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BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS

Four Strutters¹

ONE of the most desperate passages in OT is the quatrain in Prov. 30 29-31, enumerating four beings that are *comely in going*, as AV² renders. Heb. *mēṣībē lākt* corresponds to Gr. *καλλωπιζόμενοι*, strutting, i. e. walking with a pompous gait, or prancing. The characteristic of the four beings enumerated is not fleetness, but stateliness. The usual pace of a lion is a walk (EB¹¹ 16, 738^{ba}). In Schiller's poem *Der Handschuh* we read: *Und hinein mit bedächtigem Schritt | Ein Löwe tritt*, while we find in the following stanza: *Daraus rennt | mit wildem Sprunge | Ein Tiger hervor*. *Καλλωπιζέσθαι*, to make a show in walking, to move proudly, means prop. *to give oneself a good appearance*. In Italian (and Spanish) you say *to peacock*, i. e. to strut like a peacock (It. *pavoneggiarsi*).

It is possible that the Hebrew poet did not use the verb *hēṣīb* in both hemistichs of the first line. The scribes have often repeated the same expression where the original text had two different phrases.³ We may substitute *maḡbīhē* for *mēṣībē* 2°, but we must not read *mitīahhārē* instead of *mēṣībē* 1°. The text of the first two lines is correct except that *maḡbīhē* may be substituted for *mēṣībē* 2°, and *hémṣā* between *šēlōšā* and *mēṣībē* should be omitted (*Proverbs* 68, l. 30): it is probably

¹ Read at the meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, New York, Dec. 28, 1925.

² For the abbreviations see this JOURNAL, vol. 40, p. 167, n. 2; cf. AJP 46, 197, n. 3.

³ Cf. JBL 26, 18^a; 29, 106, l. 5; 31, 130, l. 1; 34, 65, l. 7; WF 217, l. 1; Is. 11 5: AJP 40, 68; Am. 5 9: JBL 35, 263, l. 14.

due to dittography of the final consonant of *šēlōšā* and the initial consonant of *mēfībē*. We may therefore read the first two lines:

שְׁלֹשָׁה מְסִיבֵי צֶדֶק וְאַרְבָּעָה מְנַבְיָהוּ לַחַת
 לִישׁ נִבְדָּה בְּבֵהמָה וְלֹא יִשׁוּב מִפְּנֵי־כָל:

which may be translated:

29 There are three that are stepping bravely, [proudly:
 yea, four that are strutting
 30 The lion, the mightiest 'mong beasts, who turns not away from any.

This is all perfectly clear, but the following verse in **𐤀** is meaningless. Ehrlich said that it was beyond interpretation, and it is not translated in AT⁴ (1923). In **𐤀** the text is evidently incomplete, the second hemistich of the line describing the cock is wanting, as is also the characterization of the buck. **𐤁** says that the buck is the leader of the flock of goats, **𐤂**: that he walks at the head of the herd. Also in **𐤃** we must read instead of *tēšā dē-'āzēl bēl giḡōrā*, the he-goat that walks into the house of the proselyte: *tēšā dē-'āzēl bē-rēš giḡrā*, the he-goat that walks at the head of the flock. This emendation was suggested long ago by Bochart (1663). The *y* in *giḡōrā* is miswritten for *z*, and the preceding *bēl* is a corruption of *bēnāt*, between, which is an erroneous repetition of *bēnāt* in the preceding hemistich *bēnāt tarnāḡēlē*, among the hens (should be *tarnōḡēlātā*).

𐤄𐤅𐤆⁴ of the last three lines are given in JBL 33, 155, but the 12 words of v. 31 in **𐤅**, as quoted there, contain six mistakes, e. g. *mēzrēbīl* for *mizdarkīl* (also *mizdarbīl* for **𐤃** *mizdarkēl*). JBL 33, 156, 6 acknowledges indebtedness to Dr. Richard Gottheil for some kind help in the Aramaic and Arabic references; if Gottheil had seen the proofs of the article, the mistakes would no doubt have been corrected. Aram. *zarkēl* is an S of *rakāl*, the original form of the stem of Heb. *rūḡl*, foot. The *g* in *rūḡl* is due to partial assimilation of the *k*: also the *z* for *s* in *zarkēl* is due to the *r*.

We may compare some of the numerical saws in Talmud and Midrasch, e. g. the four haltered animals (Shabbath 51^b):

⁴ For **𐤅** in Prov. 30 29-31 cf. ZAT 14, 102. 111. 215.

horse, mule, camel, and ass (ZDMG 65, 396, l. 27). In a Midrashic passage (ZDMG 65, 407, l. 14) four leaders are enumerated: the leader of all living beings: man; the leader of the birds: eagle; the leader of domestic animals: ox; the leader of wild beasts: lion. In Assyrian, the eagle (*našru*) is called *ašarid iṣṣūrāti*, the leader of the birds (HW 150^a, l. 7; 487^a; KB 2, 98, 69). *Ašaridu*, which we have also in the second part of the name Shalmaneser, seems to be a compound like Syr. *gurmîdâ*, fore-arm, cubit, prop, *bone of the arm*; cf. Syr. *gërim-hâṣṣâ*, spine, Ass. *eṣinṣêru* which would correspond to an Arab. 'âṭmu'-z-zâhri.

Taiš does not necessarily mean *he-goat*: in German as well as in Danish the term *buck* denotes not only a *he-goat*, but also a *ram* and a *roe-buck*. We apply *buck* also to the male of the antelope, rabbit, hare, chamois, reindeer. The Hebrew poet evidently had in mind a ram (bell-wether) leading his sheep (cf. Jer. 50 8; *Iliad* 13, 492; 3, 198) although ⚔ has *τράγος ἡγούμενος αἰπολίου*. We must supply after *taiš*: *naḡîd 'âdrô*. In Latin you call the bell-wether *dux gregis*. The same restoration is suggested by ⚔. ⚔ has *aries*. Also Luther rendered: *Widder*. ⚔ suggest also the restoration of the line beginning with *zarzîr* which does not denote a *greyhound* (Graecus Venetus,⁵ Luther, Ewald, Böttcher, Bertheau, Delitzsch, RV) or *horse* (Bochart, J. D. Michaelis, Umbreit, Hitzig, Elster, Bunsen, Reuss, Strack) or *zebra* (Ludolf, Simonis, C. B. Michaelis, Döderlein, Ziegler) but a *cock*. Also the Karaite Japheth Ibn-Ali Halevi (950—990; see *Proverbs* 66, 46) referred *zarzîr* to the cock. Heb. *zarzîr* corresponds to the Arab. *çârçar*. The *z* instead of *ç* is due to the *r* as it is in Heb. *zē'êr*, little, for *çugaiṛ* (JHUC 364, 58, l. 7; 59, l. 13). In the same way Heb. *sîr*, pot (JBL 36, 266) appears in Arabic as *zîr*. The rare term *zarzîr* is used instead of *tarnëḡôl*, because we must read in the second hemistich: *bē-tôk tarnëḡôlôtây*. For the same reason ⚔ use the rare term *âbâkkâ* instead of *tarnâḡêlâ*. There is also a Syriac word *akdâiâ*, cock, which may mean *Accadian* (AkF 51) just as we

⁵ *Δαγροκίον*. Greyhounds course hares (JAOS 45, 318⁴).

speak of Leghorns, Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes, Hamburgs, &c. *Tarnëgöl* is a Sumerian loanword < Ass. *tarlugallu* — Sum. *dar-lugal*, i. e. *the king of the pied or multicolored birds*.

The cock is figured on certain Babylonian gems and cylinders (RB 658). Arab. *çârçar*, cock, means prop. *cryer*. The cock is known as *chanticleer* (cf. Fr. *chantecler*, *chante-claire*). Arab. *çârçar* is a reduplication of the root *çr* > *çâraxa*, to cry > *çar-râx*, peacock. *Çârçara* is used of the singing of the wind (JHUC 316, 23) or the cry of a hawk or woodpecker, the cooing of a dove, &c. (cf. WZKM 23, 360¹). Our *to rout* was formerly used of the bellowing of a bull, the snorting of a horse, the howling of the wind, roaring of the waves, snoring, &c.

For the unintelligible *moṭnâim ô* after *zarzîr* we must read *nôsê karbaltô*, lifting up its comb. In Dan. 3 21 *karbêlâ* means *cap*, but in pB Hebrew *karbalâ* is used for *cockscorn*. ~~Ṣ~~ *naim ô* is a corruption of *nôsê*. The erect head is characteristic of the cock. In the *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1, 4, 31) Dr. Caius' servant, Mrs. Quickly, asks Slender's servant, Simple, with reference to his master: *Does he not hold up his head, as it were, and strut in his gait?* Dyserinck (1883) proposed *zarzîr miṭnaššê ũa-tâjš* instead of *zarzîr moṭnâim ô-tâjš*. Hitzig (1858) suggested that *moṭnâim* might be part. Hitpa'el.

While the second syllable of the unintelligible *moṭnâim* after *zarzîr* is a corruption of *nôsê*, the first syllable of ~~Ṣ~~ *moṭnâim* may represent the noun *meṭ*, man, male, which denotes *husband* in Assyrian and Ethiopic, and which may have been used for *cock*, just as *gûbr*, man, male, has this meaning in pB Hebrew. ~~Ṣ~~ renders *gûbr* in Is. 22 17, for which we must read *hag-gûbr*, O man: *gallus gallinaceus*. The word *meṭ*, it may be supposed, was added as an explanatory gloss to the rare word *zarzîr*. Heb. *meṭ* may have denoted orig. *membrum virile*, esp. ἰδὸφαλλος (JHUC 348, 48, Oct. 3). It exhibits the older form of the root *md*, to extend; Ass. *madâdu*, to measure, means orig. *to determine the extent*.

After *u-mâlk* in the last hemistich we must read *maqḥîl qiṭômô*. Also in Deut. 11, e *haiqûm* should be changed to *haq-qiṭôm*. It means there *followers*, not *substance*. The *qiṭôm* of a king denotes *hâ-ômêdîm lē-panâu* (Zech. 3 4). Cf. Ass. *manzaz*

pāni (HW 457^a). The *l* of **ל** *alqūm*⁶ is a remnant of the preceding *maqhil*. Peiser's conjecture that **ל** *alqūm* is miswritten for *alqūs* representing the Edomite god *Qōš* (KAT^a 473, n. 1) so that the last hemistich would mean *a king with whom al-Qus is*, does not commend itself. Halévy (cited in S-S) regarded *alqūm* as the name of an Arabian god more than 50 years ago.

We may restore the quatrain with the help of the Ancient Versions:

- 29 There are three that are stepping bravely,
yea, four that are strutting proudly:
30 The lion, the mightiest 'mong beasts,
which turns not away from any;
31 The cock, holding up his comb
in the midst of all his hens;
The ram which is leader of his flock,
and the king haranguing his retinue.

The king may imagine he appears like a lion, but he looks more like a cock or a bell-wether.

The Hebrew text should be read as follows:

- 29 שלשה^a מיטיבי צעד וארבעה מנביהי לכת:
30 ליש נבדד בבהמה ולא ישוב מפני-כל:
31 זחיר^b נשא כרבלתו בתוך תרנגולתו
תיש נגיד עדרו ומלך מקהיל קיומו:

עמו (γ)

מב 31 (β)

מב 29 (α)

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Mistranslated Lines in Proverbs⁷

Sixteen years ago (*Mic.* 79; cf. GB¹⁷ 321^a, l. 12)⁶ I showed that the original signification of Heb. *īarāš*, inherit, was *press*,

⁶ Geiger (1857) referred *alqūm* to Alcimus (MF 122, n. 10).

⁷ Read at the meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, New York, Dec. 28, 1925.

⁸ For the abbreviations see above, p. 326, n. 2.