions all three cultures would agree that covering the head for a male indicates the intention to conceal personal feelings of shame and embarrassment.²² From the Roman point of view, but helpfully narrated in Greek, Dio Cassius (*Hist. rom.* 58.27.3) describes Nero as he endeavors to flee for his life: after dressing himself in shabby clothing and covering his head (*κατακεκαλυμμένος*), he rides off into the night. Having lost his dignity and fearing for his life, Nero dresses himself to both conceal his identity and hide his feelings of shame. In a similar manner, Horace, referring to Damasippus, states, “for after my business failed and I wanted to cover up my head and fling myself into the river” (“nam male re gesta cum vellem mittere operio me capite in flumen”; *Sat.* 2.3.37). Livy describes plebeians who, having lost all hope and in despair, covered their heads (*capibus obvolutis*) and then threw themselves into the Tiber (4.12.11). Here we have the notions of shame, despair, and male veiling. A further case in point is the account of Quintus Curtius in his narrative concerning the wife of Darius who has just been reported as dead (*Hist. Alex.* 4.10.34).²³ Darius, overcome with grief, begins to weep. In order to conceal his misery, he covers his head (*capite*

²² For Greeks, covering one's head out of shame can be traced back to Homer. The Homeric expression *κατὰ κράτα καλυψάμενος* (“[Odysseus] would again cover his head”) is found in *Od.* 8.92. Homer mentions specifically that it was out of shame (*αἰδέτο*) that Odysseus covered his head. Richard John Cunliffe describes the word *κάρη* as defining the head (*κράτα* is the accusative singular) (“*κάρη*,” *A Lexicon of the Homeric Dialect* [1924; new ed., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980], 212). This association of male shame with veiling provides a second bridge to the biblical text. The information from the archaic Greek tradition reinforces the view that *κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχων* (or its Homeric counterpart *κατὰ κρήθεν*) is used to describe male shame when used along with a material head covering.

For Roman tradition, Dio Cassius's account (*Hist. rom.* 42.4.5) of the end of Pompey's life may illustrate the point. Pompey, having suffered heavy losses at the hands of Caesar, flees to Egypt. Here, however, he meets an unfortunate end. Seeing that the Egyptians are going to take his life, he suddenly veils himself (*συνεκαλύψατο*). Rather than offer resistance, his last act is to veil himself, which suggests feelings of shame.

For Jewish evidence, see Massey, “Meaning of *κατακάλυπτω*,” 502–23.

²³ It is clear from this text that Curtius shows Darius first covering his head while he cries over the loss of his wife. Then Darius, removing his cloak from his face (*veste ab ore reiecta*), lifts his hands to heaven. Curtius records a similar case in 5.12.8 in which Darius veils his head (*capite velato*) in order not to see Artabazus departing.

velato).²⁴ An arresting example further detailing this convention is Plutarch's *Apoph. rom.* 13 (200F):

τῆς νεῶς ἀποβὰς ἐβάδιζε κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχων τὸ ἱμάτιον, ἡξίον ἀποκαλύψασθαι περιθέοντες οἱ Ἀλεξανδρεῖς καὶ δεῖξαι ποθοῦσιν αὐτοῖς τὸ πρόσωπον

Deboarding the ship, he went on his way with his head covered with a *himation*; the Alexandrians, upon surrounding him, demanded that he unveil himself and show his face to their wishful eyes. (my translation)

Plutarch is describing the notable Roman personality Scipio, who, because of his notoriety as a Roman general, apparently does not want to draw attention to himself and so covers his head by pulling his ἱμάτιον over his head (κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχων τὸ ἱμάτιον). Since Scipio is a Roman of considerable importance, we must assume that Plutarch has substituted the Greek ἱμάτιον for the Roman toga. Scipio may have also drawn his toga up closer around his face, perhaps creating a shadowy and unrecognizable appearance. In other words, he wants to travel incognito. The attempt at concealment does not work; the Alexandrians want a closer look at this famous person. At first glance, this is a puzzling picture. Why would Scipio want to veil himself? This is certainly not a liturgical setting. His behavior appears linked to his wishes to remain unrecognized. But why? In 16 (201C), Plutarch provides a motivation for Scipio's covering of his head: Scipio was going about with a black cloak (σάγον ... μέλανα) pinned around him, saying that he is "in mourning over the disgrace of the army" (πενθεῖν τὴν τοῦ στρατεύματος αἰσχύνην λέγων) (trans. Babbitt, LCL).

Tying these two Plutarchean texts together, we note several things. First, the language of κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχων τὸ ἱμάτιον approximates the language of 1 Cor 11:4. The only difference is that Plutarch adds the name of the garment. Second, both texts connect to issues of shame. Scipio, however, exercises the prerogative of voluntarily veiling himself owing to feelings of embarrassment over the performance of his army. This usage has a possible connection to the situation at Corinth. Paul, to the contrary, indicates that such symbolic manifestations of shame are inappropriate for a worship setting. In other words, it is shameful to bring shame into a worship setting by insinuating embarrassment. If a male symbolically

²⁴Dio Cassius (*Hist. rom.* 44.19.5) introduces us to a gesture not easy to interpret. In his account of the assassination of Julius Caesar, he records that Caesar was so caught off guard by the surprise attack that he had time to do only one thing before succumbing: veil himself (συγκαλυψάμενον). What is the basis of his reaction? Is this an instinctive defensive measure in order to protect himself, a veiling in order to conceal the shame of the moment, or even a gesture in anticipation of meeting the gods? Similarly, Lucan (*Bell. civ.* 8.614–617), poetically describes the assassination of Pompey as he covers both eyes and head from the assassin's blows ("involvit voltus atque, indignatus apertum fortunae praeberet caput"). According to Lucan, Pompey does this in order not to allow any tears to mar his eternal glory. Suetonius (*Jul.* 82.2) offers no commentary on the significance of the head covering.

covered his head in a worship setting owing to feelings of embarrassment, this could be construed as self-righteous displeasure over the behavior of other believers.²⁵ Or, this covering of the head by a male or males could indicate displeasure and embarrassment in the event of the women removing their head coverings.

There is one other aspect to consider. It is clear that some Roman officials never removed their head coverings.²⁶ Yet, outside of a religious and liturgical context, Roman men did not traditionally veil their heads.²⁷ Why would this be appropriate inside such a setting and against custom outside such a setting? An examination of the key word *nupta* and its cognates may help with this question. *Nupta* as a noun conveys the idea of a wife;²⁸ the cognate *nuptia* describes the wedding ceremony itself.²⁹ Other derivatives from this root include *pronuba* (an attendant of the bride, perhaps the modern “maid of honor”) and *conubium* (the condition of living together but not married). As an adjective, *nupta* defines the status of a woman who is married; it can also be used metaphorically. Martial (*Ep.* 8.12) says, “Uxorem quare locupletem ducere nolim quaeritis? uxori nubere nolo meae.” W. Ker in the LCL translates “uxori nubere nolo meae” as “I am unwilling to take my wife as a husband.” The translation is more literally, “I am unwilling to veil myself to my wife.” *Nubere* by extrapolation suggests the idea of “covering like a cloud,” as the noun (*nubes*) is a cloud.³⁰ (Note: this is my own judgment on the word.) By extension, it means “to veil.” By further extension, it means “to marry.”³¹ The point of Martial’s Latin is that, by accepting a veil in marriage, a married

²⁵ Appian, *Bell. civ.* 2.104: “Caesar, lifting his hands to heaven, implored all the gods that his many glorious deeds be not stained by this single disaster. Approaching his soldiers, he exhorted them, removing his helmet and shaming them” (ὁ Καῖσαρ ἰκέτευε, τὰς χεῖρας ἐς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνίσχων, μὴ ἐνὶ πονῷ τῶδε πολλὰ καὶ λαμπρὰ ἔργα μίῃναι, καὶ τοὺς στρατιώτας ἐπιθέων παρεκάλει τό τε κράνος τῆς κεφαλῆς ἀφαιρῶν ἐς πρόσωπον ἐδυσώπει) (trans. White, LCL, adapted). Caesar leaves his helmet on while appealing to the gods, yet he removes his helmet in order to berate his soldiers. If it is possible from this example to make a connection to Roman Corinth, it may be that a Roman believer at Corinth, offended at unacceptable behavior, might remove his head covering at the actual moment of berating.

²⁶ Appian (*Bell. civ.* 65), states the information as he has received it: the priest of Jupiter alone (μόνος) wore the flamen’s cap at all times (αἰεὶ). Aulus Gellius (10.15.17) supplements this with the additional information that every day is a holy day for the Dialis and, therefore allegedly, he may not go outside his house “without his cap” (*sine apice*). See also Varro, *Ling.* 5.84.

²⁷ See Cicero, *Sen.* 34: “nullo imbri, nullo frigore adduci ut capite operto sit” (“no rain or cold can induce him to cover his head”), describing ninety-year-old Masinissa, who does not wear a head covering even in bad weather.

²⁸ Pliny (*Ep.* 6.33.2) describes Attia Viriola as a “femina splendide nata, nupta praetorio viro” (“a woman of fine birth, the wife of a praetorian senator”).

²⁹ Tacitus (*Ann.* 14.63) mentions, “primum nuptiarum dies” (“the first day of marriage”). See also his *Ann.* 12.25: “conciliator nuptiarum” (“a matchmaker”). See also Pliny, *Ep.* 4.2.7.

³⁰ Thus the word is a fitting poetic metaphor for concealing the face of the sun on a cloudy day (Ovid, *Metam.* 5.570). By extension, the removal of the *nubes* reveals a woman’s face and hair.

³¹ Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 1.46.5: his duobus ... duae Tulliae regis filiae nupserant (“These two

woman places herself under subjection to her husband and is thereby willing to be submissive to him. Martial's epigram describes, through the metaphor of veiling, a man's unwillingness to be subject to a woman. This would further indicate that under normal circumstances a married man did not veil himself while his wife did.³²

From a Roman point of view covering the head is a potential symbol of shame for a married man of nonelite status. This would hold true as well for a Greek man. The relationship between 1 Cor 11:4 (πᾶς ἀνὴρ προσευχόμενος ἢ προφητεύων κατὰ κεφαλῆς ἔχων καταισχύνει τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ) and 11:5 (πᾶσα δὲ γυνὴ προσευχομένη ἢ προφητεύουσα ἀκατακαλύπτω τῇ κεφαλῇ καταισχύνει τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς) now merits closer scrutiny. Has the behavior described in verse 5 caused the behavior in verse 4? Although the order of actual practice (though not the theological order) is in reverse, is there a cause-and-effect relationship between the two behaviors? If a married woman took the initiative by first uncovering her head independent of her husband's will, this could precipitate a reciprocal response on the man's part to cover his head. He would then be substituting the status of a respected married man for the shame of one who is dishonored. The cumulative effect would be a double dose of shame: the shame of her uncovering would result in the corresponding shame of his covering. Her actions would telegraph a message of immodesty; his actions would signal embarrassment and possible forfeiture of male leadership and respect among male peers. The particular context and sequence would determine how others would interpret the gesture. The key point, however, is the possibility of additional shame intruding into the assembly if a married man placed a covering over his head, provided his wife first removed hers. The associations connoted by Roman and Greek customs on this point would be similar.

Regarding the question whether 1 Cor 11:4–5 emphasizes one gender over the other or whether there is an equal distribution of paraenetic teaching, David E. Garland argues for an emphasis on the woman. He isolates four particular points from the text: (1) "Paul oscillates back and forth with statements about men and women, but this pattern is broken in 11:13 with a statement about the woman but none about the man."³³ (2) After admonishing the woman to cover herself, Paul supplements this statement with additional reasons in verses 5 and 6 but omits these in the application for the man. (3) After mentioning the enigmatic and surprising reference to angels in verse 10, Garland says that there is "no comparable explanation" given for why men should not be covered. (4) Finally, he calls attention to the fact that the only imperatives in the text are addressed to women, one in verse 13 and the other in verse 6. My own judgment supports Garland's exposition. The

... married the two Tullias, daughters of the king"). See also Martial, *Epigram* 6.7: et nubit decimo iam Telesilla viro. Quae nubit totiens, non nubit: adultera lege est.

³²The adjective *nupta* also suggests a continuing condition, at least when out in public. It would make little sense to refer to a married woman as a *nupta* if this description was confined only to the singular moment of a wedding ceremony.

³³David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 507–8.

text, it may be confidently stated, is concerned primarily with the appropriateness of a married woman's dress at worship.³⁴ Pace Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, who argued, "In fact, men figure equally prominently in this section,"³⁵ there is clearly not an equal distribution of concern in the text. Rather, there is an uneven emphasis on women over men. If married women took the first step in removing their veils, this could account for the emphasis on women in the text. This is one possible way of interpreting both conditions of shame.

B. Violation of Ritual Protocols Can Lead to Feelings of Shame and Humiliation

There are further nuances to consider. In some cases shame or embarrassment can be the result of an accident. The *Scriptores historiae augustae* records Hadrian suffering such an embarrassment when his toga slipped off of his head ("praetexta sponte delapsa caput ei aperuit") in a public ceremony (Hadrian 26.6). Because of the other unfortunate things going on in his life, the embarrassment at this unintended social gaffe gave Hadrian a premonition of his own death. The mere slippage of his toga was perceived as a moment of embarrassing consequence. A similar incident is reported by Livy (*Ab urbe cond.* 5.21.16) regarding Camillus, who, in the act of a public prayer, slipped and fell. Witnesses to this faux pas interpreted the misstep as pointing to the condemnation of Camillus. Although Livy does not mention a veil falling off the head, such must have been the case. Of significance also is the salient fact that Camillus is pictured in the act of praying while wearing a veil. Regarding this incident, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. rom.* 12.16.4) states, ὁ Κάμιλλος νόμοις ἐπειδὴ τὴν εὐχὴν ἐποιήσατο καὶ κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς εἴλκυσε τὸ ἱμάτιον ἐβούλετο μὲν στραφῆναι ("It was in accordance with the traditional usages, then, that Camillus, after making his prayer and drawing his garment down over his head, wished to turn his back"). These awkward incidents indicate that there were strict protocols attached to the formality of ceremonial prayers by persons of elite status.³⁶

Once again, from a Roman point of view, there are conditions when veiling would be entirely inappropriate and therefore shameful. Dio Cassius (*Hist. rom.* 59.27.5) records the plight of one Vitellius, who was summoned by Gaius to be put to death. In order to save his life, he goes through the following motions: first, he

³⁴See Preston T. Massey, "Gender versus Marital Concerns: Does 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 Address the Issues of Male/Female or Husband/Wife?," *TynBul* 64 (2013): 239–56.

³⁵Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Sex and Logic in I Corinthians 11:2–16," *CBQ* 42 (1980): 482–500, here 483.

³⁶See also Valerius Maximus, *Mem.* 1.1.5, who mentions a Q. Sulpicius who, allowing his "mitre" (*apex*) to slip off of his head while in the act of sacrifice, suffered the loss of his priestly office. In *Mem.* 1.1.8, Valerius follows up with a commentary that Romans were scrupulous about the smallest matters in religious rite ("tam scrupulosa cura parvula").

dresses beneath his “glory” (σχηματίσας ... καὶ ἐλάττων αὐτῷ τῆς δοξῆς φανῆναι). Next, Vitellius falls at the emperor’s feet and worships him (προσπεσὼν ... καὶ προσκυνήσας). Finally, he promises that if his life is spared, he will offer a sacrifice to Gaius (ἂν περισωθῇ, θύσειν αὐτῷ). Dio ends this humiliating account by attributing to Vitellius the ignoble distinction of surpassing all others in *κολακεία*, which is an insincere expression of fawning or flattery. Heinrich Freier conjectures that this humiliating act must have involved veiling the head: “wird wohl auch die Verhüllung des Hauptes verstanden werden müssen.”³⁷ Suetonius (*Vit.* 2.5) reports similar details regarding Vitellius. Veiling before men in an insincere act of devotion in order to manipulate others would be considered shameful.

C. Ritual Head Coverings for a Roman Male Indicate a Desire to Shield One’s Eyes from Hostile Omens

Vergil’s *Aeneid* (3.398–405) evidences several elements that Romans attributed to the original significance of male veiling: “purpureo velare comas adopertus amictu” (“veil your hair with a covering of purple robe” [trans. Fairclough, LCL, modified]). Vergil does not stop there; he adds, “ne qua inter sanctos ignis in honore deorum hostilis facies occurrat et omina tubet” (“lest among the holy fires in worship of the gods no hostile face may occur and disturb the omens”). Here there is a reason for the veiling: to conceal a possible “hostile face” and so upset the ritual. This hostile face is stated in unmistakable terms: it is clearly the “evil Greeks” (*malis ... Graeis*). Vergil, picturing Aeneas on hostile Greek soil, devises a means whereby the liturgist could avoid the distraction of a hostile presence whose sudden appearance would then disturb the omens.³⁸ Since the purpose of the sacrifice was to secure the goodwill of the gods, bad omens would disturb or perhaps offend. In this case, a bad omen could be the sudden appearance of a Greek!

Plutarch was certainly aware of the motive among Romans for wearing a veil. He states in *Quaest. rom.* 10 (266D) that, during an act of worship, Romans pull their togas over their head (τῇ ἐπικρύψει τῆς κεφαλῆς) or their ears (τῶν ὠτῶν) as a precaution (ἐφυλάττοντο) against bad omens (ἀπαίσιον). A toga coming down from the head would provide covering for both eyes and ears. Protection for the eyes would shield the sacrificant from seeing the unwanted sight; protection for the ears would muffle any approaching undesirable sound. Plutarch further develops this very thought in 266C:

Διὰ τί τοὺς θεοὺς προσκυνοῦντες ἐπικαλύπτονται τὴν κεφαλὴν, τῶν δ’ ἀνθρώπων τοῖς ἀξίοις τιμῆς ἀπαντῶντες, ἂν τύχωσιν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχοντες τὸ ἰμάτιον, ἀποκαλύπτονται;

³⁷Freier, *Caput Velare*. 121.

³⁸See *ibid.*, 75: “Dies ist auch die übereinstimmende Erklärung für diesen Brauch in der Antike, wenn seine Einführung durch Aeneas erwähnt wird.”

Τοῦτο γὰρ ἔοικε κάκεινην ἐπιτείνειν τὴν ἀπορίαν. εἰ μὲν οὖν ὁ περὶ Αἰνείου λεγόμενος λόγος ἀληθής ἐστιν, ὅτι τοῦ Διομήδους παρεξιόντος ἐπικαλυψάμενος τὴν θυσίαν ἐπετέλεσε, λόγον ἔχει καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ τῷ συγκαλύπτεσθαι πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους τὸ τοῖς φίλοις καὶ ἀγαθοῖς ἐντυγχάνοντας ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι.

Why is it that when they worship the gods, they cover their heads, but when they meet any of their fellow men worthy of honour, if they happen to have the toga over the head, they uncover?

This second fact seems to intensify the difficulty of the first. If, then, the tale told of Aeneas is true, that, when Diomedes passed by, he covered his head and completed the sacrifice, it is reasonable and consistent with the covering of one's head in the presence of an enemy that men who meet good men and their friends should uncover. (trans. Babbitt, LCL)

The above text has a number of helpful connections to Roman Corinth. First, Plutarch uses six different expressions to describe either the covering or uncovering of the head with a material garment: ἐπικαλύπτονται τὴν κεφαλὴν, ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχοντες τὸ ἱμάτιον, ἀποκαλύπτονται, ἐπικαλυψάμενος, συγκαλύπτεσθαι, and ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι. Clearly, veiling of the head with a garment is the subject under discussion. The words τὴν κεφαλὴν and τὸ ἱμάτιον leave no doubt that covering the head with a ἱμάτιον is the topic. Second, the context is the worship of the Roman gods, for which it was necessary for a male to cover the head. Third, in the anecdote about Aeneas, Plutarch mentions that, at the moment of sacrificing to the gods, Aeneas was unveiled. But when he saw Diomedes approaching, he covered his head. Diomedes is a Greek, and Aeneas considered him an enemy!

An application to the situation at Roman Corinth would make possible the following connection: if a believer, wearing a purple-bordered toga, suddenly veiled his head during worship or prayer, this act could conceivably send a shame-generating message. The shame would accrue based on the underlying assumption in Roman ritual of a potential *hostile* presence of some kind. In other words, the presumed hostile face in the assembly could be considered to be the Greeks themselves, a visitor, or unveiled women. If the believer was a Roman who suddenly covered his head, the Greeks would undoubtedly take offense.

D. The Roman praetexta, Advertising Rank and Status, Is a Purple-Bordered Toga Used for Covering the Head

Roman head coverings were often purple, signifying authority and wealth. The Roman *praetexta* and the *toga purpurea*,³⁹ along with gold and silver, were considered worthy as gifts for kings (Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 31.11.12). This particular

³⁹This “robe of state” is often used interchangeably: Livy (*Ab urbe cond.* 34.7.2) indicates a combining of these two designations into one: *praetextis purpura togis*. See also Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 1.8.3.

garment was also designated as part of the wardrobe of priests (Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 34.7.2; 33.42.2). According to Louise Revell, a Roman historian,

Wearing distinctive clothing and carrying special objects set the priests apart, and acting in an authoritative manner and interpreting the will of the gods demonstrated a knowledge not available to the rest of the community.... The right to preside over a sacrifice was limited to those with *auctoritas*, such as the *paterfamilias*, magistrates and priests.⁴⁰

Paul Zanker observes, "It is astonishing how many portraits of Augustus made during his lifetime, both on coins and as honorific statues, show him veiled in a toga. Many such statues were even exhibited in Greece and Asia Minor, where this type of ruler portrait was surely quite alien."⁴¹ According to Zanker, in fact, a veiled statue of Augustus Caesar was discovered at Corinth in 1915 and is now in the museum in Corinth.⁴² What was accepted and honored in Rome could be offensive in subjugated Greece. Such portraits could be construed as symbolic monuments to foreign rule and oppression.

Since the Roman toga of elite men was often bordered by the color purple,⁴³ this was a color of prestige and prominence. This elegant color may have signaled additional notions of rank and status. Ancients clearly valued this color.⁴⁴ What is significant, though, is that in certain contexts the color purple was required along with the *capite velato* (Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 8.9.5).

Gill focuses on this aspect of status in his description of a Roman male in a strategic position of leadership: "Not everybody present at the sacrifice would have to pull their toga over their head. This feature of the so-called *capite velato* was the

⁴⁰ Louise Revell, *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 165.

⁴¹ Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. Alan Shapiro, Jerome Lectures 16th Series (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 127. See also Klaus Fittschen and Paul Zanker, *Kaiser- und Prinzenbildnisse*, vol. 1 of *Katalog der römischen Porträts in den Capitolinischen Museen und den anderen kommunalen Sammlungen der Stadt Rom*, Beiträge zur Erschliessung hellenistischer und kaiserzeitlicher Skulptur und Architektur 3 (Mainz: von Zabern, 1983), pl. 57, no. 51, showing Hadrian veiled; the commentary reads: "die Toga *capite velato* stelle einen Kaiser immer als Pontifex Maximus dar."

⁴² See, e.g., Dietrich Boschung, *Gens Augusta: Untersuchungen zu Aufstellung, Wirkung und Bedeutung der Statuengruppen des julisch-claudischen Kaiserhauses*, Monumenta Artis Romanae 32 (Mainz: von Zabern, 2002), pls. 48.1 and 50.1, and commentary on p. 64.

⁴³ Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. rom.* 3.60.1) describes the Roman toga in a twofold manner: *χιτῶνά τε πορφυροῦν χρυσόσημον καὶ περιβόλαιον πορφυροῦν ποικίλον* ("a purple tunic decorated with gold and an embroidered purple robe"). Dionysius identifies this dress as part of the "insignia of sovereignty" (*τὰ σύμβολα τῆς ἡγεμονίας*). The *τε ... καὶ* construction ("not only ... but even") suggests two separate pieces of clothing. This is confirmed by Livy (*Ab urbe cond.* 10.7.9): "toga praetexta, tunica palmata et toga picta."

⁴⁴ See Rev 17:4 and 18:16. See also Mark Bradley, *Colour and Meaning in Ancient Rome*, Cambridge Classical Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 189–211.

iconographical mark of a sacrificant presiding over a specifically Roman ritual.”⁴⁵ Here the emphasis is on the one “presiding” and the dress that distinguishes such a leadership role—the toga pulled up over the head. Gill develops this thought further: “Paul may be attempting to say that if certain men adopt the form of dress suitable for a select band of people at a religious act, then division would occur.”⁴⁶ Gill’s emphasis is on “certain men” and “a select band of people” who wear easily identifiable clothing marking them off as notable. Finally, Gill draws an even tighter conclusion: “The issue which Paul is dealing with here seems to be that members of the social elite within the church—the *dunatoi* and the *eugeneis* (1:26)—were adopting a form of dress during worship which drew attention to their status in society.”⁴⁷ We return once again to a form of dress. In Gill’s reconstruction, it is not that these “certain men” or “band of people” were exercising spiritual gifts within the community of faith but, rather, that they were bringing their outside social status into the fellowship and using dress as evidence of it to elevate themselves over others of less privilege.

As a color, purple conveyed overtones of authority, luxury, and prestige. For example, Dionysius of Halicarnassus describes purple as one of the symbols of power (πυρφύρα ... καὶ ἄλλοις τῆς ἐξουσίας συμβόλοις; *Ant. rom.* 5.29.1). Although Oster declines to view social status as a contributing factor to Paul’s concern in this text,⁴⁸ it must be conceded that Roman male ideology regarding veiling on this point would introduce a clash of values. A striking text illustrating how purple can be used to emphasize status and self-importance is Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 24.5.3–5:

Hieronymous at his very first appearance showed how different everything was, just as if he wished by his vices to make them regret his grandfather. For, though through so many years they had seen Hiero and his son Gelo not differing from the rest of the citizens [*civibus*] in garb [*vestis*] or in any other distinction, they beheld *purple* and a diadem and armed attendants and a man who came forth from the palace sometimes even in a chariot with four white horses after the manner of Dionysius the tyrant. This haughty state and *costume* were suitably attended by contempt shown towards everyone. (trans. Moore, LCL)

E. The Act of consecratio or devotio to the Wrath of the Gods Requires the Ritual Covering of the Head

Livy records a number of incidents that may be categorized under the heading of *devotio*. Although there is some confusion among Latin writers over the

⁴⁵ Gill, “Importance of Roman Portraiture,” 247.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 248.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 250.

⁴⁸ Richard Oster, *1 Corinthians*, College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1995), 253, “This means that social status issues were not what the apostle was striving to counter.”

difference between *consecratio* and *devotio*,⁴⁹ I assume that the rite of *devotio* is the original act and that *consecratio* is a later development. The historicity of this rite also has been questioned;⁵⁰ I make use of it even though at times it is likely to have had an imaginary role in Rome's legendary past. Whether based on historical fact or imagination, its potential influence in Corinth cannot be ruled out. Livy's idea of *devotio* predates his own time by some three hundred years. I cite two texts from Livy: the first is from *Ab urbe cond.* 8.9.1–14.

Decius the consul called out to Marcus Valerius in a loud voice: "We have need of Heaven's help, Marcus Valerius. Come, therefore, state pontiff of the Roman People, dictate the words, that I may devote [*devoveam*] myself to save the legions." The pontiff bade him don the purple-bordered toga [*togam praetextam*], and with veiled head [*velato capite*] and one hand thrust out from the toga and touching his chin, stand upon a spear that was laid under his feet, and say as follows: "Janus, Jupiter, Father Mars, Quirinus, Bellona, Lares, divine Novensiles, divine Indigites, ye gods in whose power are both we and our enemies [*hostium*], and you, divine Manes, I invoke and worship you, I beseech and crave your favour, that you prosper the might and the victory of the Roman People of the Quirities, and visit the foes [*hostes*] of the Roman people of the Quirities with fear, shuddering, and death.... I devote [*devoveo*] the legions and auxiliaries of the enemy [*hostium*], together with myself, to the divine Manes and to Earth." (trans. Foster, LCL)

This tradition chronicles the origin of the *devotio* as Livy has received it. When the consul Decius despaired of victory over the enemy, he summoned the pontifex to preside over a very formal ceremony. First of all, this ritual required that Decius cover his head with a purple-bordered toga. Second, he needed to verbalize a deliberate decision to march out against the enemy so that, with the help of the Roman

⁴⁹ For example, L. Annaeus Florus (*Hist. rom.* 1.12.7) states, Decius more patrio devotum dis minibus optulit caput, sollemnemque familiae suae consecrationem in vitoriae pretium peregit ("Decius, following the example of his father, offered his life as a sacrifice to the gods below, and thus by performing an act of *devotio*, which was the custom of his family, paid the price for victory" [my translation]). Florus reveals his understanding in a number of critical ways: the rite traces back to Decius; this man devotes himself to the gods of the underworld; this act of *devotio* is further explained as a *consecratio* for the sake of victory. Florus records a similar scene (*Hist. rom.* 1.8.3) in which he describes a Roman consul who, upon veiling his head (*capite velato*), devotes himself to the infernal gods (*dis manibus se devoverit*). This he does in front of the army in order to inspire his troops. This symbolical act of self-sacrifice is reminiscent of the movie *El Cid* (1961), a historical epic film that romanticizes the life of the Castilian knight Don Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, called "El Cid." At the end of the movie, El Cid, now mortally wounded, is strapped to his saddle as he rides out of the castle and leads his troops in battle. His troops, thinking their leader is still alive, take fresh courage. For another use of *consecratio*, see Cicero, *Dom.* 46–49/122–128.

⁵⁰ For a balanced and generous account of both sides of the issue, see S. P. Oakley, *A Commentary on Livy, Books VI–X*, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 2:477–86. What is significant for our purpose is that the prayer of *devotio* was still extant in Pliny's day (*Nat.* 28.12).

gods, both he and the enemy would be destroyed. According to Livy, who does not question the historicity of this event and who never uses the word *fabula* when discussing the rite,⁵¹ Decius rode out to his anticipated death. His body was found the next day and given an appropriate burial. This sacramental death is clearly calculated to inspire fear in the enemy and provide fresh courage to the Roman soldiers. The second text then follows closely at 8.10.11–14, giving Livy's own understanding of this ritual:

It seems proper to add here that the consul, dictator, or praetor who devotes [*devoveat*] the legions of the *enemy* [*hostium*] need not devote [*devovere*] himself, but may designate any citizen he likes from a regularly enlisted Roman legion; if the man who has been devoted [*devotus est*] dies, it is deemed that all is well; if he does not die, then an image of him is buried seven feet or more under ground and a sin-offering [*piaculum*] is slain; where the image has been buried, thither a Roman magistrate may not go up. But if he shall choose to devote himself [*sese devovere*] as Decius did [*devovit*], if he does not die, he cannot sacrifice either for himself or for the people without sin, whether with a victim or with any other offering he shall choose. He who devotes himself [*sese devoverit*] has the right to dedicate his arms to Vulcan, or any other god he likes. The spear on which the consul has stood and prayed must not fall into the hands of an enemy.

The above text is loaded with formalities: it limits the rite to specific people (consul, dictator, or praetor) for the purpose of destroying enemies by devoting oneself or a designated alternate, accompanied by an act of prayer, with head veiled (*velato capite*), and with supplementary provisions for a sacrificial substitute in the event of a nondeath. Furthermore, this text clearly states that the entire ritual is connected to the Roman gods. This act of *devotio* anticipates the death of the one making such a vow, and its sole purpose is to bring about the destruction of the enemy. It appears, however, that Livy may be interpreting the original event as it may have evolved over time. Livy inserts the information that the leader of such a ceremony has the discretion to make a substitution. This may be an innovation.

H. S. Versnel breaks down the *devotio* into the following components: (1) The essence of apotropaic prayer is “the tendency to avert imminent disaster by transferring it to others.”⁵² (2) This prayer, requesting such a transference to the enemy, shows that “the gods or demons of death are entitled to a victim.”⁵³ (3) Therefore, a substitution must be made: the idea embodied in the term *vicarios* is probably

⁵¹ Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.69) is noncommittal about the historicity of this ritual. He simply says, *creditur animas numinibus infernis sacrari* (“it is believed that souls are devoted or consecrated to the gods of the underworld”). For the unquestioned practice of this ritual in the historical tradition, see L. Annaeus Florus, *Hist. rom.* 1.12.7; Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 5.41.3; Valerius Maximus, *Mem.* 1.7.3; 5.5; Cicero, *Nat. d.* 2.3.10; for its use in poetry, see Juvenal, *Sat.* 8.254–259. For the tradition that the devotee is to appear *capite velato*, see Florus, *Hist. rom.* 1.8.3.

⁵² H. S. Versnel, “Two Types of Roman *devotio*,” *Mnemosyne* 29 (1976): 365–410, esp. 389.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

based on a widespread belief that in order to avert evil a substitute must be indicated to whom the evil can be transferred.⁵⁴ The intended result of this kind of prayer and *devotio* would be the destruction of the enemy.

Such a prayer in the Corinthian assembly would have significant repercussions, depending on the identification of the enemy. If a believer showed up for worship wearing a Roman toga with a purple border and then prayed *velato capite* for the destruction of Rome, of a personal enemy, or even of someone else in the assembly (such as a woman), this action could potentially be considered shameful.

III. CONCLUSION

Greek culture has a limited purpose for male head coverings. Romans, by contrast, have numerous nuances for this male accoutrement. I have documented a total of five potential scenarios in which the notion of shame and male head coverings could possibly intersect. These multiple aspects involving the practice of *capite velato* make it difficult to isolate solely on a single dimension of this symbolism. Regarding the particular situation at Roman Corinth, the demeanor of a man covering his head in worship may have afforded more than one opportunity for manifestations of shame. Since Corinth was a Roman colony, we cannot dismiss the possibility that several different Roman veiling practices may have played a role in the injunction in 1 Cor 11:4. Depending on the degree of Roman infiltration and assimilation, multiple applications may have influenced the congregation. At least at the theoretical level, such influences may have been possible.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 395.

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