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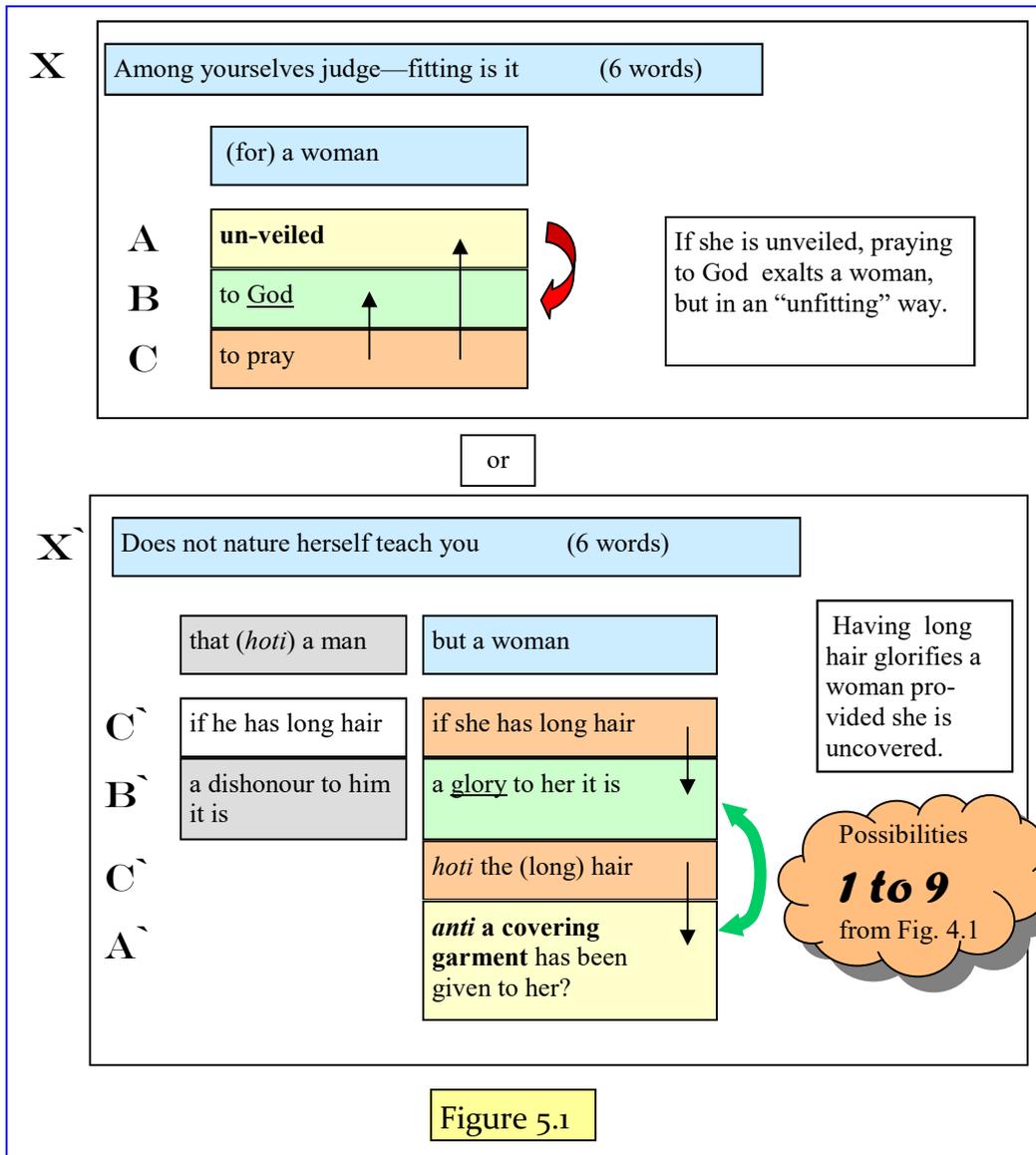
Is a Woman's Long Hair a Covering (v. 15b)? - Part II



Helen Recognising Telemachus, Son of Osyseus by Jean-Jacques Lagrenée (1739-1821). Telemachus is the young man to the left of the scene. He is weeping and holding his cloak in front of (Greek: *anti*) his eyes. (*Odyssey* Book 4, line 115.) Does Paul use this Classical Greek meaning for *anti* in 1 Cor. 11:15b?

We are continuing our investigation into the most likely translation for 1 Cor. 11:15b. In the previous chapter, it was suggested that there are nine grammatically possible translations—based on all possible combinations of the three possibilities for each of two key words, *hoti* and *anti*. These possibilities were enumerated in Figure 4.1, and will be considered further in this chapter.

These possibilities for v. 15b have to “work” within the larger context of the immediately preceding passage: for the purposes of this chapter we will consider this context to be primarily verses 13-15a. I will be working with two possible types of structural/conceptual analysis for verses 13-15. The first type is illustrated in Figure 5.1 on the next page.

Notes:

1) The significant little word “or” (*ē*) which separates X and X' is present in the TR but missing in NA27.

2) In this analysis, there is basically an X(A, B, C), X' (C', B', C', A') structure. Thus, the action of praying in X, i. e. C, has two “qualifying” components—it is directed to God (B) but this is made “unfitting” by being conducted unveiled (A). Similarly, in X', the wearing of long hair, (C') has two components—it is directed to the glory of the woman (B'), but this may depend on the “covered” status of the woman (A'). How we translate A' is thus important! It would be nice if it fits into the structural/conceptual

“framework” presented above—provided that framework is “correct” that is!

3) In X, (A, B, C), Paul asks the key (rhetorical) question, “Is it fitting for a woman uncovered to God to pray?” - expecting the answer, “No!” But then, in X', (C', B', C', A'), he offers a second, compound, rhetorical question—all parts of which expect the answer, “Yes!” These questions are connected by the word “or” - so clearly we expect the second question to be related to the first question in some way. But what is the relationship?

The first question is introduced by the command to “Judge for yourselves” whether something is “fitting”. However, the second question sort of “takes the pressure off” the Corinthians by allowing nature to teach them whether certain things are so or not. It is reasonable to suppose that, by “working through” the second question, the Corinthians will then be in a better position to answer the first question. Paul is rather like a teacher who has asked the class a difficult question. Silence follows, so he then asks a second, easier, but related question—which will guide the pupils to the correct answer to the first question. (1 Corinthians would have been read out to the church by an orator who would likely have rehearsed in advance how best to deliver the contents of the letter for dramatic effect!)

How then does the second, compound question help to answer the first? First of all, I would like to point out that the first question concerns the woman praying to God unveiled. The second question doesn't mention prayer to God, and appears to be describing situations in “everyday life”. Answering the easier second question then will presumably constitute a “stepping stone”: the relevant principles are established from the “everyday life” situation, and then the correct answer to the first question is obtained in the corresponding situation of the woman's praying during church worship.

The second situation has removed the “praying during worship” factor, but it includes an additional factor, not present in the first question, and that is the presence of long hair! This “long hair” factor acts as a concrete focus for the second question. The more general criteria for correct behaviour are more easily worked out with reference to a particular situation (just as it is easier to calculate the hypotenuse for a particular triangle, than it is to prove Pythagoras' Theorem!) The particular situation being, “if a woman has long hair”. (The inference here is that if having long hair is capable of glorifying a woman, how much more does praying

to God exalt her?!!)

Well, we've looked at the differences, what are the similarities between the two questions? These are easily stated: "un-veiled" in A is related to "*anti* a covering garment" in A' (Since un- and *anti* correspond, this suggests that *anti* probably means "opposite" or "as opposed to" rather than "as" or "equivalent to"! Also "prayer to God" (during worship) in C, B corresponds to "long hair bringing glory to the woman" (in everyday life) in C', B' - they both serve as a means of bringing attention— to God and to the woman respectively.

4) The broad direction of Paul's argument, according to the analysis presented here, is that the display, where appropriate, of a woman's long hair in everyday life, brings glory to her, but it is not appropriate in public! Parallel to this discussion about hair, the privilege and honour entailed when a woman is praying to God corresponds to this "hair" glory, and, again, such honour should not be claimed at this time since it is God alone who should be glorified. Hence the "fittingness" of veiling! This truth regarding the importance of God's glory is the final step of good judgement that the Corinthians are required to make in going from answering the question(s) in X' back to answering the key question in X. However, they have already been encouraged to think in this inferential sort way about glory because of Paul's earlier statements in verse 7—so Paul has really provided all the background information for an ultimately correct answer to X!

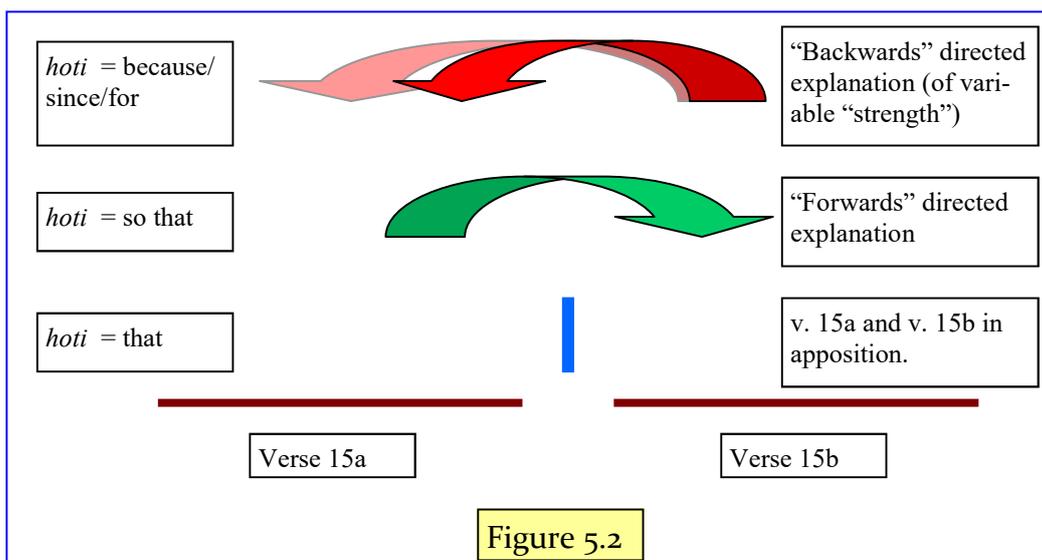
5) The women praying to God (publicly) in church form a "subset" of all the women in the church (at least over a given time period) just as women having glorious long hair form a subset of all women.

6) When a woman has glorious long or coiffured hair, we hope that this is an outward (symbolic) reflection of the glorious inner beauty and dignity of a woman. And, at least according to my understanding of the situation, this inner beauty of character, including modesty, will drive the need for the glorious hair to be covered when the woman is in public (and even if not, wise nature will use the wisdom of the good custom of covering in such circumstances.) Similarly, the honour and privilege of praying to God in church is an outward reflection of the good inner spiritual qualities of the woman—qualities which will include the concern that God's glory is paramount—hence the modest action of veiling. Both aspects of modesty—the "physical" and the "spiritual" are pointed to in Ps. 45:13—"the queen is all glorious within" ("in internal graces and gifts, with which she is adorned and accomplished"—Joseph Benson).

7) In talking about the translation of v. 15b (labelled C', A' in Figure 5.1) - we have looked at the Greek words *hoti* and *anti* and their English equivalents, but we have not yet evaluated the resulting different translation possibilities. Let us look at this now (with reference to Figure 4.1 from the previous chapter).

In Figure 4.1, the translation possibilities are obtained by considering three translations for *hoti* and three for *anti*. *Hoti* describes the relationship between v. 15a and v. 15b, and *anti* describes the relationship within v. 15b. Let us look at *hoti* first.

The three meanings given for *hoti* are i) “because”/“for” (i.e. causality of various “strengths” which “point back” from 15b to 15a, ii) “that” - in which v. 15a and v. 15b are “in apposition”, and as it were “exist independently” with no causality and finally iii) “so that” - meaning that the “direction of causality” is “forwards” from v. 15a to 15b. These are indicated in Figure 5.2 below:



Let us look at each of these translations of *hoti* in turn when used in conjunction with the three proposed meanings of *anti*:

Hoti = Because/Since/For—Translation Possibilities 1, 2 and 3 in Figure 4.1

These possibilities for v. 15b are indicated by the red arrow(s) in Figure 5.2. The red arrow(s) point backwards because v. 15b is providing an ex-

planation for v. 15a.

Using the Greek word order, the three possibilities for v. 15 are:

Possibility 1—*hoti* = because, since or for and *anti* = opposite or against

“But a woman if she has long hair a glory to her it is,
because the (long) hair against a covering has been given to/for her?”

In possibility no. 1, the meaning of the verse would be that the reason why we know that the long hair is a glory to a woman is because, in everyday life, the long hair needs to be placed or set or worn against or opposite a covering garment (in order for the woman, as a respectable lady, to hide her glory when in public for reasons of modesty): this social fact is nature's way of teaching that the long hair is a glory.

Paul's (implied) argument here then would be that if a woman's long hair is covered (for the good, modest, reason of hiding her glory in public), then how much more should a woman display modesty when praying to God who alone should be glorified (an “*argumentum a minore ad maius*”!) By explaining that the reason that we know the long hair is a glory is because of the practice or custom of covering the hair with a garment of some sort” (for reasons of modesty) (rather than all the many other reasons that could have been given!), Paul has “set up” the argument for veiling the woman's hair when praying in church.

This argument seems possible, at least to me with my limited knowledge of Greek. It requires that “the long hair against a covering garment has been given to/for her” means something like “the long hair (to be worn) against or opposite a covering garment has been decreed for her” (by wise custom or by nature, since “nature knows best”!) The verb for “has been given”, *dedotai*, comes from the Greek root *didomi*. The basic meaning is to give, but it can also mean “to allow” or “to grant”. The latter meanings, especially “to grant”, work well because they show nature working in a kind and providential way—guiding custom or right behaviour in maintaining proper “shame” and protection to the woman, rather than exposing her glory to the “inappropriateness” of public gaze.

We have noted that the meaning of “set or placed opposite or against” for *anti* is rare in the NT and in the Septuagint—indeed it is widely held that it doesn't occur at all! If so, we would have to rule out possibility 1! However, I think the situation is not as drastic as this, and I will continue this discussion when we come to Possibility no. 4.

However, there is a more fundamental reason for why I think Possibility No. 1 is unlikely, at least when *hoti* is translated as “because” and that is that it seems to me to represent a wrong way of understanding about “how nature teaches”, (or rather of how Paul would understand about “how nature teaches”!) This topic is explored in the brief excurses below:

[Excursus—why I suspect Possibility No. 1 is unsound.

Paul claims that nature teaches that if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her. How does nature do this? Possibility No. 1 says that nature does this by pointing to the recognised need for the hair to be covered up (to avoid displaying that glory in public).

I don't think this is how nature teaches, and the above argument is “back to front”! Here is an illustration. Suppose I am nature and I want to teach a perennial cave dweller that sunlight is very bright. I take the cave dweller outside into the bright sunshine for the first time, and as he is desperately trying to shield his streaming eyes from the dazzling light, I say to him, “Now look—look over there at that tree. Can you see that the sun is casting a shadow of the tree on the ground? Well, that's how we know the sun is bright because it casts shadows on the ground!”

I would not be a very good teacher! The reason the cave dweller learns the sun is bright is because it dazzles and overwhelms his eyes! He doesn't need any secondary argument—the first is quite sufficient! Indeed, it is not the case that the sun is bright because it casts a shadow, but that it casts a shadow because it is bright!!

If we now apply this to our text, suppose I was nature and I wanted to convince someone that a woman's long hair is glorious, I would simply show him a woman with glorious long hair! If he is suitably overwhelmed and convinced, fine! But if seeing the real thing doesn't convince him, then I hardly see that explaining about the need for hair coverings will be an effective strategy - for the precise reason that he doesn't appreciate that there is anything glorious that needs to be covered up in the first place! So Possibility No. 1 sort of undermines itself!

End of Excursus.]

However, “because” is not the only meaning for *hoti* that we have included in Possibility No. 1! We have also included the translation “for”. The difference between “because” (which describes a very direct causative

mechanism) and “for” (which often describes a more indirect and even allusive or additional consideration to be brought to bear on something) is described, as noted in the previous chapter in the relevant section of the entry for the use of *hoti* as a marker of causality in *BDAG*:

“The subordination [i. e. of the second clause to the first SF] is often so loose that the translation **for** recommends itself . . . Naturally the line between the two groups [i.e. the two groups are examples where the meaning is “because” and where it is “for” SF] cannot be drawn with certainty.”

In light of this, we could translate Possibility No. 1 as,

“But a woman if she has long hair a glory to her it is,
for the (long) hair against a covering has been given to her?”

where “for” is understood as indicating an “additional consideration” to the main clause—something like “bearing in mind that, or noting that, the long hair against a covering has been given to her”. In this way, the full burden of demonstrating that a woman’s hair is a glory to her does not fall on the fact that the hair is worn against a covering garment, but the latter is nevertheless a relevant consideration by nature in her teaching role. In my view, this is more likely than when “because” is used for the translation, so I suggest we keep this as a possibility for now.

As a final note, we see that in most translations of v. 15b, where *hoti* is translated as “for” the question mark comes at the end of v. 15a, not at the end of v. 15b. This may be something of a stylistic feature, but it also raises the possibility that v. 15b is seen by the translators, not as an additional consideration on the part of nature, but as an additional, relevant consideration or note that Paul *himself* is including at this point. This is probably not what is happening at this point, since if Paul has entrusted nature to teach about glory, surely nature can be trusted to teach that women sometimes cover their hair with a covering garment! Anyway, these sorts of possibilities (regardless of how *anti* is translated in v. 15b) may account for some of variation in punctuation at the junction between v. 15a and v. 15b.

Thus, sometimes a full stop is placed at the end of v. 15a, sometimes a colon, sometimes a semi-colon, sometimes a question mark and sometimes a comma!

Possibility 2—*hoti* = because, since or for and *anti* = as or “equivalent to”:

“But a woman if she has long hair a glory to her it is,

because the (long) hair as a covering has been given to her”.

This seems most unlikely! Nature cannot readily teach that “a woman’s hair is glorious because it functions as a covering garment! How would that explanation convince anyone?

Possibility 3—*hoti* = because, since or for and *anti* = “in the place of/in contrast to”:

“But a woman if she has long hair a glory to her it is,
because/since the (long) hair in the place of, and as a contrast to, a cover-
ing (garment) has been given to her”.

The meaning of v. 15b in this case is that nature teaches that the long hair is a glory because the long hair is located in the place where a covering garment is characteristically worn, and it acts as a contrast to a covering garment. I think that the argument here is basically that because the long hair has “usurped” the place where a covering garment is worn, the long hair is therefore “out in the open” and available to be seen and admired—and that is why it is a glory! This seems to me to be an entirely reasonable argument, and to “work” even when we give *hoti* its “full strength” meaning i.e. “because”. Furthermore, *anti* meaning “in the place of and/or in contrast to” is very well attested in the NT and in the Septuagint.

Perhaps too there is a touch of humour here since Paul is suggesting that the long or coiffured hair is so “voluminous” that it goes beyond the bounds of “normal” length hair to, in addition, fill up the space which a covering garment would occupy!

Well, we can be pleased with ourselves as we have found a translation which works grammatically, raises no difficulties in terms of *koine* Greek vocabulary and provides a meaning which makes clear sense since it contrasts the function of a covering with the manifestation of glory. A possible disadvantage of this translation is that it is not really clear that this glory is “inappropriate”, and yet such inappropriateness should really be clear if verse 15 is to point to the “parallel” need for veiling in v. 13. Nevertheless, this translation “sets up” the opposition between long hair, which brings glory to a woman, and a covering garment which (by implication) doesn’t (since the explanation of v. 15b wouldn’t “work” if a covering garment also provided glory for a woman! Anyway, let us now see if any of the other translation possibilities work equally well, or perhaps better.

Hoti = “So That”—Translation Possibilities 4, 5 and 6 in Figure

5.1

These possibilities correspond to the “forwards directed” green arrow in Figure 6.2. The green arrow points forwards because v. 15a is providing an explanation for v. 15b.

Possibility 4—*hoti* = so that and *anti* = opposite or against

“But a woman if she has long hair a glory to her it is,
so that the (long) hair against a covering garment has been given to/for her?”

This explanation works really well! The long hair is a glory to the woman, and as a result of this glory, the woman avoids drawing inappropriate attention to herself by the custom (in accordance with nature's teaching!) of having the hair against a covering garment (when in public). “Given” here perhaps has the sense of “deemed” or “decreed”.

Possibility 4 works very well since the need for a covering to avoid the inappropriate display of the glory of the long hair points, by an exact analogy, to the need for a veil to avoid the inappropriate exaltation of the woman when she is praying to God. The long hair and the veil are set side by side, but they are also set off against each other since the veil “counters” the effect of the long hair.

The difficulty with this explanation is, as we have already noted, that the meaning “against” or “opposite” for *anti* does not appear to be common either in the New Testament or in the Septuagint. Nevertheless there is a close match with the passage about Telemachus bringing his cloak *anti* his eyes in the *Odyssey*. (Please see the illustration at the start of this chapter!) The *Odyssey* was written in one of the dialects of “Classical” Greek as opposed to the *koine* Greek that Paul used. It would be helpful if the understanding of *anti* in Possibility No. 4 could correspond to other verses in the New Testament.

I have not investigated this topic at all fully. However, here are a couple of verse where *anti* has the meaning of setting two items opposite or against each other where a contrast between the two items is intended. In one of these cases, (and, in the “majority” view in the other case too) the idea of a substitution or replacement is not in view however.

Here is Hebrews 12:2 in Greek and in the ESV and in Young's Literal Trans-

lation.

ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν ὃς ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς ὑπέμεινεν σταυρὸν αἰσχύνης καταφρονήσας ἐν δεξιᾷ τε τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκάθισεν

. . . looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for (*anti*) the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (ESV)

. . . looking to the author and perfecter of faith -- Jesus, who, over-against (*anti*) the joy set before him -- did endure a cross, shame having despised, on the right hand also of the throne of God did sit down; (YLT)

In the translation of this verse provided by William L. Lane in his Hebrews commentary, and in agreement with N. Turner and others, *anti* is understood to have the meaning “rather than”. Thus, W. L. Lane has “. . . rather than the joy set before Him . . .” instead of “. . . for the joy that was set before Him . . .”. Thus *anti* on this understanding refers to substitution. In a footnote he defends this translation, whilst acknowledging that this is a minority viewpoint. I personally think that this minority viewpoint is correct!

If however we work with the majority translation, we see that the joy set before Jesus and the shame of the cross are not “either . . . or” events, rather they are “both . . . and” events. The two events are here set side by side in contrast to each other, but they are not alternatives since Jesus did both! This is the “opposite” or “against” meaning for *anti* rather than the “substitution” meaning. Young’s Literal Translation includes this sense of something being “set over against” something else - where both exist “side by side” although they contrast with each other, rather than one replacing the other. They are closely linked too since the enduring of the cross and the shame was, at least in some interpretations, the precondition for the joy on the other side of the suffering. *Anti* here then perhaps has the meaning, “in consideration of . . .” I don’t think that the relationship between the joy set before Christ and the hardship and shame of the cross is here to be understood with this interpretation as a direct or straightforward single “exchange” or “transaction” however.

Here is another example, also from Hebrews (Heb. 12:16):

μή τις πόρνος ἢ βέβηλος ὡς Ἡσαῦ ὃς ἀντὶ βρώσεως μιᾶς ἀπέδοτο τὰ πρωτοτόκια αὐτοῦ

that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for (*anti*) a single meal. (ESV)

lest any one be a fornicator, or a profane person, as Esau, who in exchange for (*anti*) one morsel of food did sell his birthright (YLT)

Once again, Young's Literal Translation has clarified the intended meaning. But is this the correct meaning?

The word for “meal” here, *brosis*, is either a meal, or (more literally), “the act of eating” (c.f. 1 Cor. 8:4), so we could say that the proposed sense is, “in exchange for (*anti*) one act of eating, he (Esau) sold his birthright”. These two actions are an exchange or transaction since Esau did both of them! He had an act of eating and he sold his birthright! The two actions were linked in the form of an exchange: one thing was received in exchange for what was sold or handed over. I don't think this was a substitution however because the meaning is not that he sold the birthright rather than a meal since the meal wasn't his to sell!

I understand the good “intent” of this translation: the meal and the birthright are being contrasted, and one replaces or substitutes for the other in Esau's life. However, if we look back to our earlier discussion in the previous chapter about the meaning of *anti* in Luke Ch. 11 (the fish and the scorpion), both of these items were “given”, and the word fish was repeated to make the fish “given”, (to match the scorpion being given), in addition to the fish being “asked for”. In the present case, however, the meal is eaten but the birthright is handed over—so, as I understand it, *anti* as “substitution” cannot really be used in this case since the two situations are not sufficiently comparable, and in any case, both situations were enacted. If we translate *brosis* as meal, rather than as “act of eating”, we still have the difficulty that *anti* is not a “valid” substitution, since Esau sold the birthright, but he did not sell the meal!

It seems to me that, even though the “exchange” meaning is valid in this example, but not in the first example, in both examples, *anti* is setting two contrasting actions over against one another—i.e. side by side, but not with the sense that one replaces or substitutes for the other since Esau did both! Unlike Jesus, who endured the hard and unpleasant thing in order to obtain the good thing (at least in the majority interpretation), Esau did the easy and pleasant thing (as he saw it) and as a result lost the good thing.

However, in both cases both actions were undertaken. Neither case was an “either . . . or” situation.

Now, if we follow up this idea, then we can reasonably ask whether what applies to these more complex instances might also apply to our present case. Is it possible that “the hair *anti* a covering garment has been given to her” also has a “both . . . and”, as well as a contrasting, meaning? If so, the meaning might be something like, “so that the hair set against or opposite a covering garment has been given/granted/decreed to/for her” or “so that the hair has been given to her against a covering garment”: both the hair and the (contrasting) covering garment exist “side-by-side” rather than the one substituting or replacing the other.

However, I have not yet found an exactly analogous NT or Septuagint example of *anti* being used in the way proposed here for v. 15b—that is where two “single items” are brought together side-by-side. The two examples from Hebrews are, as we have seen, more complicated since in both cases, the two items are not *physically* side-by-side, and the two situations are more complicated. In view of this, caution is necessary. Also, this meaning for v. 15b does not seem to “flow” quite so naturally as, for example, Possibility No. 3, although this might possibly be an “artefact of translation”.

An interesting feature of this, and all other translations (though I mention it here!), is that although the woman “*kome*’s - i.e. she grows her hair long - which seems like an active action on the part of the woman in v. 15a - the *kome*, the long hair is said in v. 15b to have been given to her. however, I think that an equally “valid” translation for the verb *komaō* is to let one’s hair grow long. Elsewhere in Scripture aspects of one’s hair are seen to be out of one’s own control (“Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black” Matt. 5:36).

Possibility 5—*hoti* = so that and *anti* = as or for, and

The meaning here is “. . . if a woman has long hair it is a glory to her so that the long hair has been given to her as a covering garment”. Although this grammatically possible, it doesn’t really make any obvious sense, (especially as I am working on the assumption that, whilst having long hair brings glory to a woman, covering her up with a cloak has the opposite effect, so the two conditions are mutually incompatible!) However, if we were to hold to the view that the (public) manifestation of glory by the woman is being presented as a *good* thing, rather than something inappropriate, then the verse would be saying that nature is teaching that if a

woman lets her hair grow long then it is so that she can have a (glorious) covering of long hair which functions as a (glorious) outer garment (in public) This seems an unlikely lesson for nature to teach the Corinthian Christians and it would be, in any case, contrary to Paul's purpose in this passage!

Possibility 6—*hoti* = so that and *anti* = instead of, in the place of

“. . . if a woman lets her hair grow long it is a glory to her so that the long hair has been given to her instead of and in the place of a covering garment.”

The argument here might be that the woman lets her glorious hair grow long so that it can be shown off in public without a covering garment.

Again, think this is an unlikely lesson for nature to teach the Corinthian Christians—or for Paul to attribute such a lesson to nature!

Finally,

Possibilities 7, 8 and 9—*hoti* = that and the three earlier meanings for *anti*

In these translation possibilities, vs. 14- 15a and v. 15b are treated as being in apposition. Thus we might supply the connecting word “and” between them.

Verses 14-15 are structured as two expressions both introduced by the word *oti*. Thus the structure is “*oti oti*”. One advantage of possibilities 7, 8 and 9 is that both occurrences of *oti* are translated the same way. Paul quite frequently used this “*oti oti*” structure e.g. 1 Cor. 4:9. On these occasions, the first *oti* means “that” but the second *oti* has a variety of functions. Whenever the second *oti* also means “that”, I think Paul also uses another joining word like “and” or “but” to connect the two expressions (e.g. 2 Cor. 7:9). Paul does not do that here, so that is an argument against Possibilities 7, 8 and 9.

Rather than going through each of these possibilities in turn, I suggest that they represent “weaker” versions of the earlier possibilities, and add no essentially new and different translations. In all three, the glory of the long hair and the need/existence/function of a covering are presented side by side, rather than the one explaining the other.

Conclusion

I think that out of the nine “theoretically possible” translations, Possibilities 3 and 4 are the translations are the most consistent with the interpretation of the passage being proposed in this book. Let us look at each of these in turn.

Possibility 3

“Or does not nature teach you that (v. 14) . . . but a woman if she lets her hair grow long a glory to her it is, (v. 15a)
because/since the (long) hair in the place of, and as a contrast to, a covering (garment) has been given to her?” (v. 15b)

In this translation, nature is teaching (v. 14) that if a woman lets her hair grow long, it is a glory to her (v. 15a) and also that the reason that the hair is functioning as a glory to the woman is that it is i) occupying (“usurping”?) the place that a covering garment would occupy and ii) that it is a very different sort of thing from a covering garment which, by contrast, would conceal the woman rather than showing her off to best effect.

How does this fit into Paul’s argument about the need for veiling when praying?

Well, we have been suggesting that Paul’s argument depends on a parallelism between letting the hair grow long and praying. Although long hair on display is glorious, it is nevertheless inappropriate for it to be displayed in this way in public. I wouldn’t go as far as to say it is shameful—it’s just inappropriate and incompatible with the “good” shame that a modest woman would exercise in such circumstances. Similarly, when praying to God in public, the woman is in an elevated and perhaps glorious situation. Though the word glorious is not used here, I suggest that Paul’s argument is one of *a minore ad maius* and so would be that the glory associated with praying to God should exceed that of hair! How could it not?!! Therefore, the woman should veil her head as a way of avoiding the “unfittingness” of being seen to use the occasion to draw attention to herself. This seems to me to explain “what is going on” in verses 13-15, especially given that in vs. 11-12, the interdependence of men and women in the Lord and before God has been described.

Let’s now look at . . .

Possibility 4

“Or does not nature teach you that (v. 14) . . . but a woman if she lets her hair grow long a glory to her it is, (v. 15a)
so that the (long) hair against a covering (garment) has been given/granted/deemed to/for her?” (v. 15b)

I think that Possibility 4 basically covers the same ground as Possibility 3 but in a slightly different way. Here the argument would be that the long hair is certainly a glory to or for a woman. Nature teaches this, but nature has also recognised the consequent impropriety if the woman were to appear in public with this glory on display and has already arranged things so that, by cultural good sense, the woman is spared impropriety—since the long or coiffured hair is customarily set opposite or against a covering garment when the woman is in public.

This fits into Paul's argument since if nature has arranged things so that the glory of long hair is characteristically covered up for reasons of propriety, how much more should the Corinthians and the woman herself arrange things during the meeting of the church so that the privilege and glory of publicly praying to God is modestly counteracted by the woman's action of veiling.

Possibility 4 perhaps “telegraphs” the direction of Paul's argument (please note the word “or” at the start of v. 14 linking the judgement required of the Corinthians and the teaching of nature!) slightly better than Possibility 3 since in Possibility 4, nature has already arranged for a covering to be worn in the “hair” situation thus pointing to the need for a veil in the “prayer” situation, whereas in Possibility 3, the long hair has “usurped” the place of a covering, (thereby creating the unfittingness), but we are expected to infer (albeit very reasonably!) that a covering will be the required suitable correction for this situation, and then to apply this solution to the analogous “prayer” situation.

Against this we have the fact that Possibility 4 is perhaps not so likely since we have no exactly analogous instances in *koine* Greek of *anti* being used in its original Classical Greek sense of “placed opposite or against”, with the possible exception of the more complicated example of Heb. 12:16. At least I haven't come across such an instance, but I would greatly appreciate help in this matter!

I suppose it is possible that Paul *might* have used a “studied ambiguity” in

the way v. 15 is worded so that both possible meanings (meanings **3** and **4**) are present simultaneously—with Possibility **3** emphasising the problem (the long hair is on display and has displaced a covering garment) and Possibility **4** emphasising the solution—the “given” of the hair being placed opposite a covering garment.

I hope that these two chapters, have shown that verse 15 can successfully fit into Paul's wider purposes in the passage. In doing this, I have concentrated on the “conceptual” links between Paul's second “hair” argument (vs. 14-15) and the consequent need for veiling when a woman is praying (v. 13) but I have also (Figure 5.1) shown that there are structural links between these two components.

However, I think, anticipating later work, that this second “hair” argument (vs. 14-15) also has structural links with the first “hair” argument in verses 5b-6. These structural links are illustrated in the diagrams on the next page (Figures 5.3 i and ii).

Notes:

1) The diagrams are quite complicated. In both, the words are presented in the order of the text, but the words pertaining to men's long/coiffured hair have been omitted in the lower diagram.

2) There is a chiastic relationship between the passages using Possibility **3**, (Figure 5.3i) and a parallel relationship using Possibility **4** (Figure 5.3ii). In both cases, the items are “inverted” - thus, for example, A in the upper part of Figures 5.3i and ii refers to a woman who has been shorn, but A in the lower part by contrast refers to a woman having long hair. Similarly, shame and glory are contrasted etc.

3) The upper part of each Figure has an extra item. and this has been labelled X in each case. In Figure 5.3i, The upper and lower “problems” (labelled A) are the same, and the solution, X in the upper diagram has to be “applied” to the lower diagram (purple arrow). In Figure 5.3ii however, the upper and lower “solutions” are the same, and the problem, X in the upper diagram, has to be applied (purple arrow) to the lower diagram. The two possible translations thus complement each other.

We are now ready, I hope, to proceed to the main structural analysis of the entire passage!

