

CRITICAL NOTES

עֵין AND דָּה:
TWO VERBS MASQUERADING AS NOUNS
IN MOSES' BLESSING (DEUTERONOMY 33:2, 28)

Irregular spelling is not normally an obstacle to understanding the biblical text. Nevertheless, when the deviant spelling of a rare word coincides with the normal spelling of a common word, exegetes can be misled. I submit that there are two irregular spellings in Moses' Blessing: דָּה for דָּהָה (Deut 33:2, מִיִּמִּינוֹ אֲשַׁדְּהָה לְמוֹי) and עֵין for עֵין (Deut 33:28, וְיִשְׁכֵּן יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח בְּרָד עֵין יַעֲקֹב). These spellings have disguised the identity of the forms in question, leading many exegetes to assume that they are nouns or simply scribal errors. I shall argue that they are, in reality, verbs and not in need of emendation.

I. דָּה

According to the oral reading tradition recorded by the Masoretes, supported by most ancient witnesses (including the Samaritan version), the *kētīb* אֲשַׁדְּהָה in Deut 33:2 is to be read (*qērē*) as two words: דָּהּ אֵין.¹ Because the second word looks like the noun דָּה ("law"), attested in Hebrew and Aramaic passages of Esther, Ezra, and Daniel, the phrase דָּהּ אֵין was traditionally understood as connecting the Torah with fire in one way or another.²

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¹ Cf. Aleppo margin מִלִּין תְּרַח וְקִרִי חֲדָה וְקִרִי חֲדָה, "written as one word and read as two words." The writing of אֵין together with a following monosyllabic word is found also in Jer 6:29: מִאֲשַׁדְּהָה (see סֵפֶר וְאִכְלָה וְאִכְלָה [ed. S. Frensdorff, Hannover: Hahn, 1864] 96). Short proclitic words are often written together with the following word in inscriptions as well. The Samaritan Pentateuch has אֵין דָּה, written as two words (A. Tal, *The Samaritan Pentateuch Edited According to MS 6 (C) of the Shekhem Synagogue* [Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, 1994]). For other ancient witnesses that support the reading as two words, see the next footnote. There is only one ancient witness that may have interpreted our form as a single word: LXX. It has been conjectured that the word ἄγγελοι ("angels") in the Septuagint's rendering of the end of 33:2 (ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ ἄγγελοι μετ' αὐτοῦ) corresponds to the *kētīb* אֲשַׁדְּהָה and that the latter is to be compared to Arabic 'asad ("lion") and Epigraphic South Arabian ṣ'ld ("man, warrior" [?]) (J. S. Vater and K. W. Justi *apud* K. H. Graf, *Der Segen Moses* [Leipzig: Dyk, 1857] 10; W. Gesenius, *Hebräisches und chaldäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament* [Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel, 1823] s.v. דָּה; A. F. L. Beeston, "Angels in Deuteronomy 33²," *JTS* n.s. 2 [1951] 30–31).

² The Vulgate renders *igne lex* ("fiery law") and the Samaritan Targum has נֹר אֲוִרָה ("fire of

By the nineteenth century, such interpretations had fallen on hard times. It was realized that the word הָרַךְ , occurring also as a component of Iranian names like מְהַרְרַךְ (Ezra 1:8; 4:7) and בַּגְדָד , “Baghdad” (*b. Yebam.* 67a; *b. Ketub.* 10b, etc.), is an Iranian loanword.³ It was also noted that, outside of Deut 33:2, the word is attested only in post-exilic compositions. As a result, scholars began to question the traditional exegesis. K. H. Graf, for example, asked how a “Hebrew poet of the early period” could have used such a word.⁴ More recent scholars have asked the same question,⁵ for it is now generally acknowledged that Moses’ blessing was composed “long before the post-exilic dates which were in vogue around the turn of the century.”⁶

Thanks in part to these considerations, scholars have concluded that the reading הָרַךְ is impossible, and a great number of alternatives have been offered.⁷ D. N. Freedman’s view is typical: “In a few instances, a different vocalization is proposed, where MT is clearly faulty: e.g., ‘āšēdōt [*sic*, for ‘āšēdōt —RCS] for הָרַךְ (v. 2), where the vocalization of MT is based upon a highly improbable interpretation of the text.”⁸ Further, “MT cannot be followed in its analysis of the term into two words, הָרַךְ , which is a counsel of despair.”⁹ G. Rendsburg, who calls the form “one of the most difficult cruces in the Bible,”¹⁰ agrees: “Modern Bible critics have rightly rejected the Masoretic division into רַךְ and d̄t .”¹¹

Torah”) (A. Tal, *The Samaritan Targum of the Pentateuch. A Critical Edition* [Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, 1981] 2,392, 399). *Onqelos*, *Neofiti*, and the *Fragment Targums* are similar, except that they break up the phrase. *Mekhilta*, *Sifre* and other midrashim also find references to Torah and fire here.

³ See R. Kent, *Old Persian* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1953) 189. It is far from certain that the Iranian dialect from which the word was borrowed is Old Persian, *pace* such handbooks as *HALAT*, s.v. הָרַךְ ; and K. Beyer, *Die aramäischen Text vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht) 558. The name מְהַרְרַךְ is from the Median dialect; the Persian counterpart would have yielded מְהַרְרַך , as in Syriac (see *HALAT*, s.v. מְהַרְרַך).

⁴ Graf, *Der Segen Moses*, 9.

⁵ B. Margulis writes that “ רַךְ —‘law; usage’—is a Persian loanword into postexilic Hebrew, centuries later than the poem’s composition” (“Gen. XLIX 10/Deut. XXXIII 2–3,” *VT* 19 [1969] 206).

⁶ L. E. Axelsson, *The Lord Rose up from Seir* (Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1987) 50. Axelsson adds that “there is nothing whatever to suggest a late (post-exilic) date.” For a premonarchic dating, see F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman, “The Blessing of Moses,” *JBL* 67 (1948) 192; I. L. Seeligman, “A Psalm from Pre-Regal Times,” *VT* 14 (1964) 75–92; and D. N. Freedman, “The Poetic Structure of the Framework of Deuteronomy 33,” in *The Bible World: Essays in Honor of Cyrus H. Gordon* (ed. G. Rendsburg; New York: New York University Press, 1980) 26.

⁷ According to Cross and Freedman (“Blessing of Moses,” 199 n. 11), “conjectures are almost as numerous as scholars.” See the surveys of the literature in Graf, *Der Segen Moses*, 9–10; Margulis, “Gen. XLIX 10,” 206; L. Blau, “Zwei Dunkel Stellen im Segen Moses (Dt. 33 2–3, 24–25),” in *Jewish Studies in Memory of George A. Kohut* (ed. S. W. Baron and Alexander Marx; New York: Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1935) 95–96; Seeligman, “A Psalm from Pre-Regal Times,” 75; and G. Rendsburg, “Hebrew *šdt* and Ugaritic *išdym*,” *JNSL* 8 (1980) 81–82; and add D. L. Christensen, “Two Stanzas of a Hymn in Deuteronomy 33,” *Bib* 65 (1984) 382–89.

⁸ Freedman, “Poetic Structure,” 30.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁰ Rendsburg, “Hebrew *šdt*,” 81; so already Margulis, “Gen. XLIX 10,” 206.

¹¹ Rendsburg, “Hebrew *šdt*,” 81.

As we have seen, however, the division into two words is supported by most of the ancient witnesses. I submit that the problem with that division can be solved by taking דָּה as an irregular spelling of the verb דָּהָה *—a feminine perfect¹² of the root ד-ה-א occurring only a few chapters earlier (Deut 28:49, דָּהָה). It is feminine because it is the predicate verb of the feminine noun שָׂא .

The form $\text{דָּה} = \text{דָּהָה}$ * is a contraction of דָּהָה *. The latter exhibits the archaic third person feminine singular form of III- א verbs attested sporadically in the Bible (Lev 25:21, עָשָׂה ; Lev 26:34, הִרְצָה ; Jer 13:19, הִגִּילָה ; Ezek 24:12, הִלְלָה) and possibly also in the Siloam inscription and Mishnaic Hebrew.¹³ The contraction is apparently the result of the elision of א between identical or similar vowels, as in $\text{רְבוּחַ/רְבוּחָה/רְבוּחוֹת}$ (Isa 16:6), גָּא/גָּאָה (Isa 28:1,4).

Omission of quiescent א in the orthography is well known from the Bible (e.g., Gen 25:24, חֹמִים ; 31:39, אֶחָפְנָה ; Deut 28:57, הִיִּצָּה ; 1 Sam 1:17, שָׁלַחַךְ ; 2 Sam 22:40, וַחֲזַרְנִי ; Ps 22:22, רָמִים)¹⁴ and from Northwest Semitic inscriptions; however, the most interesting example for our purposes comes from tannaitic literature. In Mishnaic Hebrew, the feminine of בָּא (“he came”) is בָּאָה , normally vocalized בָּאָה in reliable manuscripts, such as Codex Kaufmann.¹⁵ This form may be compared to (the final syllable of) בָּקָהָה in Deut 31:29. In one of the earliest and most important rabbinic manuscripts, the Vatican manuscript of the *Sipra* (Codex Assemani 66), alongside בָּאָה we find בָּה in the meaning “she came.”¹⁶ This spelling fluctuation is precisely the one we have posited for דָּהָה * and דָּה (“she flew”).¹⁷

According to this analysis, the phrase $\text{מִיְמִינוֹ אֲשֶׁרֶת לָמוֹ}$ means “from his right, fire flew to them.”¹⁸ It contains a verb paralleling the verbs in the preceding stichs¹⁹ and a prefixed מ- meaning “from,” as in the preceding stichs, rather than “at.” It serves to sum

¹² Cf. the nineteenth-century emendations to שָׁרַת and דָּת cited by Graf, *Der Segen Moses*, 10.

¹³ See, most recently, G. B. Sarfatti, “הכחזכות מתקופת המקרא ולשון חכמים,” *Mehqarim Belazon* 5–6 (1991–92) 44–45.

¹⁴ The phenomenon is especially common in Job, e.g., 1:21; 35:11; 39:9; 41:17.

¹⁵ The form has a very archaic appearance, and, like other Mishnaic forms, may actually be older than its standard Biblical Hebrew counterpart. It is therefore conceivable that anomalous forms such as Deut 33:16 תִּבְאָהָה (“may it come,” alongside Isa 5:19 וַתְּבוֹאָה) and 1 Sam 25:34 kētīb וַחֲבֹאֲתִי (“you [fem. sing.] came,” alongside Ezek 16:7 וַתְּבֹאֲתִי) owe their existence to a reanalysis of בָּאָה which incorporated the feminine ending into the root. It is well known that a similar reanalysis occurred in דָּלַח (“door”) and other nouns. For the roots of Mishnaic Hebrew in the biblical period and its importance for biblical studies, see R. C. Steiner, “A Colloquialism in Jer 5:13 from the Ancestor of Mishnaic Hebrew,” *JSS* 37 (1992) 11–26 and the literature cited there.

¹⁶ See I. Yeivin, מסורת הלשון העברית המשתקפת בניקוד הבבלי (Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew Language, 1985) 633–34; S. Naeh, 66 כתב־יד וטיקאן (diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1989) 251. Naeh rightly views this form as an example of III- א verbs being treated as III- א .

¹⁷ To what extent there is a morphological parallel between בָּאָה and דָּהָה * depends on the root of the latter. The dictionaries know only ד-ה-א , but the similarity between the bird-names דָּהָה and קָאָה (from the hollow root א-ק-א) leads me to wonder whether there was a hollow by-form ד-ו-א . In that case, the morphology of דָּהָה * would be identical to that of בָּאָה . Another possible parallel between the two is that they are both presupposed by forms in Moses’ Blessing (see n. 15 above).

¹⁸ Cf. JPS: “Lightning flashing at them from His right.”

¹⁹ The absence of a verb in this stich bothered Ibn Ezra enough to make him combine it with the previous stich, yielding something like $\text{וַאֲתָהּ אֲשֶׁרֶת מִרְבֵּבָה קָדַשׁ מִיְמִינוֹ לָמוֹ}$.

up the four previous stichs and even to resolve a slight contradiction among them. Two of those stichs speak of the Lord *coming* (בָּא, אָהָה) to the Israelites from his place while two of them speak of him *shining* (זָרַח, הִרְפִּיעַ) upon them from his place—presumably while remaining there. The fifth stich reconciles the apparent contradiction: instead of coming to them in person, the Lord sends a fire from his right.²⁰ Through his fire, the Lord both shines and comes.

II. עֵין

Another word in Moses' blessing that looks like a noun is עֵין (Deut 33:28). Most ancient and medieval exegetes took it to be the construct form of עֵינַי ("eye, spring"). An important exception, pointed out by N. Netzer, is Menaḥem b. Saruq (tenth century), who connected it with the noun מְעִנָה in the preceding verse (33:27) and with the verb וְעָנָה in Isa 13:22.²¹ His gloss to the section in question is: עֵינַי שְׂכֹנָה הֵמָּה, "they have the meaning of 'dwelling.'"²² Netzer notes that Menaḥem's approach was criticized by Dunash and subsequently forgotten.²³

The gloss שְׂכֹנָה makes it very likely that Menaḥem took עֵין as parallel with the verb וְיִשְׁכֵּן, perhaps by a simple process of elimination (cf. בָּטַח//בָּרַד and יִשְׁכֵּן//יִשְׁכֵּן).²⁴ Y. Avishur has shown that ע-ר-ן and כ-ש-ח//ב-ר-ד are attested as parallel pairs elsewhere in biblical poetry.²⁵ Thus, there can be little doubt about the correctness of Menaḥem's view, and it is, in fact, generally accepted today. Freedman, for example, translates: "So Israel settled securely, alone dwelt Jacob, in a land of grain and must; indeed his skies drip dew."²⁶ I. L. Seeligman renders: "Israel thus dwells in safety, Jacob abides in seclusion, in a land of corn and vintage, and blessed with dew from the heavens."²⁷

It is not clear whether Menaḥem took the word as a verb or a noun. A few modern adherents of Menaḥem's view have taken it to be a noun—either a by-form of the con-

²⁰ Cf. Ps 104:4: "He makes the winds his emissaries, burning fire (אֵשׁ) his servants." The verb א-ר-ד is not attested elsewhere with fire as its subject, but it is used of the Lord in Ps 18:11, and its synonym, ע-ר-ן, is used in Isa 6:6 of a fiery angel flying from the Lord to a man.

²¹ N. Netzer, "למקורו של עֵין יַעֲקֹב בְּמִשְׁמַע מֵעֵין יַעֲקֹב," *Beit Mikra* 20 (1974–75) 156. For this interpretation of וְעָנָה in Isa 13:22, cf. already the LXX and note וְשָׁכַן in 13:21. See also n. 33 below.

²² *Mēnaḥem ben Saruq. Mahberet* (ed. A. Sáenz-Badillos; Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1986) 285*, s.v. עֵין section 3. The edition of Z. Filipowski (London: Me'orere Yešanim, 1854), which is now superseded, is missing the gloss; hence Netzer did not know of it. Note that occurrences of עֵין with the meanings "eye, spring, appearance" are dealt with elsewhere (sections 6–8), as are occurrences of עָנָה with the meaning "sing, answer" (sections 1–2).

²³ *Tēšubot de Dunaš ben Labrat* (ed. A. Sáenz-Badillos; Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1980) 102*–103*. Menaḥem's usual partisans did not rise to his defense in this instance. *Tēšubot de los discípulos de Mēnaḥem contra Dunaš ben Labrat* (ed. S. B. Robles; Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1986) contains no response to the criticism, and Rabbenu Tam sides with Dunash (see סֵפֶר הַחֻבּוֹת דּוֹנָשׁ בֶּן לַבְרָט עִם הַכְרֵעוֹת רַבֵּינוּ יַעֲקֹב חָם [ed. Z. Filipowski; London: Me'orere Yešanim, 1855] 80).

²⁴ If so, we may assume that he was willing to overlook the fact that, according to the Masoretic accents, בָּרַד בְּשָׁח is a phrase.

²⁵ Y. Avishur, "נוספות לדברים ל'ג," *Beit Mikra* 22 (1976–77) 133–36.

²⁶ Freedman, "Poetic Structure," 33.

²⁷ Seeligman, "Psalm from Pre-Regal Times," 78.

crete noun עָנַן²⁸ or an abstract (verbal) noun on the pattern of שָׁרַד and צִיר.²⁹ According to these analyses, our verse exhibits parallelism between a verb and a noun, which, according to S. Loewenstamm and Avishur, is rare and late.³⁰ Nevertheless, Loewenstamm does not exclude this possibility.

Most modern scholars, unaware of the aforementioned possibility, have followed K. Budde in assuming that the parallel of the verb יָשָׁן should also be a verb (derived from the root י-ר-ע) and that עָנַן should be emended accordingly.³¹ Of the three emendations proposed in the 1920s—Budde's עָנַן, U. Cassuto's עָנַן, and A. Van Hoonacker's עָנַן—it is the second that has won general acceptance.³² It has not been realized that the interpretation of עָנַן as a verb—perfect or participle—does not require any emendation at all.

Cassuto's emendation assumes that י-ר-ע is a dynamic verb with a perfect and participle on the pattern of קָם, rather than a stative verb with a perfect and participle on the pattern of מָה. It is true that Biblical Hebrew verbs of dwelling normally have dynamic morphology—as does perhaps י-ר-ע itself in Isa 13:22.³³ Nevertheless, many of them exhibit vestiges of an older stage during which they were stative. Thus, the perfect of ש-כ-ן in five passages (prose, nonpausal) is dynamic יָשָׁן, but Moses' Blessing and the Song of Deborah preserve three examples of an archaic stative perfect יָשָׁן, either because the poetic dialect is more archaic than standard Biblical Hebrew or because all three occurrences are in at least minor pauses. The stative *participle* יָשָׁן survives in prose only as a noun meaning "neighbor," but one poetic passage (Isa 33:24) has it instead of the usual dynamic יָשָׁן.

Similarly, the participle of ג-ר-ר is dynamic יָגַר, but a fossilized stative participle survives in the noun גֵּר ("stranger, resident alien");³⁴ the two forms are frequently collo-

²⁸ M. Bar-Magen, "זי"שכן ישראל בטח ברך עין יעקב," *Beit Mikra* 18 (1972–73) 48–50. See already JPS: "Untroubled is Jacob's abode."

²⁹ S. Loewenstamm, "עין יעקב," *Beit Mikra* 21 (1975–76) 152–53.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 153; Avishur, "נוספות לרברים ל"ג, כח," 136.

³¹ K. Budde, *Der Segen Mose's, Deuteronomium* 33 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1922) 16.

³² *Ibid.*; U. Cassuto, "Il cap. 33 del Deuteronomio e la festa del capo d'anno," *RSO* 11 (1928) 249–50; A. Van Hoonacker, "Notes sur le texte de la 'Bénédictio de Moïse' (*Deut.* XXXIII)," *Mus* 42 (1929) 59.

³³ See HALAT, s.v. עין III, where the form is analyzed as a hollow verb with the archaic fem. plur. perfect *-ā* ending preserved in Akkadian and Aramaic and attested sporadically in BH. If this is correct, וְעֵינָיו קָמָה (1 Sam 4:15) exhibits a shift to ultimate stress before a word beginning with a laryngeal (אֵי); see G. Bergsträsser, *Hebräische Grammatik* (Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel, 1929) 2. §28e; and C. Rabin, "משמעותיותה של הצורות הרקדוקיות בלשון המקרא," *יבולשון ימינו* (Jerusalem: Academon, 1973) 18.

³⁴ W. F. Albright, "An Archaic Hebrew Proverb in an Amarna Letter from Central Palestine," *BASOR* 89 (1943) 32 n. 26. A fossilized stative participle from a different semantic field may be discerned in the noun עֵקֶד ("almond tree") from the root ע-ק-ד ("be vigilant, be awake at a time when it is customary to sleep [late at night or early in the morning]"), whose productive participle is עֵקֶד. As is well known, the Hebrew name of the almond tree derives from the fact that it is the first tree to bloom (= awaken) in the spring (= morning). The noun עֵקֶד shows that ע-ק-ד originally had stative morphology, like its near-synonym ע-ר-ר ("be awake") (participle עָרַר) and its near-antonym ע-ש-ן ("be asleep") (participle עָשָׁן). For the spread of dynamic morphology at the expense of the stative and its causes, see P. Joüon, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique* (Rome: Institut Biblique Pontifi-

cated in the Bible as הָגַר הֶגֶר, and the like. The verb לִוּוּ-וּ also preserves the stative form of the participle in Neh 13:21 (לָוִים) alongside the younger and more common form לָוִי.

Thus, there is every reason to expect that the verb related to מְעִין was originally stative עָן, just as לָן is related to מְלִין, כָּן, מְכוּן, and גָּר. Indeed, were it not for the *plene* spelling of עָן in our verse, it would never have posed much of a problem.

Plene spelling is rare in the MT for an *e* not derived from *ay*, but it is not unattested; see examples cited by F. I. Andersen and A. D. Forbes and J. Barr such as Exod 25:31, חִיעָשָׁה; Josh 9:11, וְקִינִי; Mic 1:8, אִילְכָה; Ps 139:12, כִּחְשִׁיקָה; 2 Kgs 17:16, אִשְׁרָה; and from Deuteronomy itself (7:5), וְאִשְׁרָהֶם. The closest parallels are 2 Sam 22:29, גִּירָי, and 2 Chr 2:16, הַגִּירִים.³⁶ Both nouns are probably derived from hollow statives, just like עִין.

It should be noted that *BHS* consistently refrains from emending *plene* spellings of the sort cited above.³⁷ That wise policy can now be safely extended to עָן in Deut 33:28. The interpretation of that word as a verb meaning “dwelled” or “dwells” requires no alteration of the Masoretic spelling or pointing.

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cal, 1923) §41b (note the article cited there); and J. Blau, תורת ההגה והצורה (Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1972) 131. This process led ultimately to the near-total disappearance of stative marking for the perfect in Mishnaic Hebrew (see C. Haneman, תורת הצורות של לשון המשנה [Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, 1980] 69–73).

³⁵ F. I. Andersen and A. D. Forbes, *Spelling in the Hebrew Bible* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986) 136; J. Barr, *The Variable Spellings of the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) 140. The opposite tendency, the defective spelling of *e* derived from *ay* (e.g., Isa 3:8 עֵי), is, of course, widely attested.

³⁶ Barr, *Variable Spellings*, 142.

³⁷ Indeed, as pointed out by Barr, *BHS* creates its own *plene* spelling in Deut 33:12, only a few verses from our example, where it gives the form כְּהִפְיוּ, not found in the Leningrad codex!

ʿAMON AGAIN

The sentence וַתֵּדַע אֱמֻנָה אֱלֹהִים (Prov 8:30a) presents one of the great puzzles in the Hebrew Bible.¹ In it personified Wisdom says, or seems to say, that she was an אֱמֻנָה with God during creation. But what is an אֱמֻנָה?

Three main explanations of אֱמֻנָה have been offered: (1) artisan, (2) constant(ly), and (3) ward/nurseling. I will argue for a fourth, which is a variant of the last, by drawing upon the neglected insights of two medieval scholars, Yonah Abu al-Walid Marwan ibn Janah² and Moshe Qimhi.³

I. אֱמֻנָה refers to some aspect of craftsmanship.

(a) אֱמֻנָה = “artisan” or the like. Some commentators take אֱמֻנָה as equivalent to אֲמִן (or emend thus). אֱמֻנָה = “artisan” is a *hapax* found in Song 7:2. Thus, e.g., RSV “master worker,” F. Delitzsch “master of the work,”⁴ H. Ringgren “*Werkmeisterin*.”⁵ This is apparently a loanword from Akkadian *ummānu* (“foreman”) via Aramaic.⁶

The major ancient versions presuppose a similar understanding: Peshitta: *mtqnʿ hwyt*, “I was establishing”; Vulgate: *conponens*, “arranging,” “composing”; and probably LXX: ἀπρόζουσσα, “composing” or “being in harmony with.” This understanding is reflected in the Wisdom of Solomon (7:21; 8:6), which speaks of wisdom as the τεχνίτης (“artificer”) of the world.

אֱמֻנָה, “artisan,” does not exist elsewhere in Biblical Hebrew. To be sure, some com-

¹ The history of its interpretation is surveyed by H.-P. Rüger, “Amon—Pflegetkind: Zur Auslegungsgeschichte von Prov. 8:30a,” in *Übersetzung und Deutung: Festschrift A. R. Hulst* (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1977) 154–63.

² ספר הרקמה (ed. M. Wilensky; Jerusalem: Academy for the Hebrew Language, 1929; reprint, 1965).

³ פירושים לספר משלי לביה קמחי (ed. Frank Talmage; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990).

⁴ Franz Delitzsch, *Proverbs* (1873; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989) 191. Delitzsch implausibly derives the word from “be firm,” hence “one who is strong in his art.”

⁵ Helmer Ringgren, *Sprüche* (ATD 16; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962) 39. Ringgren’s use of the feminine in German, in spite of the masculine form of אֱמֻנָה, shows one of the difficulties in treating the word as a noun.

⁶ Avi Hurvitz argues that since the noun pattern *qātōl* indicates the holder of a certain occupation, *ʿāmōn* as pointed probably means “artisan” (לְ), in *The Bible in the Light of its Interpreters: Memorial for Sara Kamin* [Jerusalem: Magnes, 1995] 647–50.

mentators regard *הַמְּבֹרָךְ* in Jer 52:15 as a collective meaning "artisans,"⁷ but this is actually an aural variant of *הַמְּבֹרָךְ*, "multitude" (1 Kgs 25:11). The verse lists groups of exiles in the second wave, and according to 2 Kgs 24:14 all the artisans were deported in 597. In any case, the posited sense of *הַמְּבֹרָךְ*, "collectivity of artisans," would not apply in Prov 8:30a.

The problem with explaining *מְבֹרָכָה* as "artisan" is that nowhere in Proverbs 8 is Wisdom assigned an active role in creation. On the contrary, in the parallel lines she is said to be *playing* constantly. The emphasis on Wisdom's play in vv. 30–31 seems to be a deliberate refutation of the notion that wisdom had an active productive role in the work of creation.⁸

(b) *מְבֹרָכָה* = "tool." *Gen. Rab.* §1.2 states simply, *מְבֹרָכָה מְבֹרָכָה*, "*mmcn* means artisan (*ummān*)." However, the midrash goes on to describe wisdom (= Torah) not as an artisan but as the *tool* (*כלי אומנותו*) of God, who used the Torah (believed to be preexistent) as a blueprint when constructing the universe. This midrash, if it is to be understood precisely, is construing *מְבֹרָכָה* in a derived sense as "means of artistry." Sa'adia assumes this interpretation when he explains that wisdom was the means whereby all things were initiated and put into operation.⁹

(c) *מְבֹרָכָה* is emended to *מְבֹרָכָה*, supposedly meaning "binding [all] together," "uniting." This was proposed by R. B. Y. Scott, for which he appeals to the LXX, Vg, and Pesh.¹⁰ But this explanation too goes contrary to context and syntax, as well as assuming an unattested meaning for the verb *מְבֹרָכָה*.

2. *מְבֹרָכָה* = "constant(ly)," "faithful(ly)," or the like.

Thus Symmachus and Theodotion: ἑστηκυμένῃ, "set firm"; Targum: מְבֹרָכָה, "trusted one"; Venetus: πιστός, "good faith." A. Ehrlich renders "vertrauten Freund" or "beständiger Gast."¹¹ O. Plöger hesitantly parses *מְבֹרָכָה* as an infinitive absolute used adverbially in the sense of "beständig."¹² However (as Plöger recognizes), the root *מְבֹרָכָה* ("be firm/constant") is not productive in the G-stem (this appears only in the frozen form, *מְבֹרָכָה*, "Amen"). Moreover, the use of the N-stem would be expected in the proposed sense.

⁷ For example, William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah* (2 vols.; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989) 2.437; Robert P. Carroll, *Jeremiah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986) 862.

⁸ Even in Prov 3:19, which says that God created the world "by" (or "in") wisdom, wisdom is an instrument, not an agent.

⁹ Sa'adia ben Yosef Fayyumi, *משל* (trans. into Hebrew and ed. by Yosef Qafih; Jerusalem: Hava'ad Lehoṣa'at Sifrey Rasag, 1976 [?]).

¹⁰ R. B. Y. Scott, "Wisdom in Creation: The 'Amon of Proverbs VIII 30," *VT* 10 (1960) 213–23.

¹¹ A. Ehrlich, *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1908–14; reprint, 1968) 6.42.

¹² O. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos* (BKAT 17; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984) 95.

3. *אָמּוֹן* is derived from *אָמַן*, “to raise”/“care for.”

(a) *אָמּוֹן* = pedagogue. *Ber. Rab.* §1.1 offers “pedagogue” as one gloss among several. This might be justified morphologically by construing the word as a *nomen agentis* of the *qātōl* pattern, rare in Biblical Hebrew,¹³ but the picture of Wisdom teaching God his task is inappropriate. Gal 3:24 seems to reflect this interpretation: ὁ νόμος παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν εἰς Χριστόν, “The law was our teacher till Christ came.”

(b) *אָמּוֹן* = *אָמַן*, a passive participle meaning “ward,” “one who is raised.” Aquila’s *τιθηνοσυμένη* (“nursed”) construes the word thus, and this interpretation is followed by most modern commentators (e.g., C. H. Toy and William McKane).¹⁴ If this is correct, the word must be taken as an epicene noun, because as an adjective the passive participle would be feminine. But no such noun is attested. The plural participle *אָמּוֹנִים* appears in Lam 4:5.

4. *אָמּוֹן* is an infinitive absolute meaning “being raised”/“growing up,” serving as an adverbial complement to the main verb.

Ibn Janaḥ was the first (and almost the only) scholar to identify *אָמּוֹן* as an infinitive (*מִקְוֶה*), which is exactly what the vocalization indicates (*ספר הרקמה*, §323.16). He recognized also that the word is an adverbial complement, for which he uses the Arabic term *ḥāl*. For the sense he adduces Esth 2:7: “And he was raising (*אָמַן*) Hadassah.” But this example, though mentioned by many commentators, implies that Wisdom was doing the child-rearing (see 3a above), which is impossible, since there was not yet any child figure on the scene.

Moshe Qimḥi says that the “expected form” (*הראוי*) would be *באָמּוֹן*. In other words, he too recognizes that *אָמּוֹן* is an adverbial complement (*פירושים*, p. 198). Moshe Qimḥi’s contribution to the solution lies simply in referring to Esth 2:20b: “and Esther obeyed the word of Mordecai *אָמַן בְּאָמְנָה אִתּוֹ*” just as was the case when (she was) growing up with him.”

The significance of this parallel has been obscured by the lexicons, which consistently parse *אָמְנָה* as a noun meaning “tutelage,” “fosterage,” or the like. This construal creates a *hapax legomenon* and produces an awkward phrase, “as it was in fosterage with him.”

In fact, *אָמְנָה* is an infinitive. *BHS* and others reasonably propose supplying a *mappiq* for a third feminine suffix—a minuscule emendation yielding “when she was growing up.” But even without the *mappiq*, *אָמְנָה* can be parsed as infinitive with a third feminine singular suffix. (For the usage, see *GKC* §91f.) A third option would be to parse *אָמְנָה* as the extended or “feminine” form of the G infinitive. In any case, Esth 2:20b shows that the G infinitive of *אָמַן* can be intransitive and can refer to the child’s part (“being raised,” “growing up”) as well as the guardian’s. In fact, the example of Esth 2:20b conforms to the rule that the infinitive, especially in the G-stem, is indifferent to

¹³ The preferred form in this sense is the G participle; see 1 Kgs 10:1, 5; Esth 2:7; Num 11:12; Isa 49:23.

¹⁴ C. H. Toy, *Proverbs* (ICC; Edinburgh: Clark, 1959) 177; William McKane, *Proverbs* (OTL; London: SCM, 1970) 357.

voice. It also shows that רָאָה ("be raised") can govern a word meaning "with," because לְצִדְדֵי ("with"/"next to") is a near synonym of עִם as a preposition of proximity. (Compare the use of these prepositions in 1 Kgs 20:36.)

The infinitive absolute sometimes functions as an adverbial complement.¹⁵ Examples are Gen 30:32a; Exod 30:36a; Num 6:5b, 23b (וְאָמַר = "saying" rather than "say!"); and Jer 22:19. In the latter verse, note also the passive sense of the G and H infinitives of verbs that are otherwise transitive.

By this understanding, the second line in our verse (8:30ba) is not precisely synonymous with the first (v. 30a) but refines and elaborates the picture. This is the same relation that v. 31b bears to v. 31a.¹⁶ Lady Wisdom is declaring that while God was busy creating the world, she was nearby, growing up like a child in his care (v. 30a) and giving him delight (v. 30ba) by playing before him (v. 30bβ) in the world that would be inhabited (v. 31a). Now that humans are on the scene, *she* is the guardian and teacher and declares, "And my delight is in mankind" (v. 31b).

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¹⁵ See Bruce Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990) §35.3.2 and J. M. Solá-Solé, *L'Infinitif sémitique* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1961) 87–91, esp. §44.

¹⁶ In James Kugel's formulation, these are instances of parallelistic "heightening": "A, and what's more, B." (*The Idea of Biblical Poetry* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981] 1–58). In Robert Alter's terminology, they display a "structure of intensification," specifically an "elaboration" (*The Art of Biblical Poetry* [New York: Basic Books, 1985] 19–30, esp. 24, 29).

A LOVER, CITIES, AND HEAVENLY BODIES:
CO-TEXT AND THE TRANSLATION
OF TWO SIMILES IN CANTICLES
(6:4c; 6:10d)

Canticles—is there another work so fascinating, so splendid, yet so bewildering? Many aspects of Canticles can be confounding. Are there two or three main characters? What is the book’s role in the canon of the Hebrew Bible? How erotic is the language? One also wrestles with trying to understand many perplexing lexical items. In this note, I look at a phrase that occurs as part of a simile, which occurs twice but should be understood differently in each instance.

Canticles 6:4a–c, 6:10a–d and Commentary

6:4a	יפה את רעיתי כתרצה	You are beautiful, my dear, like Tirzah
6:4b	נאוה כירושלם	Lovely like Jerusalem
6:4c	אימה כנרגלות	ʿāyummâ kannidgālôt
6:10a	מרוצאת הנשקפה כמרשחר	Who is this who gazes (down) like the dawn
6:10b	יפה כלבנה	Beautiful like the moon
6:10c	ברה כחמה	Radiant like the sun
6:10d	אימה כנרגלות	ʿāyummâ kannidgālôt

The text may be formatted to point out the elements of the similes:

6:4a	יפה את רעיתי כתרצה	You are beautiful, my dear, like Tirzah
	TARGET REFERENCE FRAME ¹	= רעיתי, את (= female lover)

¹ Rather than the traditional *tenor-vehicle* labeling of the two principal elements in simile and metaphor, I prefer TARGET REFERENCE FRAME and SOURCE REFERENCE FRAME. These are labels I offer by bringing together two theoretical elements: (1) Benjamin Harshav’s [Hrushovski] literary theory for working with texts (“An Outline of Integrational Semantics: An Understaner’s Theory of Meaning in Context,” *Poetics Today* 3/4 [1982] 59–88) and (2) the hypothesis that simile and metaphor involve a *mapping* phenomenon from a *source*, traditionally “vehicle,” onto a *target*, traditionally “tenor” (G. Lakoff and M. Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989] 4 and passim; I discuss this mapping phenomenon in detail in chapter 4 of “Simile, Metaphor, and the Song of Songs” [Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1993]). REFERENCE FRAME allows one to refer to the components within a single simile or metaphor syntagm, but it also acknowledges that those components are vital to the overall semantic integration of a text.

SOURCE REFERENCE FRAME = הרצה
EXPLANATION² = יפה

- 6:4b נאוה כירושלם Lovely like Jerusalem
TARGET REFERENCE FRAME = רעיתי, את, in 6:4a (=female lover)³
SOURCE REFERENCE FRAME = ירושלם
EXPLANATION = נאוה
- 6:4c אימה כנדגלות *äyummâ kannidgälôt*
TARGET REFERENCE FRAME = רעיתי, את, in 6:4a (=female lover)
SOURCE REFERENCE FRAME = נדגלות
EXPLANATION = אימה
- 6:10a מי־זאת הנשקפה כמו־שחר Who is this who gazes (down) like the dawn
TARGET REFERENCE FRAME = זאת (=female lover)
SOURCE REFERENCE FRAME = שחר
EXPLANATION = נשקפה
- 6:10b יפה כלבנה Beautiful like the moon
TARGET REFERENCE FRAME = זאת in 6:10a (=female lover)
SOURCE REFERENCE FRAME = לבנה
EXPLANATION = יפה
- 6:10c ברה כחמה Radiant like the sun
TARGET REFERENCE FRAME = זאת in 6:10a (=female lover)
SOURCE REFERENCE FRAME = חמה
EXPLANATION = ברה
- 6:10d אימה כנדגלות *äyummâ kannidgälôt*
TARGET REFERENCE FRAME = זאת in 6:10a (=female lover)
SOURCE REFERENCE FRAME = נדגלות
EXPLANATION = אימה

6:4a–b. Despite the occurrence of ירושלם in 6:4b, the translators of the LXX, Vg, and Peshitta understood הרצה not as a geographic name but as a noun from the root רצ׳.

² Traditionally, the link or connection between different categories that give rise to simile and metaphor has been called the *tertium comparationis*. I prefer to use the label EXPLANATION for the connection. The EXPLANATION encompasses the possible categorization principles by which a SOURCE REFERENCE FRAME is linked to a TARGET REFERENCE FRAME. The label is birthed from an explanation-based model for categorization that allows various explanations to factor into a given categorization decision, whether the explanation be a highly similar correlated feature-matching or something abstract (G. Murphy and D. Medin, "The Role of Theories in Conceptual Coherence," *Psychological Review* 92 [1985] 289–316; and L. Rips, "Similarity, Typicality, and Categorization," in *Similarity and Analogical Reasoning* [ed. S. Vosniadou and A. Ortony; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989] 21–59).

“be pleasing.” D. Broadribb, S. Krauss, and M. H. Pope, among others, have followed these ancient versions.³ For תרצה Pope proposed “verily pleasing,” understanding the *kaph* to be asseverative.

The occurrence of ירושלם in 6:4b convinces me that תרצה, as an early capital of the North, refers to that city.⁴ תרצה may have been used for two reasons. (1) As a short-lived, early capital, it may have offered the poet a more benign parallel than Samaria. תרצה may have been less charged with negative connotations associated with the North’s capital. (2) The poet may have wished to play on the root meaning “pleasing.”⁵

Precisely how the beauty and loveliness of a city compliment the female lover is difficult to know. Perhaps the male lover has in mind a beautiful and stunning winter and early spring phenomenon in the Judean and Samaritan hills, where a brief moment’s sunshine may brilliantly strike sandy colored city edifices framed by a backdrop of dark rain clouds. If so, one can begin to understand what he might have in mind. One may be reminded that cities are typically personified as women (Isa 60:1–12; Ezekiel 16).

6:4c. Here we arrive at a crux. Scholars have tended to suggest two major senses respectively for אַיִמָה and נְגִלּוֹת אַיִמָה may denote (1) terror⁶ or (2) magnificence,⁷ and נְגִלּוֹת may denote (1) a bannered or an arrayed troop⁸ or a bannered astronomical phenomenon⁹ (denominative verb from נָגַל, “banner”) or (2) something seen (cognate to

³ D. Broadribb, “Thoughts on the Song of Solomon,” *AbrN* 3 (1961–62) 26; S. Krauss, “The Archaeological Background of Some Passages in the Song of Songs,” *JQR* n.s. 32 (1941–42) 135; M. H. Pope, *Song of Songs* (AB 7c; New York: Doubleday, 1977) 551, 558.

⁴ So G. R. Driver, “Hebrew Notes on ‘Song of Songs’ and ‘Lamentations,’” in *Festschrift Alfred Bertholet zum 80. Geburtstag Gewidmet von Kollegen und Freunden* (ed. W. Baumgartner et al.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1950) 144; R. Gordis, “A Wedding Song for Solomon,” *JBL* 63 (1944) 269: he believes that the poem must go back to a time when Tirzah was the capital of the North; L. Krinetzki, *Das Hohe Lied. Kommentar zu Gestalt und Kerygma eines alttestamentlichen Liebesliedes* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1964) 65; F. Landy, “The Song of Songs and the Garden of Eden,” *JBL* 98 (1979) 521; A. Mariaselvam, *The Song of Songs and Ancient Tamil Love Poems: Poetry and Symbolism* (AnBib 118; Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1988) 72; J. Sasson, “On M. H. Pope’s Song of Songs [AB 7c],” *Maarav* 1 (1978–79) 196.

⁵ R. E. Murphy, *The Song of Songs: A Commentary on the Book of Canticles or the Song of Songs* (ed. S. Dean McBride, Jr.; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 175. Cf. M. V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985) 151.

⁶ So, e.g., F. Landsberger, “Poetic Units Within the Song of Songs,” *JBL* 73 (1954) 209: “terrible”; Landy, “Song of Songs,” 517: “terrible”; Murphy, *Song of Songs*, 174–75: “awe-inspiring,” that is, the disquieting effect of the woman; C. Meyers, “Gender Imagery in the Song of Songs,” *HAT* 10 (1986 [1987]) 217: “terror”; H.-P. Müller, “Die lyrische Reproduktion des Mythischen im Hohenlied,” *ZTK* 73 (1976) 25: “furchtbar”; Pope, *Song of Songs*, 560: “awesome.”

⁷ So, e.g., S. D. Goitein, “Ayumma kannidgalot (Song of Songs VI.10): ‘Splendid Like the Brilliant Stars,’” *JSS* 10 (1965) 220–21; Krauss, “Archaeological Background,” 137: “magnificent or majestic.”

⁸ G. Garbini, “Note linguistico-filologiche (*Cantico* VI,9; *Salmo* XX,6; *1 Re* VII,6),” *Henoch* 4 (1982) 167: “truppe schierate in battaglia”; Krinetzki, *Hohe Lied*, 65: “junge Truppe”; Landsberger, “Poetic Units,” 209: “an army with banners,” thus “[t]errible as an army with banners” refers to the “metallic jewelry around the head of the beloved”; Meyers, “Gender Imagery,” 217.

⁹ S. T. Byington, “נגילות,” *JBL* 39 (1920) 82.

Akkadian *dagālu* “to look, see”), whether sights,¹⁰ brilliant stars,¹¹ war trophies,¹² or something most conspicuous/eminent.¹³

The adjective אִימָה/אִימָה occurs elsewhere only in Hab 1:7, where it applies to the fearsome Neo-Babylonians. The substantive אִימָה throughout the Hebrew Bible designates a terror or an overwhelming negative feeling associated with theophany (Exod 15:16), the teeth of a monster (Job 41:6), enemies (Josh 2:9), and so forth. Goitein, though, has amassed examples of Semitic lexical items that show a transition or semantic shift from “terror” to “splendid” or “‘terrific’ in the sense of ‘extraordinary.’”¹⁴ Is this the case here? Given the co-text, I think it reasonable to consider the adjective to be denoting a quality that produces an overwhelming feeling, either awe from terror or awe from something splendid. In the similes of 6:4a and 6:4b the woman’s beauty and loveliness are highlighted; these attributes are awe-inspiring in a non-“terror” sense. But does the co-text in 6:5b, where one reads that the woman’s eyes הרהיבו the man, suggest that terror or fright might be in mind? Evidence from the Arabic cognate, which clearly encompasses “fear,” shows that fear might be a sense of the Hebrew root רהב. Only here and in Ps 138:3 does the hiphil of רהב occur. In the psalm it refers to an emboldening or an arousal of strength in the supplicant, not fear. The eyes in Cant 6:5 arouse something in the man; it could be fear (based on Arabic) or, more likely given the focus on beauty within the immediate co-text, intense excitement. I do not think that terror or fear is in mind in 6:5b; rather the man is aroused by the eyes to the point that he is overwhelmed, asking her to turn away—“Turn your eyes from me for they overwhelm me!” (6:5a–b).

The sense of נרגלוח must enter into the discussion. If this word refers to arrayed troops ready for battle, then overwhelming *terror* would be linked to אִימָה. Referring to the lover as terrible, like an arrayed army, juxtaposed to her being fair, beautiful, and radiant, I must confess, strikes me as so odd as to be troublesome.

Keeping in mind for the moment the possibility of נרגלוח being a denominative verb from דגל (“banner”), one may conjecture that the lexical item could refer to any sort of figuratively or nonfiguratively bannered entities, including these two cities, which could be radiantly “bannered” with sunshine, for example. With this latter understanding of נרגלוח, an overwhelming *splendid* quality would be linked to אִימָה. This is true also if one understands נרגלוח as having the sense “things seen” (feminine for neuter), Akkadian *dagālu* being a cognate. Only the co-text allows for a more specific sense.

¹⁰ M. Falk, *The Song of Songs: A New Translation and Interpretation* (San Francisco: Harper, 1990) 75, 185: “visions”; R. Gordis, “The Root דגל in the Song of Songs,” *JBL* 88 (1969) 204: “great sights”; Murphy, *Song of Songs*, 175.

¹¹ Goitein, “Ayumma kannidgalot,” 221: “stars of first class magnitude which are always brilliant and easily to be seen”; Landy, “Song of Songs,” 517: “constellations”; Müller, “Die lyrische Reproduktion,” 25: “(weithin strahlend) sichtbaren (Gestirne)”; idem, *Vergleich und Metapher im Hohenlied* (OBO 56; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984) 32: the same.

¹² Pope, *Song of Songs*, 560–62. He has in mind Anat’s rampage against humanity in which she makes a necklace of severed heads and a girdle of severed hands. These would be things to be looked at (נרגלוח), that is, war trophies, that would be horrific or terrible (אִימָה).

¹³ Fox, *Song of Songs*, 152: “most eminent”; Krauss, “Archaeological Background,” 137: “pre-eminence.” Krauss, though, does not mention the Akkadian cognate; rather, he argues that דגל has a sense of “excellent one” in addition to “flag” (p. 136).

¹⁴ Goitein, “Ayumma kannidgalot,” 220.

O. Loretz considers this lone half-line to be an (out-of-place) insertion from 6:10—a possibility.¹⁵ But we should prevent ourselves from being hasty in rearranging the MT, and we should try to make sense of a text as it is. Since Tirzah and Jerusalem are mentioned in 6:4a–b, might one not take נִדְגַלְיוֹת to denote “the things seen” (with definite article in Hebrew) and to refer to these sights, the beauty and loveliness of which have just expressed something meaningful about the woman?

6:5–9. These verses continue the male lover’s comments. Most noteworthy for my discussion is to note that in 6:9d–e the lover mentions that daughters/girls, queens/princesses, and concubines praise the female lover. In v. 8 he begins to speak of and draw in other women—queens/princesses, concubines, and young women—in order for him to claim the uniqueness of his lover. That his lover is unique among other women is his perception of her. In 6:9d–e, however, he reveals that these women also have a perception of her—a most favorable one. The male lover, then, is shifting the point of view from his own to that of the women.¹⁶

6:10a–c. The referent of אִשָּׁה is the female lover, but the speaker of 6:10a–d is not so clear. The male lover, the women, or the poet is possible, though I believe the male lover is most likely since he has been speaking up to this point. Though the words are from his mouth, he most likely is specifying the praise of the daughters/girls, queens/princesses, and concubines alluded to in 6:9d–e. Here, then, is the expression of the women’s point of view; here is their assessment of the female lover. One may note that the quatrain 6:10a–d, which ends the male lover’s words, does not have a second person pronoun as does the tricolon that initiates his thoughts (6:4a–c)—support for seeing a shift from second-person interaction to a reported third-person perspective.

שָׁחַר in the niphāl (and hiphil) refers to an action of looking out from above.¹⁷ שָׁחַר denotes the glow of dawn just before the sunrise. The EXPLANATION of the simile in 6:10a is expressed, yet a full understanding of the simile is not without conjecture. The poet might have the early morning light in mind as it brightens, suggesting the enveloping and rising beauty of the woman. שָׁקַף with its denotation of “position above,” when mapped onto the TARGET REFERENCE FRAME, suggests the loftiness and high place the woman has in her lover’s mind.¹⁸ Additionally, like each of the similes in 6:10b–c, radiant beauty is important.¹⁹

לְבָנָה (“white one”) is a poetic term for the moon used elsewhere only in Isa 24:23 and 30:26, in each occurrence parallel with חֹמֶה (“heat”), a poetic term for the sun. Does the speaker have in mind a large refulgent moon?

בָּרַר may refer to moral excellence (Ps 18:27; 24:4), the polished quality of an arrow

¹⁵ O. Loretz, *Das althebräische Liebeslied: Untersuchungen zur Stichometrie und Redaktionsgeschichte des Hohenliedes und des 45. Psalms* (AOAT 14/1; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1971) 38.

¹⁶ I must thank the reviewer of this article who suggested this possibility.

¹⁷ Pope, *Song of Songs*, 571–72. So also Fox, *Song of Songs*, 153; Murphy, *Song of Songs*, 176.

¹⁸ Fox, *Song of Songs*, 153.

¹⁹ G. Gerleman, *Ruth, Das Hohelied* (BKAT 18; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1985) 186; Krinetzki, *Hohe Lied*, 65; Murphy, *Song of Songs*, 178.

(Isa 49:2), or to physical choiceness (valiant man [1 Chr 7:40]; sheep [Neh 5:18]).²⁰ In Psalm 19 the root is used to mediate between a brilliant sun and moral perfection. In Ps 19:5c–7 the psalmist colorfully writes of the sun. Following this, one reads in Ps 19:9c that the “commands of Yahweh are בָּרָה, *enlightening the eyes*.” The English word *radiant* most fittingly conveys the sense of בָּרָה in this psalm, as it does here (6:10c) in co-text with the sun.²¹

6:10d. The second and third cola of v. 10 focus on the astronomical phenomena of moon (v. 10b) and sun (v. 10c). Those who believe that in 6:10d נִרְגְּלוֹת refers to stars (see n. 11 above) are close to the mark; “the things seen” in a co-text of astronomical phenomena and perhaps as a semantic parallel to “moon” makes this sense winsome.

One should, however, keep in mind that the phrase אֵימָה כְּנִרְגְּלוֹת in 6:4c and 6:10d marks an envelope construction (*inclusio*). The phrase in 6:4c refers to lexical items mentioned in the two preceding cola: Tirzah (6:4a) and Jerusalem (6:4b). Similarly, the phrase in 6:10d should refer to the lexical items mentioned in the two preceding cola: moon (6:10b) and sun (6:10c). The two cola 6:4c and 6:10d help to demarcate the beginning and end of the male lover’s expression of affection, but the sandwiched text has sufficiently changed in point of view and imagery so that the phrase should not have the same referents in 6:10d as it has in 6:4c. The phrase should follow a pattern of referring to the focal lexical item in each of the two preceding cola.

Conclusion

Canticles 6:4–10 presents the male lover’s expression of affection. He likens his lover’s beauty to two cities (6:4a–c); he focuses on her facial features (6:5–7); he mentions her uniqueness among other women (6:8–9c); and he contemplates what women say of her (6:9d–10d). Having then considered the co-text in conjunction with etymological issues, I offer now a complete translation of Cant 6:4a–c and 6:10a–d:

6:4a	יִפֶּה אֶת רְעוּתִי כְּתִרְצָה	You are beautiful, my dear, like Tirzah
6:4b	נְאוּמָה כִּירוּשָׁלַם	Lovely like Jerusalem
6:4c	אֵימָה כְּנִרְגְּלוֹת	Overwhelming like the[se] sights [i.e., Tirzah and Jerusalem]
6:10a	מִי־זֹאת הַנִּשְׁקָפָה כְּמוֹ־שֶׁחַר	Who is this who gazes (down) like the dawn
6:10b	יִפֶּה כְּלִבְנָה	Beautiful like the moon

²⁰ F. Landy, “Beauty and the Enigma: An Inquiry into Some Interrelated Episodes of the Song of Songs,” *JOT* 17 (1980) 98 n. 47.

²¹ Thus I follow M. Dahood, “Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography II,” *Bib* 45 (1964) 412: “resplendent as the sun”; Landy, “Beauty,” 70, 98: “radiant”; K. Schoville, “The Impact of the Ras Shamra Texts on the Study of the Song of Songs,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1969) 92: “resplendent.”

6:10c ברה כחמה

Radiant like the sun

6:10d אימה כנדגלות

Breathtaking like the[se] sights
[i.e., the moon and sun]²²

A lover, cities, and heavenly bodies!

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²² *Today's English Version* offers a similar translation for these two verses. I arrived at my translation before discovering TEV's translation and thus independent of influence. I was happy to see the like-mindedness.

TARGUMIC כְּרוּבָה (ZECHARIAH 14:20)
= GREEK κορυφαία?

The penultimate verse of the book of Zechariah speaks of *מצלות הסוסים*, a phrase that is today almost always rendered “the bells of the horses.” The modern lexicographical consensus on this point is a relatively recent development, however; the ancient versions present us with a number of different translations of *מצלות*, but “bells” is not among them. Especially puzzling is the rendering we find in the *Targum to the Latter Prophets*, which has כְּרוּבָה (or some variant thereof). Since we here have an example of an Aramaic *hapax legomenon* rendering a Hebrew one, it is not surprising that previous scholarship has been at a loss with respect to the targumic word here used, both as to its correct reading and its semantic reference.

Although the reading כְּרוּבָה is found in most printed sources (the *Arukh*, the rabbinic Bibles, the London and Antwerp Polyglots, and the lexica of J. Levy, M. Jastrow, and G. Dalman), there is considerable variation in the manuscripts. A. Sperber's edition lists the following variants: כְּרוּרָה, כְּרוּרָה (the reading adopted in Sperber's own text), כְּרוּבָה, כְּרוּבָה, and כְּרֻבָה.¹ P. de Lagarde's edition printed the reading כְּרוּרָה.² while that of Wilna adopted yet a sixth variant, namely, כְּרוּכָה.³ In the recent English translation of the *Targum of the Twelve Prophets* by K. J. Cathcart and R. P. Gordon, it is again the reading כְּרוּבָה that serves as their *Vorlage*.⁴

It is in fact only for the reading כְּרוּבָה that a translation has been attempted, although it is clear from the lexicographical tradition that the translations offered were little more than guesses. A. Kohut's edition of the *Arukh* relates the word to Greek *καμπύλα*, which is said to be the equivalent of German “*Schall, Geklingel*.” It also suggests the possibility that the true reading is כְּרוּכָה and represents a Persian loanword denoting a musical instrument resembling the tambourine.⁵ The seventeenth-century lexicon of J.

My thanks to Professor Robert Gordon of Cambridge University, and Dr. Edward M. Cook of the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project (Cincinnati) for commenting on an earlier draft of this article.

¹ Alexander Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic Based on Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts*, Vol. 3, *The Latter Prophets according to Targum Jonathan* (Leiden: Brill, 1992) 499.

² Paul de Lagarde, *Prophetiae Chaldaice* (Leipzig, 1872; reprint, Osnabrück: Zeller, 1967) 486.

³ *Teste Marcus Jastrow, A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York, 1893; reprint, New York: Judaica Press, 1989) s.v. כְּרוּבָה.

⁴ Kevin J. Cathcart and Robert P. Gordon, *The Targum of the Minor Prophets* (The Aramaic Bible 14; Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1989) 226.

⁵ *Aruch Completum* (ed. Abraham Kohut; Vienna, 1878–92; reprint, Tel Aviv: Ramah, 1961) s.v. כְּרוּכָה.

and J. Buxtorf offers three possibilities: “*pack-saddle*, or *horse-cloth*. Others have *medallions*.”⁶ The third of these options is the one adopted in the Latin version of the targum included in the London Polyglot (*phalerae*),⁷ and the second is the one favored by Levy’s lexicon (*Pferdedecken*).⁸ Some nineteenth-century commentators on Zechariah state that the enigmatic Aramaic word refers to horse trappings in general.⁹ Jastrow’s dictionary relates the word to the root כרב and renders the noun as “wrap, blanket,”¹⁰ while Dalman’s dictionary suggests a link with Greek κρωβύλος, and gives the meaning as *Federbusch*, “plume” or “crest.”¹¹ Cathcart and Gordon opt for the translation “blanket,” accompanied by a prudent question mark and a sensible footnote.¹²

It is clear from the foregoing that everyone is guessing, and that no convincing interpretation of כרובה (or any of its textual variants) has yet been put forward. It is the purpose of the present note to suggest a candidate for such an interpretation. My proposal is to accept the most widely adopted reading¹³ (to be vocalized as כְּרוּבָה, the feminine singular construct of *כְּרוּבָה¹⁴), and to interpret it as a Greek loanword based on κορυστία, which is defined in LSJ as “headstall of a bridle.” This proposal is supported by two considerations: its agreement with other ancient versions of מצלותה in Zech 14:20, and its conformity with the pattern of Greek loanwords in rabbinic usage.

With respect to the first point, it is significant that three of the other ancient versions interpret מצלותה to refer to a horse’s bridle or part thereof: (1) Septuagint: χαλινός (“bit” or “bit and bridle”¹⁵); (2) Peshitta: pēgūdētā (“bridle”¹⁶); (3) Vulgate: frenum (“bit” or “bridle”¹⁷). Although translations of מצלותה that diverge widely from this interpretation are offered by both the Minor Greek versions¹⁸ and the anonymous Jewish scholar con-

⁶ Joannes Buxtorfius P. and Joannes Buxtorfius F., *Lexicon Chaldaicum, Talmudicum et Rabbinicum* (ed. B. Fischerus; Leipzig: Schaefer, 1869–74) s.v. כְּרוּבָה: “*clitellae*, vel *ephippia*. Alii *phalerae*.” A *phalera* was a medallion or ornamental disc on a horse’s trappings.

⁷ B. Walton, *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta* (6 vols.; London: Roycroft, 1657) 3.140.

⁸ J. Levy, *Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim* (2d ed.; 4 vols.; Berlin, 1924; reprint, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963) s.v. כְּרוּבָה.

⁹ See the editorial note by John Owen in John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets, Volume Fifth* (Edinburgh, 1849; reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1986) 449; similarly E. B. Pusey, *The Minor Prophets: A Commentary* (Oxford, 1877; reprinted as vol. 8 of Barnes’ Notes; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985) 458.

¹⁰ Jastrow, *Dictionary*, s.v. כְּרוּבָהָא.

¹¹ Gustaf H. Dalman, *Aramäisch-Neuhebräisches Wörterbuch zu Targum, Talmud und Midrasch* (Göttingen, 1938; reprint, Hildesheim: Olms, 1967) s.v. כְּרוּבָהָא.

¹² Cathcart and Gordon, *Targum of the Minor Prophets*, 226.

¹³ The other readings are readily explained as scribal errors due to the graphic similarity of כ/כ and כ/ך, and to the unfamiliarity of both the Aramaic word and the Hebrew term which it renders.

¹⁴ The singular vocalization כְּרוּבָה is to be preferred over the plural כְּרוּבָה (*pace* Buxtorf, Levy, and Dalman), since all other ancient versions construed מצלותה as a singular noun.

¹⁵ LSJ, s.v. χαλινός, I, 1.

¹⁶ J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1903) s.v. pēgūdā, pēgūdētā; cf. R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1879–1901) col. 3030.

¹⁷ Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1896) s.v. *frenum*, I.

¹⁸ Aquila and Theodotion both have βύθος (“depth”), while Symmachus has περιπατος σύσκιος (“shady walkway”). See F. Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae Supersunt* (2 vols.; Oxford, 1875; reprint, Hildesheim: Olms, 1964) 2.1030.

sulted by Jerome,¹⁹ it is clear that there was a significant exegetical tradition in antiquity that supported it. The strength of this tradition can be gauged from the fact that the Vulgate did not break with it, despite Jerome's own preference for another interpretation.²⁰ It is altogether plausible that the targumist too should have aligned himself with this exegetical tradition, especially since the Hebrew *מצלות* of his *Vorlage* was a puzzling *hapax legomenon*, and the *Targum to the Twelve Prophets* elsewhere shows affinities with the Peshitta.²¹

With respect to the second consideration mentioned above, it is beyond dispute that Greek loanwords were common in the language of the rabbis—notably including terms describing horse trappings²²—and that the correspondence between *כרובה* (or rather its absolute form *כרובה*) and Greek *κορυφαία* is much closer than that between *כרובה* and Greek *κρούμα* (as suggested by Kohut) or Greek *κρωβύλος* (as suggested by Dalman). We know from S. Krauss's study of Greek and Latin loanwords in rabbinical Hebrew and Aramaic that the fricative *ϕ* of later Greek was often represented by the fricative *כ* of later Hebrew and Aramaic,²³ and that the Greek vowel *υ* was frequently represented by the vowel letter *ו*,²⁴ while *ο* was often not transcribed at all.²⁵ The correspondence between *κορυφ-* and *כרוב-* therefore occasions no surprise. As for the correspondence between the ending *-αία* and the single letter *ה*, we need to remember that endings of Greek loanwords were frequently elided,²⁶ and that the diphthong *αι* had come to be pronounced as [ε] in later Greek,²⁷ so that Greek *παλαιά* could be transcribed as *pylh*,²⁸ and *ὕμνεα* as *hynwm* (with metathesis).²⁹

If our proposal is admitted, it is also instructive to take a closer look at the precise

¹⁹ See Jerome, *In Zachariam Prophetam* (Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 76 A, Pars 1.6, Turnholt: Brepols, 1970) 897: "Quod cum ab Hebraeo quaererem quid significaret, ait mihi, non debere nos legere mesuloth, sed mesaloth, quod significat phaleras equorum et ornatum bellicum." ("But when I inquired of a Jew what it [i.e., *מצלות*] meant, he said that we ought not to read *מצלות*, but *מצלות*, which means the medallions and military trappings of horses.")

²⁰ Jerome, *In Zachariam Prophetam*, 897: "Soli Septuaginta *χαλινόν* id est, frenum, transtulerunt, quos et nos in hoc loco secuti sumus, ne nouum aliquid in quaestione uulgata uideremur afferre." ("Only the Seventy translated it as *χαλινόν*, that is, 'bridle,' and we too have followed them in this place, lest we should appear to be introducing something new in a much-publicized question.") Jerome does not explain what the mysterious *quaestio uulgata* was that induced him to follow the LXX, but he goes on to make it clear that he himself prefers the interpretations of the Minor Greek versions.

²¹ See A. Gelston, *The Peshitta of the Twelve Prophets* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987) 178–90, and Robert P. Gordon, *Studies in the Targum to the Twelve Prophets from Nahum to Malachi* (VTSup 51; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 117–29.

²² See Samuel Krauss, *Griechische und Lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum* (2 vols.; Berlin, 1898–99; reprint, Hildesheim: Olms, 1964) esp. 2.635, where the following Greek terms productive of rabbinic loanwords are included: *ἐπίπλιον* ("saddle-cloth"), *καυθήλια* ("pack-saddle"), *φορβεία* ("halter"), *χαλινάριον* ("small bit"), *χαλινός* ("bit" or "bridle")

²³ *Ibid.*, 1.42 (§55) and 98 (§155).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.20 (§28).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.19 (§27).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.118 (§§214–15).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.55 (§69).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.434, 454.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.228.

technical meaning of κορυφαία in Greek usage. As used by Xenophon in the fifth century BCE, the word is generally understood to refer either to the “headstall” of the bridle (everything but the bit and reins),³⁰ or to one or more of its upper straps.³¹ Julius Pollux, however, a Greek writer who flourished in the late second century CE, defines it as “the strap that extends from the crown of the horse to the bit (ὁ ἀπὸ τῆς κορυφῆς τοῦ ἵππου ἐκτεταμένος ἰμάς ἐπὶ τὸν χαλινόν).”³² This last definition, which is probably relatively close in date to the targum, is particularly suggestive with respect to the exegesis of Zech 14:20. For one thing, the phrase ἐπὶ τὸν χαλινόν is reminiscent of the LXX, which renders the words מַצְלוֹת of the MT as τὸ ἐπὶ τὸν χαλινόν, which could have been interpreted to mean “that [strap] which [extends] to the bit.” For another, the specific sense of “crown-to-bit bridle strap” suggests a connection with yet another witness to the Jewish exegesis of this verse in late antiquity.

According to the Babylonian Talmud (*b. Pesah.* 50a), Rabbi Eleazar stated that the מצלות of Zech 14:20 (understood as a plural) were the שְׁחוּלֵין לְסוּס בֵּין עֵינָיו, usually translated as “the bells which are hung on a horse between its eyes.”³³ This translation is unlikely, however, both because the interpretation of מצלות as “bells” is a modern one,³⁴ and because bells, if they were attached to horses at all in classical antiquity, were not hung between their eyes.³⁵ A better translation of Rabbi Eleazar’s words would be “the bridle-straps which are attached to a horse between its eyes.” There is clear pictorial evidence from the first and second centuries CE that at least some Roman bridles had crown-to-bit straps which crossed between the horse’s eyes,³⁶ and could therefore be said to “be attached” there—a possible meaning of the verb תָּקָה in Mishnaic Hebrew.³⁷ These straps are the objects which Rabbi Eleazar’s audience would have most naturally assumed to be situated between a horse’s eyes. In other words, the rabbi and the targumist may have understood מצלות in the same way—as referring to a specific component of a horse’s bridle, which in Greek had the precise designation κορυφαία.

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³⁰ So LSJ, s.v. (“head-stall of a bridle”) and the translation by E. C. Marchant in Xenophon, *Scripta Minora* (LCL; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968) 309, 317, 323 (“head-stall”).

³¹ So P. Vigneron, *Le cheval dans l’antiquité gréco-romaine* (2 vols.; Nancy: Annales de l’Est, 1968) 1.54, and E. Delebecque in his edition of Xenophon, *De l’art équestre* (Collection Budé; Paris: Belles Lettres, 1978) 46, 50, 54.

³² Julius Pollux, *Onomasticon* (ed. I. Bekker; Berlin: Nicolai, 1846) 33 (§147).

³³ So H. Freeman in *Hebrew-English Edition of the Babylonian Talmud: Pesahim* (ed. I. Epstein; London: Soncino, 1967) 50a.

³⁴ Or possibly medieval, if Rashi’s Hebrew and Old French glosses are understood as referring to bells and not more generally to tinkling ornaments.

³⁵ There is almost no evidence that the Greeks and Romans (unlike the Assyrians and Persians) regularly attached bells to their horses.

³⁶ See Vigneron, *Le cheval dans l’antiquité*, 1.54; and his *Planche* 16 (b and c).

³⁷ See Jastrow, *Dictionary*, s.v.

THE INDENTURED LABOR OF THE PRODIGAL SON (LUKE 15:15)

Luke's parable of the Prodigal Son describes a youth in need who "hires himself out [ἐκολλήθη] to one of the citizens of that country" (Luke 15:15 NRSV). Previous commentary assumes that the "hiring out" itself needs no detailed discussion, its meaning being self-evident. Yet in antiquity as today dependent labor took a variety of forms, such as chattel slavery, debt bondage, hired agricultural employment, clientship, and indentured service.¹ Among these possibilities, the Hellenistic institution of *paramonē* (or "indentured labor") may provide insight into the kind of "joining" that ἐκολλήθη indicates. This suggestion not only offers a more specific translation for ἐκολλήθη but also lends support to the view that the author of Luke articulated his theology in the language of ancient economics.²

In the Greek East and other Hellenized areas of the Roman Empire, the noun *παράμωνή* (a new word coined around the third century BCE) had a technical usage best translated as "indentured labor."³ A *paramonē*-contract or, more precisely, a *paramonē*-clause within a legal instrument, bound an agent "to remain with" (*παράμεινεν*) a patron and to work in general service for a specified length of time. The clauses were intentionally vague; during the tenure of the clause, the free person indentured under *paramonē* had to do whatever services were ordered, making the agent a general laborer.⁴ The indeterminate nature of the agent's duties and obligations, from custodial services and animal husbandry to business sales, makes *paramonē* wholly unlike other Hellenistic labor contracts, which usually neither were demandingly vague nor required the laborer "to remain with" the hirer in the literal sense of that term.⁵ The *paramonē*-

¹ M. I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York: Viking Press, 1980) 68; Peter Garnsey, ed., *Non-Slave Labour in the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge Philological Society Supplementary Volume 6; Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1980).

² Halvor Moxnes, *The Economy of the Kingdom: Social Conflict and Economic Relations in Luke's Gospel* (OBT; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 22–98, 155.

³ G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World: From the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests* (1981; corr. reprint, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989) 169; Alan E. Samuel, "The Role of *Paramone* Clauses in Ancient Documents," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 15 (1965) 255.

⁴ William Linn Westermann, "The *Paramone* as General Service Contract," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 2 (1948) 24.

⁵ Westermann, "Paramone," 25–26, 37; although he pushes this thesis too far in his attempt to narrow the definition of *paramonē* to clauses containing unspecified tasks only: so de Ste. Croix, *Class Struggle*, 572 n.73.

clause in a labor contract from Alexandria, dated 9 BCE, illustrates this general service. According to the clause, a free woman indentured her labor to another woman, a beer seller. The agent agreed to work in the brewery in any capacity required, “carrying out in addition the orders that will be imposed upon her.”⁶ A similar *paramonē* document, coming from the first century CE, specifies that a weaver will remain with a certain Heron for two years “spending his time and doing everything ordered and weaving whatever the above mentioned Heron may wish.”⁷ Additional examples can be found in Greek apprentice contracts (διδασκαλικαὶ ὁμολογίαι), which bound by indenture free-born youths for a prescribed period with a view to learning an art or trade.⁸

Such *paramonē*-clauses contracted not only free labor but also servile. Originating in Athens, Delphi, and other Greek cities at the time of Alexander the Great and continuing into the Roman period, the institution of *paramonē* was a common legal mechanism used by Greeks to defer the manumission of their chattel slaves. Such clauses obligated an ex-slave to remain with the former master for a specified length of time, often “as a slave,” before the manumission became effective. *Paramonē*-clauses were therefore more binding than the Roman *liberti* (freedmen’s and freedwomen’s) stipulations of *operae* (workdays) and *obsequium* (deference) to the former master, now the patron.⁹

The prodigal’s relation to the citizen is best understood as *paramonē*, not hired agricultural employment or chattel slavery. Agricultural employment means hired hands on piecework as in the parable of laborers in the vineyard, in which no provision “to remain” with the landowner is stipulated (Matt 20:1–16). In contrast, the prodigal must remain. If the passage were to state that the son sought employment as a professional pig tender, then hired piecework might be its meaning. Rather, the son is driven to seek *any* employment and finds illusive relief by contracting himself out as a general laborer to the citizen. Subsequently, he receives his initial task of feeding pigs. A change in subject makes clear a separation between two different moments in the parable episode: a first event, καὶ παρευθεὶς ἐκολλήθη ἐνὶ τῶν πολιτῶν τῆς χώρας ἐκείνης, “So he [the son] went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country”; and a second event, καὶ ἐπεμψεν αὐτὸν εἰς τοὺς ἀγροὺς βόσκειν χοίρους, “and he [the citizen] sent him to his fields to feed the pigs.” Willing to do whatever was necessary or required, the son indentured himself to the citizen in a nonspecific way: the degradation of the task eventually received demonstrates the youth’s obligation to do anything. Such was the phenomenon known as *paramonē*.

⁶ *Ägyptische Urkunden aus den königlichen (staatlichen) Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden (BGU) IV 1126.9–10*; Westermann, “Paramone,” 27.

⁷ *Papiri Greci e Latini, Pubblicazioni della Società italiana per la ricerca dei papiri greci e latini in Egitto (PSI) VIII 902.3–4* (= *Michigan Papyri V 355*); Westermann, “Paramone,” 27.

⁸ Bertrand Adams, *Paramoné und verwandte Texte: Studien zum Dienstvertrag im Rechte der Papyri* (Neue kölnner rechtswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen 35; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1964) 114–45. Indentured by their masters to a third party, slaves also served in apprenticeships.

⁹ J. Albert Harrill, *The Manumission of Slaves in Early Christianity* (HUT 32; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1995) 54, 90–91, 164, 169–72, 175–77; Wolfgang Waldstein, “Paramone und operae libertorum,” in *Festschrift für Arnold Kränzlein: Beiträge zur antiken Rechtsgeschichte* (ed. Gunter Wesener et al.; Grazer rechts- und staatswissenschaftliche Studien 43; Graz, Austria: Leykam, 1986) 143–47.

A *paramonē* contract of service dating from the reign of Trajan (98–117 CE), and so roughly contemporaneous with the composition of the Gospel of Luke, provides a remarkable parallel.¹⁰ The document, from the village of Theadelphia in Egypt, tells how Ares and Thermouthas, a married couple, borrow twenty silver drachmae from Lucius Bellienus Gemellus, an Egyptian landowner, legionary veteran, and Roman citizen. In lieu of interest, Ares agrees to leave his family temporarily and to indenture himself under *paramonē* to the local citizen: He is to “remain [παραμενεῖν] during one year from the aforesaid day tending the pigs that Lucius has [βόσκων ἃ ἔχει ὁ Λούκιος χοιρίδια]” and to “bring them to the proper roads and pastures and doing everything [ποιῶν πάντα], which is incumbent on the tender” at a wage of twenty drachmae per month (*P. Oxford* 10.15–19). Ares further agrees that “it will not be possible for him to leave within the time [μὴ οὐσης ἐξουσίας αὐτῷ ἐντός το(ῦ) χρόνου ἀπαλλαγῆναι]” (10.22–23). At the year’s end, Ares must repay the initial loan of twenty drachmae.¹¹ If Ares leaves before the tenure of service, he violates his agreement “to remain” and so is obligated to pay a penalty: “But if he leaves before the time [ἐὰν δὲ πρὸ τοῦ χρόνου ἀπαλλαγῆ], he shall repay the money double” (10.27–28). Such is an example of indentured nonslave labor.

There are many parallels between Ares and the prodigal son. Both Ares and the prodigal son find themselves in need, seek financial assistance, join themselves to a prosperous landowning citizen, separate from their family, agree to “be bound” in the technical sense of *paramonē*, and are sent to the landowner’s fields to tend pigs. A further parallel lies in the document’s penalty clause for premature departure, which anticipates that Ares might not wait a full year before returning home to his family. This attempt to prevent workers from leaving may illumine the way that the prodigal leaves to return to his father’s household (Luke 15:18–19). Apparently, landowners such as Lucius Bellienus Gemellus experienced workers absconding, even while bound under *paramonē*.

An *Ephesian Tale* by Xenophon of Ephesus provides another parallel, the value of which is its context within a full narrative. The hero Habrocomes, long separated from home and his wife, sails to Italy but finds himself without any means of support, similar to the prodigal. He wants to look for his wife yet as a last resort must “hire himself out to some quarrymen” [αὐτὸν ἀπεμίσθωσε τοῖς τοὺς λίθους ἐργαζομένοις] in order to live (5.8.1–2).¹² He finds the work arduous, even miserably servile, lamenting his condition (5.8.3–4) as much as the prodigal. Unable to bear his labors any longer, he goes down to the sea “by night” [νύκτωρ] and catches the first available ship in order to continue the search for his wife (5.10.1–2). This nocturnal departure suggests stealth and so the renegeing of some kind of labor contract to remain with the quarrymen; Habrocomes is probably bound under *paramonē*. Since the prodigal leaves the pigs without conse-

¹⁰ E. P. Wegener, “Contract of Service (Παραμονή),” in *Some Oxford Papyri (P. Oxford) 10* (ed. E. P. Wegener; Papyrologia Lugduno-Batava 3A; Leiden: Brill, 1942) 38–44, trans. Wegener; Westermann, “Paramone,” 14, 44–46; Samuel, “Role,” 301–2; Adams, *Paramonē*, 15–16, 29, 59, 82–84.

¹¹ Samuel, “Role,” 301–2; *pace* Westermann, “Paramone,” 44–46, who argues that the loan is antichretic, a legal fiction.

¹² Antonius D. Papanikolaou, ed., *Xenophontis Ephesii Ephesiacorum libri V de amoribus Anthiae et Abrocomae* (Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana; Leipzig: Teubner, 1973); trans. in B. P. Reardon, *Collected Ancient Greek Novels* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989) 158–69 (book 5).

quence, the situation is perhaps more comparable to Habrocomes' abandonment, by night, of his fellow quarrymen.

Because the parable of the prodigal son illustrates an agreement of indentured labor similar to that in a *paramonē*-clause, knowledge of *paramonē* is critical for the parable's interpretation. This finding suggests a more specific translation for ἐκολλήθη in Luke 15:15: "*he was indentured to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his field to feed the pigs.*" The parable thus portrays the economic position of the son as extremely low in order to heighten the drama of the acceptance by the father. Read in this way, the parable becomes intelligible as one important part of Luke's larger theological theme of hospitality to the poor, outcast, and marginal, expressed in the language of ancient economics.¹³

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