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- 209–227 *Mark Leuchter*, Genesis 38 in Social and Historical Perspective
- 229–250 *Joshua Berman*, Histories Twice Told: Deuteronomy 1–3 and the Hittite Treaty Prologue Tradition
- 251–274 *Yitzhaq Feder*, The Aniconic Tradition, Deuteronomy 4, and the Politics of Israelite Identity
- 275–293 *C. L. Seow*, An Exquisitely Poetic Introduction to the Psalter
- 295–313 *Amy Erickson*, “Without My Flesh I Will See God”: Job’s Rhetoric of the Body
- 315–325 *Jeremy Schipper*, Interpreting the Lamb Imagery in Isaiah 53
- 327–332 *Eric D. Raymond*, The Meanings of “Life” in the Hebrew of Ben Sira
- 333–350 *Matthew Thiessen*, Revisiting the προσήλυτος in “the LXX”
- 351–371 *Michael Bartos and Bernard M. Levinson*, “This Is the Manner of the Remission”: Implicit Legal Exegesis in 11QMelchizedek as a Response to the Formation of the Torah
- 373–391 *Alexander E. Stewart*, Narrative World, Rhetorical Logic, and the Voice of the Author in 4 Ezra
- 393–413 *Thomas R. Blanton IV*, Saved by Obedience: Matthew 1:21 in Light of Jesus’ Teaching on the Torah
- 415–430 *Alicia D. Myers*, “Jesus Said to Them . . .”: The Adaptation of Juridical Rhetoric in John 5:19–47
- 431–451 *Brian C. Dennert*, Hanukkah and the Testimony of Jesus’ Works (John 10:22–39)
- 453–465 *Troy W. Martin*, Περιβόλαιον as “Testicle” in 1 Corinthians 11:15: A Response to Mark Goodacre

Περιβόλαιον as “Testicle” in 1 Corinthians 11:15: A Response to Mark Goodacre

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In 2004, I published an article in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* in which I argued that περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15 means “testicle.” In the same journal in 2011, Mark Goodacre wrote a critique challenging and contesting my translation not only in this passage but also in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269. In this article, I respond to Goodacre’s critique and offer additional arguments supporting the translation of περιβόλαιον as “testicle” in both passages. I rely on modern linguistic theory to demonstrate that context requires the meaning of “testicle” for περιβόλαιον in both 1 Cor 11:15 and *Herc. fur.* 1269. I conclude that my reading of περιβόλαιον as “testicle” makes better sense of the use of this term in both passages than any other proposed readings, including Goodacre’s.

In a recent article, Mark Goodacre evaluates my proposed reading of περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15 as a “testicle.”¹ I am grateful that he has taken my proposal so seriously and has provided me with an opportunity to explain my reading in greater detail.² Although the purpose of his article is to evaluate my reading of 1 Cor 11:15, he devotes the majority of his article to challenging my translation of περιβόλαιον in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269 and Achilles Tatius’s *Leuc. Clit.* 1.15.2 since these texts, he assumes (p. 396), provide “the necessary lexical basis for the [my] desired translation of 1 Cor 11:15.” Goodacre’s entire argument in his article rests on this assumption. I want to begin my response by pointing out that his assumption is questionable in the light of recent linguistic theory.

¹Mark Goodacre, “Does περιβόλαιον Mean ‘Testicle’ in 1 Corinthians 11:15?” *JBL* 130 (2011): 391–96. References to the page numbers of Goodacre’s article will be placed in parentheses in the text of my response. Goodacre is evaluating my publication “Paul’s Argument from Nature for the Veil in 1 Corinthians 11:13–15: A Testicle instead of a Head Covering,” *JBL* 123 (2004): 75–84.

²I am also grateful to Clare K. Rothschild and Christopher Matthews for reading drafts of my response and offering helpful comments and suggestions.

Modern linguistics emphasizes that words have meaning in context, and “the necessary lexical basis” for any particular meaning of any word is the specific context in which that word is used.³ A particular context may indicate a special meaning for a word that is not illustrated by uses of that word in other contexts. Even if other examples of this meaning cannot be found, that particular context still provides “the necessary lexical basis” for that special meaning of that word.⁴ Thus, modern linguistics emphasizes that the context of 1 Cor 11:15 determines the meaning of *περιβόλαιον* in this verse even if no other contexts illustrate that meaning.⁵

For example, consider the use of *ψήφισμα* in Aristophanes’ *Nub.* 1019. Now, this word means “decree” or “edict” in many contexts. In this line in Aristophanes’ play, however, *ψήφισμα* occurs in a list of undesirable body parts that Pheidippides will have if he follows bad reasoning. Lines 1016–19 read: *πρῶτα μὲν ἔξεις στῆθος λεπτόν, χροιάν ἄχράν, ὤμους μικρούς, γλῶτταν μεγάλην, πυγὴν μικράν, ψήφισμα μακρόν.* The published English translations of these lines refuse to take the context seriously and to translate *ψήφισμα* as a body part. So, Jeffrey Henderson (LCL) translates, “You’ll start by having a puny chest, pasty skin, narrow shoulders, a grand tongue, a wee rump and a lengthy edict [*ψήφισμα*].” An edict is not a body part and is not a satisfactory translation of *ψήφισμα* in this context. The more recent translation by Paul Roche is similarly unsatisfactory. He translates, “a tiny bottom and a long harangue.”⁶ A harangue is not a body part, and neither of these translations makes sense of the passage. Even less satisfactory are the translations that render *ψήφισμα μακρόν* as “long harangues” or “decrees” and understand the word as disparaging oratory.⁷ None of these translations makes sense of this pas-

³Kurt Baldinger, *Semantic Theory: Towards a Modern Semantics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1980), 15–16. Baldinger comments, “The isolated word is put into a broader context, and through this it is decided what is meant by the individual word; i.e., the context determines the meaning within the concrete linguistic situation.” For a survey, discussion, and critique of recent works on lexical semantics, see Vyvyan Evans, *How Words Mean: Lexical Concepts, Cognitive Models, and Meaning Construction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3–26. Evans comments, “The observation with which this book proceeds, then, is that words are never meaningful independent of the utterance in which they are embedded, and the encyclopaedic knowledge and extra-linguistic context which guide how words embedded in an utterance should be interpreted” (p. 21).

⁴Evans says that it is possible to assume that a word “has exactly the same number of distinct meanings . . . as the number of different sentences in which it appears” (*How Words Mean*, 19–20).

⁵Evans states, “As observed by a large number of scholars, the meanings associated with words are flexible, open-ended, and highly sensitive to utterance context” (*How Words Mean*, 22). After listing a number of these scholars, Evans concludes, “Word meaning, from this perspective, is always a function of a situated interpretation: the context in which any given word is embedded and to which it contributes” (p. 23).

⁶Roche, *Aristophanes: The Complete Plays* (London: Penguin, 2005), 178.

⁷See Cyril Bailey, *Aristophanes Clouds* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1921), 65 and Alan H.

sage in Aristophanes’ comedy because each fails to consider ψήφισμα in this context as a reference to a body part.⁸ Each translation misses the hilarious point of Aristophanes’ use of ψήφισμα in reference to Pheidippides’ penis.

The context is a list of body parts, and the passage makes sense only if ψήφισμα is understood as referring to a body part. The passage contrasts the body parts Pheidippides will come to possess if he follows wrong thinking and not right thinking.⁹ Line 1019 specifically contrasts undesirable body parts with the desirable body parts in line 1014. The words ψήφισμα μακρόν in line 1019 contrast in particular with the words πόσθην μικράν (a small penis) in 1014. The word ψήφισμα in line 1019 thus refers to Pheidippides’ penis. Instead of refusing to understand ψήφισμα in reference to a body part and specifically to a penis, we need to explore why in this context Aristophanes uses ψήφισμα in reference to a penis.

In many other contexts, ψήφισμα refers to a decree or act representing the end result of a decision-making process that is passed by a majority of votes with small stones (ψηφοί). Once the legislators cast their votes or stones, the decision is out of their control and rests solely with the stones. In other words, the stones determine the decision that is finally made, and this decision prescribes and controls the behavior of the populace and hopefully the legislators as well. By referring to a penis with the word ψήφισμα, Aristophanes connects the penis to decision making and behavioral control. He thus expresses a thought akin to the colloquial English notion of a man who “thinks with his dick.” If Pheidippides follows wrong reason, his decision making will rest not with him and his good sense (cf. line 1010) but with his “long dick” (line 1019). Aristophanes explains how in the lines that follow (1020–23).

In these lines, the subject of the two verbs ἀναπέσει (1020) and ἀναπλήσει (1023) is not clearly stated. The subject could be wrong reason, since these verbs form part of the apodosis for the protasis, which reads “if you Pheidippides practice what current men practice” (1015). Since wrong reason instructs these men to do what they do (987), wrong reason could be what persuades (ἀναπέσει) Pheidippides that the shameful is good and fills him (ἀναπλήσει) with unnatural lust as well.

The subject, however, is more likely Pheidippides’ long penis (ψήφισμα μακρόν), since these words are the last image left in the mind of the audience

Sommerstein, *The Comedies of Aristophanes*, vol. 3, *Clouds: Edited with Translation and Notes* (Chicago: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1982), 109, 210. Bailey translates, “And your public harangues never come to an end” (p. 65). Sommerstein translates the word as “long . . . winded decree” (p. 210) and explains, “Under the aegis of the Worse Argument, Pheidippides will become an orator and propose verbose decrees in the assembly” (p. 109).

⁸ Although he does not explicitly state that ψήφισμα refers to a penis, K. J. Dover nevertheless comments that “either a reference to the penis or a surprise substitute for it” is what is needed. He concludes, “ψήφισμα μακρόν gives precisely the new twist needed” (*Aristophanes Clouds: Edited with Introduction and Commentary* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1968], 223).

⁹ C. C. Felton, *The Clouds of Aristophanes with Notes* (Cambridge: John Bartlett, 1858), 206.

before these verbs are spoken. Thus, Pheidippides' long penis will convince him that the shameful is good and fill him with unnatural lust. Seeing Pheidippides' long penis as the subject of these verbs contributes to the humor of these lines.

Whether wrong reason or a long penis is the subject of these verbs, the flow of thought is similar. The reference to Pheidippides' long penis (ψήφισμα μακρόν) allows Aristophanes to transition from a list of undesirable body parts to a description of Pheidippides' moral degradation resulting from his following wrong reason.

In this example from Aristophanes' *Nub.* 1019, the context specifies the referent of "penis" for ψήφισμα. Now, this referent is not given for ψήφισμα in LSJ, and, as far as I can tell, ψήφισμα never refers to a penis anywhere else in the surviving literature from the ancient world. Considering this example, one cannot say that there is no lexical basis for translating ψήφισμα as "penis" or that "penis" is an incorrect translation of ψήφισμα just because there are no lexical parallels to support this referent for ψήφισμα in Aristophanes' *Nub.* 1019. Yet Goodacre's argument based on his questionable linguistic assumption would require denying that ψήφισμα refers to a penis in this passage.

An even more pertinent example that illustrates Goodacre's dubious assumption is the use of σύναμμα in reference to testicles in Aristotle's *Gen. An.* 788a10. This word means "knot," "syllogism," or "clamp" in other contexts but is used in association with the testicles only in this passage in Aristotle and in the commentary on this passage by John Philoponus.¹⁰ Goodacre's argument requires providing other texts in which this word is used in association with the testicles before allowing this association in this passage in Aristotle. No association other than "testicles," however, makes sense of σύναμμα in the context of *Gen. An.* 788a10. Furthermore, Aristotle uses the singular form of this word in reference to the testicles even though Goodacre reasons, "If Paul had wished to contrast women's hair with male testicles in 1 Cor 11:15, we would have expected him to use a plural noun" (p. 395). Although other examples could be cited, these two from Aristotle and Aristophanes are sufficient to demonstrate the dubious linguistic assumption of Goodacre's argument against my reading περιβόλαιον as "testicle" in 1 Cor 11:15.¹¹

Goodacre thus dismisses Euripides' *Herc. fur.* 1269 and Achilles Tatius's *Leuc. Clit.* 1.15.2, the two lexical illustrations I provide, and concludes that "'testicle' is an incorrect translation of περιβόλαιον" in 1 Cor 11:15 (p. 393). He further concludes, "There is no basis, then, for translating περιβόλαιον as 'testicle' in 1 Cor 11:15" (p. 395). Goodacre's entire argument in his article rests on his mistaken linguistic assumption that by dismissing these two illustrative texts, he has destroyed my case for translating περιβόλαιον as "testicle" in 1 Cor 11:15.

Even if I were to concede for the sake of argument that Goodacre had dismissed the two lexical illustrations I provide, he still cannot cogently conclude that

¹⁰Diogenes Laertius, *Vit.* 7.191.18; Plutarch, *Alex.* 18.3.4; Aristotle, *Part. an.* 687b15; John Philoponus, *In G.A.* 14.3.

¹¹For references to further examples, see n. 17 below.

περιβόλαιον does not mean “testicle” in 1 Cor 11:15, because the context of this passage must be considered. This lack of consideration I deem to be the weakest part of his article, for he does not account for the context but skirts it. He says that my reading “opens up a new and intriguing possibility” (p. 391) and that my “exposition of ancient attitudes to sex and gender is intriguing” (p. 392). He concludes that “the interesting ancient medical data may shed light on the kinds of perspectives that Paul and his readers shared with respect to hair, but, in the absence of the necessary lexical basis for the desired translation of 1 Cor 11:15, Martin’s case is not established” (p. 396). Goodacre does not discuss the context of περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15 but ignores this context, which is the most important lexical basis for translating περιβόλαιον as “testicle.”

Aside from lexical illustrations, I would argue that the most persuasive evidence for translating περιβόλαιον as “testicle” is the specific context of 1 Cor 11:15. In this passage, Paul develops an argument from nature about the different functions of long hair in men and women.¹² The context is thus one of physiology and the contrasting body parts of men and women.¹³ Paul’s statement that long hair is given by nature to a woman instead of a περιβόλαιον requires a translation of περιβόλαιον that refers to a male body part lacking in a woman but having a function corresponding to her long hair.¹⁴ The only translation proposed thus far that satisfies this context of περιβόλαιον is “testicle.” Elsewhere, I have provided the substantial gynecological material demonstrating long feminine hair as the functional counterpart to a male testicle, and “testicle” is the only translation of περιβόλαιον that makes sense of the passage and provides a cogent explanation of Paul’s argument and his flow of thought.¹⁵

The traditional translation of “covering” does not satisfy this context, since hair provides a covering for both men and women (see Aristotle, *Hist. an.* 498b). This traditional translation thus leads to conclusions that Paul’s flow of thought does not make sense or that Paul has lost the thread of his argument.¹⁶ Goodacre states that “there may be good answers to the puzzles thrown up by this passage” (p. 396). If he has any good answers, I certainly would like to hear them so I can evaluate their merit in the light of my proposed reading. At present, however, only my reading makes sense of this passage and satisfies the lexical context of

¹²Martin, “Paul’s Argument,” 78–79.

¹³Ibid., 77. I tried to make this point clear when I wrote, “Since περιβόλαιον is contrasted with hair, which is part of the body, the physiological semantic domain of περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15b becomes particularly relevant.”

¹⁴Ibid., 83.

¹⁵Ibid., 77–84.

¹⁶Neither does the more recent suggestion of *hairstyles* as the issue make sense of Paul’s argument. See Preston T. Massey, “The Meaning of κατακαλύπτω and κατά κεφαλῆς ἔχων in 1 Corinthians 11.2–16,” *NTS* 53 (2007): 502–23. Massey’s linguistic argument against hairstyles would be more conclusive if he had shown that this issue does not satisfy the physiological context of this passage and especially of περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15.

περιβόλαιον. Since translating περιβόλαιον as “testicle” makes sense of the context, I would argue that this context is the “necessary lexical basis” for this translation even if the word περιβόλαιον, just as ψήφισμα in Aristophanes’ *Clouds* or σύναμμα in Aristotle’s *Generation of Animals*, never occurs elsewhere with this meaning in the material that survives from the ancient world.

The problem with providing lexical illustrations for these words and others like them is that colloquial euphemisms are often used for sexual body parts.¹⁷ The material that survives from the ancient world, however, is largely literary, technical, and scientific, and the living colloquial speech is often not adequately represented. It is not surprising that the two illustrative texts I provide are from plays and erotic literature, which preserve more of the colloquial speech than some other types of ancient materials. If only the literary production of intellectuals and academics in our culture survives the next two thousand years, we should not be surprised if colloquial terms such as “balls,” “nuts,” or “family jewels” in reference to testicles are rarely represented in that body of literature.

Before turning to the specifics of Goodacre’s arguments against translating περιβόλαιον as “testicle” in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269 and Achilles Tatius’s *Leuc. Clit.* 1.15.2, I want to emphasize that my case for translating περιβόλαιον as “testicle” in 1 Cor 11:15 does not ultimately rest on the meaning of this word in these two illustrative texts but rather on the specific context of 1 Cor 11:15. Although parallels may be helpful and instructive, they are not decisive. Context, however, is. Unfortunately, Goodacre’s article is based primarily on the linguistic assumption that if περιβόλαιον does not mean “testicle” in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269 or Achilles Tatius’s *Leuc. Clit.* 1.15.2, then it does not mean “testicle” in 1 Cor 11:15. In this assumption, he could not be more mistaken from the perspective of recent linguistic theory. Nevertheless, I intend to respond to his specific arguments against the two illustrative texts that I provide and not concede that he has dismissed them.

Goodacre takes particular issue with my translation of the clause ἐπεὶ δὲ σαρκὸς περιβόλαι’ ἐκτησάμην ἡβῶντα in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269. I translate these words as Heracles’ saying literally, “After I received [my] bags of flesh, which are the outward signs of puberty,” or saying dynamically, “After I received my testicles, which are the outward signs of puberty.” Goodacre points out that “there are important problems” with my translation and asserts, “‘testicle’ is an incorrect translation of περιβόλαιον” (p. 393). Instead of a body part, Goodacre prefers to

¹⁷The euphemisms are numerous and diverse, as Dover comments, “We must be prepared for the possibility that words which we could not recognize as sexual by inspecting them in isolation . . . had a precise sexual reference” (*Greek Homosexuality: Updated and with a New Postscript* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989], 17). Among other examples, Dover cites Aristophanes’ use of “rope” (σχονίον) in reference to Lovekleon’s penis (*Vesp.* 1343–44), and the general comic use of the plural of “barley” (κριθαί) as slang for “penis” (p. 59). Further examples can be found in Jeffrey Henderson, *The Maculate Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy* (2nd ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), passim.

understand περιβόλαια as a clothing metaphor and to translate the clause σαρκὸς περιβόλαι’ . . . ἡβῶντα as “youthful vestures of flesh” or “youthful garb of flesh.” Although he points to problems with my translation, he fails to recognize at least three significant problems with his own.

The first problem is his inconsistent treatment of the plural περιβόλαια as a clothing metaphor. He translates it with both the plural noun “clothes” and the singular noun “garb” (p. 393) before finally settling on the plural noun “vestures” (p. 396). He appeals to “all published translations of the passage” to support his translation of περιβόλαια. Almost all of these translations, however, render the Greek plural noun with an English singular noun. Hence, Theodore Alois Buckley translates περιβόλαια as “vesture,” Robert Browning as “garb,” and E. P. Coleridge as “cloak” (pp. 393–94 and nn. 14–16). For support, Goodacre (p. 393 n. 12) also appeals to Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, who comments on this passage, “To see the body as a garment [singular] is a metaphor stemming from Orphic circles” (my translation). The published English translations and the comment by Wilamowitz-Moellendorff indicate that the bodily clothing metaphor employs a singular noun, not a plural one such as περιβόλαια in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269.

Several texts demonstrate the use of a singular noun rather than a plural in clothing metaphors referring to the body. The body is described as a sack (Diogenes Laertius 9.10.59) and as a robe, garment, coat, cloak, or tunic (Empedocles *Fr.* 126; Philo, *Leg.* 3.69; *QG* 1.53; *Corpus hermeticum* 7.3; *Ascen. Isa.* 11:35; *Apoc. Ab.* 13:14; *Acts Thom.* 108–13; *Teach. Silv.* 105.13–16). Philo’s interpretation of Gen 3:21 (*QG* 1.53) is particularly instructive. Although the text of Genesis contains the plural “garments of skin,” Philo shifts to the singular “garment of skin” each time he refers to a single, individual body.¹⁸ In texts that contain bodily clothing metaphors, a singular noun is thus commonly used as a metaphorical reference to the body.

Goodacre mentions a few texts that use a plural noun in a clothing metaphor (p. 393 with n. 12), but he fails to recognize that the context of these uses differs markedly from the use of περιβόλαια in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269. One text is Euripides’ *Bacchae* 746, which contains the phrase “garments of flesh” (σαρκὸς ἐνδυτά) in reference to the bodies of the cows and bulls that are being torn asunder by the Bacchae. Although “garments” is plural, the context of many cows and bulls indicates that each bovine has only a single body or garment of flesh. Another text cited by Goodacre is Plato’s *Phaed.* 87c, which compares a succession of cloaks worn out by a weaver to the many bodies worn out by a soul. At any given time, however, the soul is wearing only a single garment or body, since Plato writes, “When the soul perishes, it must necessarily have on its last cloak” (87e). Plato refers to a single, individual body not with the plural “cloaks” but with the singular “cloak.”¹⁹ The final text cited by Goodacre is Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 549, which refers

¹⁸ Unfortunately, this passage from Philo survives only in translation and not in Greek.

¹⁹ For a similar use of the plural in reference to individual bodies, see also Plato’s *Gorg.* 523c.

to “our having put on garments of death” (θανάτου . . . περιβόλαι’ ἐνήμεθα). The plural subject and verb in this context indicate that each person mentioned bears only a single mortal body or garment of death and not many bodies or garments at the same time.²⁰ The context of these three texts, therefore, differs markedly from the context of Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269, which has only a single, individual body in view at the specific time of puberty. Referring to Heracles’ body with a clothing metaphor as “vestments of flesh” or “garments of flesh” is very unusual and not supported by any of the texts or material that Goodacre provides.²¹

This unusual use of the plural περιβόλαια as a clothing metaphor for an individual body signals caution in translating this word as “clothes,” “vestures,” or “garb” in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269. I have not been able to find a precedent early enough to illustrate a plural noun in reference to a single body in a clothing metaphor. Much later than Euripides, the Jewish and Christian traditions speak of an individual’s wearing garments in an afterlife, and these garments may refer to an individual’s body (Rev 3:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13–14; 22:14; *Apoc. El.* 5:6; 4 *Ezra* 2:45; 2 *En.* 22:8; 1 *Apoc. Jas.* 28.16–17; *Great Pow.* 44.25–26; Lucian, *Peregr.* 40). The sources of these traditions are Zech 3:1–5 and Jesus’ transfiguration (Mark 9:2–8 and parallels). In both of these sources, however, the garments do not refer to the body of the prophet or to the body of Jesus, whose face and hair are described separately from his garments. Hence, the secondary literature debates whether the plural noun “garments” in these traditions refers to the body or simply to an individual’s moral and spiritual condition in the afterlife.²² In either case, the use of the plural “garments” is too late and too tradition-specific to provide a precedent for reading the plural περιβόλαια in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269 as a clothing metaphor referring to a single body.

Goodacre’s inconsistent treatment of the plural περιβόλαια is the first significant problem with his contention that this noun is a clothing metaphor referring to the entire body of Heracles rather than to body parts such as testicles. Almost all of the published translations of this passage want to translate the plural περιβόλαια as though it were singular to fit the clothing metaphor. To his credit, Goodacre finally settles on a plural translation of περιβόλαια as “vestures” (p. 396), but he does not consider that the plural is unnatural for a clothing metaphor on

²⁰ Other texts not mentioned by Goodacre that use a plural noun in a clothing metaphor in reference to many bodies also have in view only a single garment for each body. For examples, see Origen, *Cels.* 4.40 and *Apoc. El.* 5:6, although this latter text may be explained by Zech 3:1–5 or the transfiguration of Jesus. See the explanation below.

²¹ One other text cited by Goodacre (p. 393 n. 12) is Pindar, *Nem.* 11.15. This text describes clothes’ covering mortal members of the body and the earth’s being the final clothing of these members. This text does not use the plural “clothes” or “garments” as a reference to a single body and is therefore not parallel to the use of περιβόλαια in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269.

²² For a discussion of the options and references to other texts, see David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5* (WBC 52A; Dallas: Word, 1997), 222–23.

which he bases his translation. Translating the plural περιβόλαια as a reference to body parts in this passage is therefore much more natural than understanding it as a clothing metaphor. Furthermore, the specific context of περιβόλαια in this passage points to even more significant problems with Goodacre’s clothing metaphor.

The second significant problem with Goodacre’s contention that περιβόλαια does not refer to testicles in Euripides is his translation of the participle ἡβῶντα as “youthful.” The English word “youthful” has a broad semantic range since “youth” includes stages of development both before and after puberty. The Greek verb ἡβάω, however, is a denominative verb formed from the noun ἡβη, which refers to the pubic hair or pubes and then to other aspects of development associated with puberty.²³ Aristotle comments, “Now in human beings this stage [puberty] is marked by a change in the voice, and by a change both in the size and in the appearance of the sexual organs . . . and above all by the growth of the pubic hair (τῆι τριχώσει τῆς ἡβης).”²⁴ Goodacre’s translation of the participial form of this denominative verb as “youthful” obscures the essential connection of this participle and περιβόλαια, the noun it modifies, with puberty. In contrast, my translation of this participle as “which are the outward signs of puberty” makes this connection explicit. Goodacre criticizes my translation as “clunky” and a “lexical leap” (p. 393 n. 11), but he does not demonstrate that it is a lexical leap. My translation satisfies the context of specifying a time when Heracles’ labors began, namely, at the time when his testicles appeared at puberty.

Furthermore, Goodacre’s translation of the participle ἡβῶντα as “youthful vestures of flesh” overlooks the fact that the participle with this meaning would more naturally modify σαρκός than περιβόλαια. The ancients certainly distinguished between old and youthful flesh. In an extended discussion, one Hippocratic author explains the difference between the flesh of young and old (*Morb.* 1.22.12–23). When someone is described as bearing youthful flesh, the participial form of ἡβάω modifies σάρξ. Thus, Aeschylus (*Sept.* 622) describes Lasthenes as sporting or bearing youthful flesh (σάρκα δ’ ἡβῶσαν φύει [variant: φέρει]). Goodacre’s translation of the participle ἡβῶντα in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269 would be more natural if the participle modified “flesh” (σαρκός), but it does not. It modifies περιβόλαια. When distinguishing between young and old bodies, the ancients prefer the expressions “youthful flesh” and “old flesh” to “youthful garments” and “old garments.” Goodacre’s translation of the clause ἐπεὶ δὲ σαρκός περιβόλαι’ ἐκτησάμην ἡβῶντα in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269 as “youthful vestures of flesh” is therefore neither as natural nor as straightforward as he implies.

The third significant problem with Goodacre’s treatment of this clause is his inadequate consideration of the verb ἐκτησάμην (“I acquired”). Whatever the word περιβόλαια means in this context, it refers to something associated with puberty

²³Hippocrates, *Epid.* 3.4; Aristotle, *Hist. an.* 493b3. Compare also Aristophanes, *Nub.* 976; and Theopompus Comicus, *Fr.* 37.

²⁴Aristotle, *Hist. an.* 544b21–25 (Peck); see also *Hist. an.* 581a–b.

that Heracles acquired. To imply as Goodacre does that Heracles acquired “youthful vestments of flesh” or a body of flesh at puberty overlooks Heracles’ having a (youthful) body of flesh both before and after this time. Instead of a body, the primary acquisition for males at puberty is the testicles, according to the common view that the testicles first appear on the outside of the male body at puberty.

Hippocrates (*Epid.* 6..4.21) describes puberty as marked by the appearance of a testicle on the outside of the body.²⁵ Galen (*UP* 14.7; Helmreich 2.307) quotes Hippocrates approvingly and describes the testicles as appearing (*ἐπισημαίνει*; *UP* 14.7; Helmreich 2.309.3) or swelling-out (*ἐξαίρειτο*; *UP* 14.7; Helmreich 2.309.6) at puberty. The Greek verb *κτάομαι* accurately expresses this ancient perception that the testicles were the primary acquisition of males at puberty and that their appearance marked the passage from a child to a pubescent youth.²⁶ This verb supports translating the plural *περιβόλαια* in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269 as “testicles,” not “vestures,” and Goodacre’s translation does not adequately account for this verb.

The issue to be decided, therefore, is whether Goodacre’s translation “youthful vestures of flesh” or my translation “bags of flesh” and specifically “testicles” more adequately renders *σαρκὸς περιβόλαια* in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269. The phrase “bags of flesh” is an apt description of testicles. Aristotle (*Hist. an.* 493a33–34) says that the testicles are not exactly the same as flesh but are not far from it. He makes this statement because he considers flesh to be a uniform part of the body whereas a testicle is a nonuniform part of the body (*Hist. an.* 486a1–8). A piece can be cut from a uniform part such as flesh, bone, hair, or blood, and that part still remains completely flesh, bone, hair, or blood. A piece cut from a nonuniform part such as the face, hand, or testicle cannot fully be that bodily part but only a piece of that part. Thus, Aristotle cannot say that the testicles are exactly the same as flesh, but he recognizes that they are not far from it. He perceives them to be very fleshlike.

Physiologically, a testicle is a mass of flesh enclosed in a membrane or sack. Anyone who has ever castrated or slaughtered an animal and cut into a testicle would recognize Euripides’ phrase *σαρκὸς περιβόλαια* as a reference to the testicles. The ancients often slaughtered and castrated animals and even ate the flesh of testicles. Galen comments, “The people around me cut the testicles off young pigs and bulls . . . goats and sheep. . . . All the animals just mentioned have testicles that are difficult to digest and unwholesome, although when cooked properly they are

²⁵ In his Loeb translation of this passage, Wesley D. Smith renders *τράγος* as “lubriciousness” or “sexual urge.” Galen (*UP* 14.7) understands it more accurately as a reference to puberty. In other contexts, the word means “he-goat” and often refers to puberty because of the pubescent change of voice that resembles the sound made by this animal.

²⁶ See Aristotle, *Gen. an.* 787b21–788a15 and 728a18–19. Dover comments, “Old Philokleon in *Wasps* 578, listing the enjoyable perquisites of jury service, includes ‘looking at the genitals of boys’ whose attainment of the age necessary for registration as full citizens had been questioned and referred to a lawcourt” (*Greek Homosexuality*, 125).

nourishing.”²⁷ He points out that the defects and virtues of the testicles as food “parallel what was said about flesh.”²⁸ Euripides’ description of the testicles as bags of flesh would have been very familiar to the ancients, and their familiarity with the physical nature of testicles, therefore, is a very persuasive argument that *σαρκὸς περιβόλαια* in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269 refers to Heracles’ testicles and not to garments or vestures as a metaphor for Heracles’ entire body, as Goodacre wants to translate.

Goodacre states that there are “important problems” with my translation of the passage from Euripides (p. 393), but I have demonstrated that Goodacre’s translation encounters problems more significant than mine.²⁹ I maintain that translating *περιβόλαια* as “testicles” in this passage fits the context better and provides a lexical illustration for the usage of this word in 1 Cor 11:15. My case for translating *περιβόλαιον* as “testicle” in 1 Cor 11:15, however, ultimately depends not on Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269 but on the specific context of the passage in 1 Corinthians.

The second text I provide as a lexical illustration for translating *περιβόλαιον* as “testicle” in 1 Cor 11:15 is Achilles Tatius’s *Leuc. Clit.* 1.15.2. Goodacre allows that this text can support the meaning of “testicle” for *περιβόλαιον* if that meaning is established elsewhere. I think I have demonstrated sufficiently that this word does convey this meaning in Euripides’ *Herc. fur.* 1269, so I hope Goodacre can now also see this passage in Achilles’ erotic work as an allusion to male and female sexual organs. Again, however, my case for translating *περιβόλαιον* as “testicle” in 1 Cor 11:15 does not finally rest on his seeing this allusion in Achilles’ work.

In conclusion, I want to respond to some scattered arguments that Goodacre makes against my reading of 1 Cor 11:15. Goodacre concludes, “If Paul had wished to contrast women’s hair with male testicles in 1 Cor 11:15, we would have expected him to use a plural noun, and the noun of choice would have been ὄρχις” (p. 395). Paul could not have used the word ὄρχις, however, without confusing his readers, since the semantic range of this Greek word includes both male testicles and female ovaries.³⁰ Both genders thus have ὄρχις, but the appearance and function of these ὄρχις differ significantly between the genders.³¹ A female ὄρχις or ovary is flat, thin, and small and plays a marginal role in her genital system. In contrast, a

²⁷ Galen, *De alimentorum facultatibus* 3.6 (Kühn 6:675–76); translated by Mark Grant, *Galen on Food and Diet* (London: Routledge, 2000), 160.

²⁸ Galen, *De alimentorum facultatibus* 3.6 (Kühn 6:676); translated by Owen Powell, *Galen On the Properties of Foodstuffs (De alimentorum facultatibus): Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 121.

²⁹ Another problem with Goodacre’s translation is that it mistakenly implies that youthful bodies are strong and vigorous. Such is not always the case, however. See Aristotle, *Hist. an.* 581b19–582a5.

³⁰ Aristotle, *Hist. an.* 497a30–31; Galen, *UP* 14.6 and 14.9.

³¹ See the extended discussion of the differences in Galen, *UP* 14.6, 10, 12, and 14.

male ὄρχις or testicle is large, hollow, and porous. It plays a most significant role in drawing the bloodlike fluid and concocting it into pure semen.³² Referring to a male testicle as a bag thus distinguishes it and its function from the female's ὄρχις, since she does not have a bag. If the English word "testicles," for example, could refer both to male testicles and female ovaries, then an English writer would need to use a colloquial expression such as "balls" or "nuts" to specify the meaning of male testicles. Since the Greek word ὄρχις does not refer to a male body part lacking in a woman, this word does not therefore fit the contextual requirements of 1 Cor 11:15. Paul must use a colloquial word to specify a male testicle and its function in contrast to a female's genital system, and the word he uses is περιβόλαιον, which is best rendered by the English word "testicle."

Goodacre further states, "If Paul had wished to contrast women's hair with male testicles in 1 Cor 11:15, we would have expected him to use a plural noun" (p. 395). Paul, however, does not use plural nouns in contexts similar to 1 Cor 11:15. Paul's ancient physiology does not perceive the testicles as working in tandem in the same way as the kidneys or lungs (Aristotle, *Gen. an.* 765a23–26). The testicles' independent function is similar to the function of the eyes or the ears in that a man with only one testicle, eye, and ear can still reproduce, see, and hear. When Paul speaks of dual body parts that function independently of one another, he customarily speaks of the singular eye, hand, or ear and not the plural (1 Cor 2:9; 12:15–17, 21; 15:52).³³ In 1 Cor 11:15, Paul contrasts the function of a woman's long hair with male testicles, and he characteristically does so with the singular περιβόλαιον ("testicle") rather than the plural περιβόλαια ("testicles").

Furthermore, Goodacre insists that if σαρκὸς περιβόλαια in Euripides' *Herc. fur.* 1269 means "testicles," then the limiting genitive (σαρκὸς) must occur with περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15 if περιβόλαιον means "testicle." There are so many nouns that express a particular meaning with and without a limiting genitive that his insistence seems arbitrary and unrealistic in the case of περιβόλαιον. The context determines whether a limiting genitive is needed to specify the meaning of a noun or whether this noun can be used with this meaning without the genitive. In any case, our task is not to rewrite what Paul has written but to try to make sense of the words as he has written them.

Finally, Goodacre criticizes me for not giving more attention to possible alternative meanings of περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15 (p. 395). Actually, I did consider the possible reference of περιβόλαιον to the scrotum more seriously than my brief reference in a footnote indicates.³⁴ This alternative is appealing because the scrotum is called a "wrapping," which falls within the semantic range of περιβόλαιον,

³² See, e.g., Galen, *UP* 14.10 and 14.14.

³³ When Paul refers to dual body parts and their mutual function is in view, however, he uses the plural. See his use of the plural "feet" in 1 Cor 12:21.

³⁴ Martin, "Paul's Argument," 77 n. 7.

although not in reference to a scrotum. Aristotle (*Gen. an.* 719b1–2) calls the scrotum a shelter (σκέπη) and a covering (καλύμματος) that protects the testicles. He calls it “the skin that surrounds (the testicles)” (πέριξ δέρμα; *Hist. an.* 493a33) and “a skin covering” (σκέπη δερματική; *Gen. an.* 719b5). In reference to the scrotum, Aristotle uses words such as περιληπτική and περιλαβεῖν, which are rendered with the English word “wrapping” in Peck’s Loeb translation. Galen (*UP* 14.7; Helmreich 2.308.10) also describes the scrotum as surrounding a testicle (ὁ ἀμφ’ αὐτὸν ὄσχεος). Understanding περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15 as a reference to a scrotum is thus appealing.

In addition, the male genital structure is downward and outward, while the female structure is inverted from the male and is oriented inward and upward.³⁵ The scrotum, therefore, forms the covering for the extremity of the male genital structure just as a woman’s hair forms a covering for the extremity of her genital system. Thus, it is possible for περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15 to mean “scrotum,” as I suggest in a footnote.³⁶

I decided not to pursue this alternative, however, because the function of a woman’s hair is more similar to the structure and function of a male testicle. The structure of the scrotum is skin wrapped around the testicles, while the testicles themselves are hollow and porous (διάκενοι καὶ σηραγγώδεις; Galen, *UP* 14.10; Helmreich 2.316.22–23) similar to the hollow and porous structure of a woman’s hair.³⁷ The function of a scrotum is to protect the testicles and keep them warm. Although it participates in the coction of semen (Aristotle, *Gen. an.* 719b1–3), it does not draw the semen downward as a testicle does. Since a woman’s hair participates in the drawing up of semen, I decided that the contrasting male part to a woman’s hair in 1 Cor 11:15 is a testicle, not the scrotum.³⁸ Nevertheless, περιβόλαιον in 1 Cor 11:15 may refer to a scrotum, but it seems to me that a reference to a testicle is the better alternative.

After carefully considering Goodacre’s evaluation and article, I conclude that my reading of περιβόλαιον as “testicle” in 1 Cor 11:15 makes better sense of this passage than any other reading proposed thus far. If Goodacre or anyone else can suggest a more cogent reading, I am happy to consider it. Until then, however, I shall continue to read this passage in the only way that makes sense by translating περιβόλαιον in the context of 1 Cor 11:15 as “testicle.”

³⁵ Aristotle, *Hist. an.* 493b3–6; Galen, *UP* 14.6 (Helmreich 2.296–297) and 14.10 (Helmreich 2.318).

³⁶ Martin, “Paul’s Argument,” 77 n. 7.

³⁷ For texts that hold the hair to be hollow, see *ibid.*, 77–79.

³⁸ For the ancient sources that describe the physiological function of female hair and male testicles, see *ibid.*, 77–83.

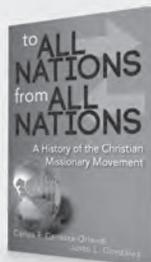
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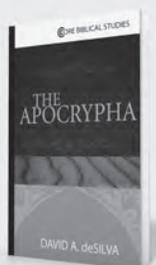
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