

Psalm 91:1 and the Rabbinic *Shema*¹ in Greek on a Byzantine Amuletic Armband

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The armband discussed here (dia. 7 cm) is in the collection of The Israel Museum, Jerusalem (figs. 1–4).¹ It is made of silver and probably originally consisted of eight medallions of alternating sizes: four small medallions (dia. 2.7 cm each; one almost entirely missing) and four large medallions (dia. 3 cm each). The medallions are connected by eight narrow, lozenge-shaped links (h. 1.5 cm each; one partially missing), the flanks of which are slightly overlapped by the medallions. The armband is broken and mended in several places. One of these breaks, where the partial link and partial medallion have been rejoined (fig. 3), may have been intentional. In addition, one of the large medallions is broken on top, and 2–4 of its lines are missing. Otherwise, the armband is complete.

The medallions and links are covered with a dense but neat Greek inscription. The large medallions have 13–15 lines of text each; the small medallions have 12–13 lines each. At the top of each medallion is a small incised decorative circle from which a circular outline, surrounding the text,

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emerges. Three of the medallions also have a small “figure-eight” or double circle at the bottom. The links have 3–5 lines each, with 1–3 letters per line.

The beginning of the inscription, most of which is missing, was in all likelihood a Greek translation of Deut 6:4 and Ps 91(LXX 90):^{1,2} The continuation, which is almost entirely preserved, is a unique conflation of the first two paragraphs of the rabbinic *Shema*^c (Deut 6:5–9 and Deut 11:13–21), also in Greek translation. The text exhibits the typical features of Byzantine inscriptions, especially those written on objects for personal use, including phonetic spelling (e.g., *κέ* for *καί*; *ύμῶν* for *ύμῶν*)³ and iotacism (e.g., *πάσι* for *πάση*); a confusion of case endings; lunate *sigmas*; and horizontal strokes over abbreviated *nomina sacra*. Apart from one instance (*ρήματα* in line III.9), the long vowels *eta* and *omega* are not used.

The diplomatic and normalized texts of the inscription are presented in the table below along with the text of LXX for comparison.⁴ The medallions and links have been numbered consecutively from I–XVI. Epigraphic and orthographic comments appear in the Appendix.

² See below, n. 29.

³ The common spellings *κέ* and *ύμῶν* are not corrected here.

⁴ The text of LXX is according to J. W. Wevers, ed., *Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum*, Vol. III,2, *Deuteronomium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977) and A. Rahlfs, ed., *Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum*, Vol. X, *Psalmi cum Odis* (2nd ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967). The apparatuses of these editions, as well as those of F. Field, ed., *Origenis Hexaplorum* (2 vols., Oxford: Clarendon, 1875) and J. W. Wevers, ed., *Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum*, Vol. II, 1, *Exodus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991) were used for the comparison with the Greek translations that follows the table. Comparison with SP is based on *The Pentateuch: The Samaritan Version and the Masoretic Version* (ed. and annotated by A. Tal and M. Florentin; Tel Aviv: Haim Rubín Tel Aviv University Press, 2010) (Heb.). The siglum < > refers to corrections by the editor. The siglum { } refers to superfluous letters that should be ignored. A dot under a letter indicates that the reading is uncertain. In the normalized text, the *iota subscriptum* was not inserted below *iotas*, where applicable, for technical reasons. The restored text of XV.1 and XVI is written in full, without hypothetical spelling or abbreviation; see Appendix, below.

	Diplomatic text	Normalized text	LXX
I	1 [--] 2 [--]Α 3 [--]Σ 4 [--]Σ̄ 5 [--] 6 [--?]	[-- --Α --Σ --Σ -- --ι?]	[Deut 6:4] Ἄκουε, Ἰσραήλ· κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστίν. [Ps 90:1] Ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν βοηθείᾳ τοῦ ὑψίστου ἐν σκέπη τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ
II	1 [.] 2 AN 3 OY 4 AYΛ 5 I'	[κ?] αν οὔ αὐλ ι(σθήσεται)	οὐρανοῦ αὐλισθήσεται.
III	1 ΚΕΑΓ 2 ΑΠΙΣΙΣΤ 3 [..]ΝΚΥΡΙΟΝ 4 [..]ΣΟΥΕΝΠΙΑΣ 5 ΙΚΑΡΔΙΑΣΟΥΚΑΝ 6 ΕΝΠΙΑΣΙΨΥΧΙΣΟΥ 7 ΚΕΕΝΠΙΑΣΙΣΦΟΔΡΟ 8 ΤΙΤΙΣΟΥΚΕΕΝΠΙΣ 9 ΟΝΤΕΤΑΡΗΜΑΤΑΤ 10 ΑΤΑΥΤΑΑΕΓΟΕΝ 11 ΤΕΛΟΜΕΥΜΟΝ 12 ΣΙΜΕΡΟΝΤΟΥ 13 ΑΓΑΠΑΝ	κὲ ἀγ απίσις τ [δ]ν κύριον [θ(εό)ν] σου ἐν πάσ ι καρδίᾳ σου κα<ι> ἐν πάσι ψ{ψ}υχῆ σου κὲ ἐν πάσι σφοδρό τιτί σου κὲ ἐν π(ά)σ(η) ὄντε τὰ ῥήματα τ ὰ ταῦτα ἅ ἐγὼ ἐν τέλομε ὑμῶν σίμερον τοῦ ἀγαπᾶν	[Deut 6:5] καὶ ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς δυνάμεώς σου. [Deut 6:6] καὶ ἔσται τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα ... [Deut 11:13] ... ὅσας ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι σοι σήμερον, ἀγαπᾶν
IV	1 ΤΟ 2 Ν 3 ΚΝ	τὸ ν κ(ύρι)ν	κύριον
V	1 [...]ΝΥ 2 ΜΟΝΚΕΤΟ 3 ΥΔΟΥΛΕΥΕΙΝ 4 ΑΥΤΟΥΕΝΕΝΠΙΑΣ 5 ΙΚΑΡΔΙΑΥΜΟΝΚΕ 6 ΕΝΠΙΑΣΙΨΥΧΙΥΜΟ 7 ΚΕΔΟΣΟΟΜΡΟΥΣ 8 ΥΜΟΝΕΝΚΕΡΟΥ	[θεό]ν ὑ μῶν κὲ το ῦ δουλεύειν αὐτοῦ ἐν {ἐν} πάσ ι καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν κὲ ἐν πάσι ψυχῆ ὑμῶ(ν) κὲ δῶσο ὄμρους ὑμῶν ἐν κεροῦ αὐτοῦ	τὸν θεόν σου καὶ λατρεύειν αὐτῷ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου, [Deut 11:14] καὶ δώσει τὸν ὑετὸν τῇ γῆ σου καθ' ὥραν πρόσιμον καὶ ὄψιμον,

	9 ΑΥΤΟΥΠΙΡΟΙΜ 10 ΟΝΚΑΙΟΥΨΙΜ 11 ΟΝΚΕΣΥΛ 12 ΕΛΞΙΞ	πρόιμ ον και ὄψιμ ον κέ συλ <λέ>σις	και εισοίσεις
VI	1 ΧΕΙ 2 ΥΙ 3 ΜΑ	χει ῦι μα	τὸν σῖτόν
VII	1 ΣΟΥ[--] 2 ΝΙΑΝΣΟΥ 3 ΚΕΕΙΣΤΙΑΠ 4 ΝΟΤΙΤΑΝΣΟΥ 5 ΚΕΔΟΣΟΧΛΟΙΝΕ 6 ΝΤΙΧΟΡΑΣΟΥΤΟΥ 7 [.]ΤΙΝΙΣΟΥΚΕΦΑΓΙΣ 8 [.]ΕΕΝΠΙΛΙΣΘΙΣΠΑΡΑ 9 ΦΥΛΑΞΕΣΤΕΥΜΙΝΜΠΙ 10 ΟΤΕΘΕΛΧΘΙΚΑΡΔΙΑ 11 ΥΜΟΝΚΕΑΠΟΣΤΙΤΕ 12 ΚΕΔΟΥΛΕΥΣΑΤΕΘΕ 13 Υ[.]ΕΤΕΡΥΣΚΕΠ 14 ΡΟΣΚΥΝΙ	σου [κὲ ο] <ἴν>ον σου κέ εἰσιτλπ νότιτάν σου κέ δῶσο χλόιν ἐ ν τι χόρα σου τοῦ [κ]τίνι σου κέ φάγις [κ]ἐ ἐνπλίσιθις παρα φυλ<ά>ζεσ- τε ὑμῖν μίπ οτε θελχθῖ καρδία ὑμὸν κέ ἀποστίτε κέ δουλεύσατε θευ[ς] ἐτέρυς κέ π ροσκυνί-	σου και τὸν οἶνόν σου και τὸ ἔλαιόν σου· [Deut 11:15] και δώσει χορτάσματα ἐν τοῖς ἀγροῖς σου τοῖς κτήνεσιν σου· [Deut 11:16] και φαγὼν και ἐμπλησθεῖς (ΜΤ11:16) πρόσεχε σεαυτῶ, μὴ πλατυνθῆ ἡ καρδία σου, και παραβῆτε και λατρεύσητε θεοῖς ἐτέροις και προσκυνησητε
VIII	1 ΣΑ 2 ΤΕ 3 ΑΥ 4 Τ	σα τε ἀυ τ-	αὐτοῖς·
IX	1 ΟΥΣ 2 ΚΑΙΟΡΓ 3 ΙΣΘΤΙΚΥΕΝ 4 ΕΝΥΜΙΝΚΕ 5 ΕΠΕΧΙΤΟΝΟΥ 6 ΡΑΝΟΝΚΕΟΥΚ 7 ΕΣΤΕΥΕΤΟΣΚΕ 8 ΙΧΘΣΝΟΥΔΟΙΦΥ 9 ΙΝΑΥΤΙΣΚΕΑΠ 10 ΟΛΙΣΤΕΤΑΧΕΟ 11 ΣΑΠΟΤΙΣΓΙΣ 12 ΤΙΣΑΓΑΘΙ 13 ΣΙΣΚΞ	οὺς και ὄργ ίσθι κύ(ριος) ἐν {ἐν} ὑμῖν κέ ἐπέχι τὸν οὐ ρανόν κέ οὐκ ἔστε ὑετός κέ ἰ χθ<ό>ν οὐ δό<σ>ι φυ ῖν αὐτῖς κέ ἀπ ολῖστε ταχέο ς ἀπὸ τῖς γῖς τῖς ἀγαθῖ ς ἴς κ(ύριος)	[Deut 11:17] και θυμωθεῖς ὄργισθῆ κύριος ἐφ' ὑμῖν και συσχῆ τὸν οὐρανόν, και οὐκ ἔσται ὑετός, και ἡ γῆ οὐ δώσει τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς, και ἀπολεισθε ἐν τάχει ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς τῆς ἀγαθῆς, ἧς ἔδωκεν κύριος

X	1 Δ 2 ΙΔ 3 ΙΥ 4 ΜΙ 5 Ν	δ ιδ ι̇ υ μ ι̇ ν	ύμιν.
XI	1 ΚΑΙΘΙΣΑ 2 ΤΕΤΑΡΙΜΑ 3 ΤΑΜΑΤΑΜΟΥΤ 4 ΑΥΤΑΕΠΙΚΑΡΔ 5 ΙΑΥΜΟΝΚΕΠΙΨ 6 ΥΧΟΝΥΜΟΝΚΑΙ 7 ΣΥΝΔΙΣΑΤΕΑΥΤΑ 8 ΣΙΜΙΟΝΕΠΙΧΙΡ 9 ΟΝΥΜΙΝΚΕΕΣΟΝ 10 ΤΕΔΙΑΝΥΚΤΑΜΕ 11 ΤΑΖΥΟΦΘΑΛΜ 12 ΟΝΥΜΟΝΚ 13 ΑΙΔΙΔ	και θίσα τε τὰ ρίμα τά{ματα} μου τ αὐτα ἐπὶ καρδ ία ὑμῶν κέ <έ>πὶ ψ υχῶν ὑμῶν και συνδίσσατε αὐτὰ σιμίον ἐπὶ χιρ ῶν ὑμῶν κέ ἔσον τε διανυκτὰ με ταξὺ ὀφθαλμ ῶν ὑμῶν κ αι διδ-	[Deut 11:18] και ἐμβαλεῖτε τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα εἰς τὴν καρδίαν ὑμῶν και εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν ὑμῶν· και ἀφάψετε αὐτὰ εἰς σημεῖον ἐπὶ τῆς χειρὸς ὑμῶν, και ἔσται ἀσάλευτα πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ὑμῶν· [Deut 11:19] και διδάξετε
XII	1 Α 2 ΖΑ 3 Τ 4 ΕΑ 5 Υ	ἀ ζα τ ε α ύ-	
XIII	1 ΤΑΤΟ 2 ΥΣΥΟΣΥΝ 3 ΟΝΤΟΥΛΑΛ 4 ΙΝΕΝΑΥΤΟΥΣ 5 ΕΝΤΟΥΚΑΘΙΣ 6 ΤΕΣΣΕΕΝΥΚΟΝΣΟΥ 7 ΚΕΕΝΤΟΥΠΟΡΕ 8 ΥΕΣΤΕΣΕΕΝΟΔ 9 ΟΥΕΝΤΟΥΚΥΤ 10 ΑΖΕΣΤΕΣΕΚ 11 ΕΕΝΤΟΥ 12 ΑΝΙ	τὰ το ῦς ὑδς ύ<μ> ῶν τοῦ λαλ ῶν ἐν αὐτούς ἐν τοῦ καθίστέ σε ἐν ὑκόν σου κέ ἐν τοῦ πορε ύεστε σε ἐν ὀδ οῦ ἐν τοῦ κυτ αζέστε σε κ έ ἐν τοῦ ἀνί-	τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν λαλεῖν αὐτὰ καθημένους ἐν οἴκῳ και πορευομένους ἐν ὁδῶ και κοιταζομένους και διανισταμένους·
XIV	1 [.] 2 ΤΑ	[σ] τα στ έ σ ε	

	3 ΣΤ 4 ΕΣ 5 Ε		
XV	[2-4 missing lines] 1 ΕΠΙΣΤ[--] 2 ΥΥΚΟΥΣΟΥΚΕ[--] 3 ΠΥΛΙΣΟΥΟΠΟΣΠ 4 ΛΙΘΥΝΘΘΟΥΣΙΝΙΜ 5 ΕΡΕΥΜΟΝΚΑΙΜΕ 6 ΡΕΥΟΝΙΜΟΝΕΠΠ 7 ΙΣΧΘΑΝΟΕΙΣΟΜΟΣΕ 8 ΝΚΣΤΥΣΠΑΤΡΑ 9 ΣΙΝΥΜΟΝΤΟΥΔΟ 10 ΥΝΕΑΥΤΟΥΣ 11 ΟΣΙΜΕΡΕ	[κὲ γράψις? αὐτὰ] ἐπὶ στ[αθμούς? το] ῦ ὕκου σου κὲ [ἐν] πύλις <σ>ου ἄπος π λιθυνθ{θ}οῦσιν ίμ έρε ὑμῶν και ίμέ ρε ὑὼν <ὕ>μῶν ἐπὶ τ ῖς χθ<ο>νό<ς> ἴς ἄμοσε ν κ(ύριο)ς τῷς πατρά σιν ὑμῶν τοῦ δο ῦνε αὐτοῦς ὅς ἡμέρε	[Deut 11:20] καὶ γράψετε αὐτὰ ἐπὶ τὰς φλιάς τῶν οἰκιῶν ὑμῶν και τῶν πυλῶν ὑμῶν, [Deut 11:21] ἵνα πολυημερεύσητε και αἱ ἡμέραι τῶν υἱῶν ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ἥς ἄμοσεν κύριος τοῖς πατράσιν ὑμῶν δοῦναι αὐτοῖς, καθὼς αἱ ἡμέραι
XVI	[2-3 missing lines] 1 Ε[.] 2 ΙΣ	[τοῦ οὐρανοῦ] ἐ[πὶ τῆς γ] ῖς	τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

*Comparison with the Greek Translations*⁵

I (last letter), II.1-5 [= Ps 91(90):1]

[ix?]ανοῦ α' σ' LXX οὐρανοῦ

ἀλι(σθήσεται) α' LXX] σ' νυκτερεύων

Commentary

In view of the affinity of the translation on the armband with the fragments of Aquila's translation (see below), the restoration of *ixanoῦ*, used by both

⁵ The text of the armband was compared to all available Greek and Hebrew textual witnesses: LXX, Hexaplaric evidence, MT, SP, and the Dead Sea biblical scrolls (including *tefillin* and *mezuzot*). The DSS evidence, while extensive, does not provide any otherwise unattested variants, and therefore is not included in this apparatus.

Aquila and Symmachus for this verse (and by them and others elsewhere) to translate the Hebrew יָשׁוּ is not improbable.⁶ However, it is also possible that the text should be restored οὐρανοῦ.⁷

III.1-9 [= Deut 6:5]

ἐν πάσι καρδίᾳ σου] LXX ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου

ἐν πάσι ψυχῆ σου] LXX ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου

κὲ ἐν πάσι σφοδρότιτί σου κὲ ἐν π(ά)σ(η) ὄντε] LXX καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς δυνάμεώς σου

Commentary

The text of the armband provides two translations, or interpretations, of the Hebrew word תַּמָּד: σφοδρότιτι and ὄντε. תַּמָּד is usually an adverb meaning “very” or “very much,” but it is used in Deut 6:5 as a noun. The only other place in the Hebrew Bible where it is used in this way is 2 Kgs 23:25, a verse that employs a similar formula in reference to Josiah, King of Judah. The first translation of תַּמָּד on the armband is σφοδρότιτι, a dative singular form of the noun σφοδρότης (“vehemence”), which, like the word תַּמָּד, is closely related to an adverb (σφόδρα) meaning “very much, exceedingly.” This word is attested, without the iotacism, on a fragment of a palimpsest from the Cairo Genizah, the underlying text of which is a Greek translation of 1 Kgs 20:7-17 and 2 Kgs 23:11-27 attributed to Aquila.⁸ The underlying manuscript is dated by Burkitt to the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century

⁶ I am grateful to Menahem Kister for pointing this out. See G. Bertram, “IKANOS in den griechischen Übersetzungen des ATs als Wiedergabe von *schaddaj*,” ZAW 70 (1958), 20-31; E. Hatch and H. A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament (Including the Apocryphal Books)* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1998), 683-84.

⁷ On the difficulty of reconstructing the missing text, see n. 29, below.

⁸ F. C. Burkitt, *Fragments of the Books of Kings according to the Translation of Aquila* (Cambridge, 1897), 8, 13; Hatch-Redpath, *Concordance*, Appendix 3, 214; Cambridge, UL, T-S 12.184 and T-S 20.50; http://www.gbbj.org/texts/T1_d.html#T1_4Kgdms_23-25_26.

CE and most resembles codices that have come from Egypt.⁹ The relevant part of the text reads: “[εν] [παση] καρδια [αυτου] και εν πα[ση] [ψυ]χη αυτου και εν παση σφ(ο)δροτητι αυτου...” (2 Kgs 23:25), which closely resembles the translation preserved on the armband. The second interpretation of **רצמ** on the armband is *ὄντε*. It is likely that *ὄντε* is the dative singular *ὄντι*, in the sense of “being,” with an *epsilon* instead of an *iota*. However, it is tempting to consider the possibility that *ὄντε* is somehow derived from the expression *τὰ ὄντα*, attested already in the fourth century BCE and, more importantly, in the sixth century CE as “that which one has, property, fortune.”¹⁰ The fact that the word σου does not follow the word *ὄντε* leads me to believe that what was intended here was not a fourth item in the list of ways to love the Lord, but rather another interpretation of the rare Hebrew noun **רצמ**. The interpretation of *ὄντε* in the sense of property corresponds to the Jewish interpretation of the Hebrew word **רצמ** as wealth or property: it appears to have this meaning in the Hebrew Ben Sira (Sir 7:30–31)¹¹ and is attested in this sense in CD 9.10–11. The Jewish Aramaic versions (*Tg. Onq.*, *Tg. Ps.-J.*, and *Tg. Neof.*) of Deut 6:5 all translate **רצמ** in this sense, and this is the way it is understood in the early rabbinic tradition (*Sifre Deut* 32 and *m. Ber.* 9:5). For additional Greek translations of **רצמ** (*διάνοια*, *ισχύς*) see Matt 22:37, Mark 12:30, and Luke 10:27.

III.9–10 [= Deut 6:6]

τὰ ῥήματα τὰ ταῦτα] LXX καὶ ἔσται τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα

Commentary

⁹ Burkitt, *Fragments*, 10–11.

¹⁰ H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, “*ὄντα*, *τά*,” *Greek-English Lexicon* (New 9th edition, with a revised supplement; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 1234, and, especially, the revised 1996 supplement, 228.

¹¹ This and the following references to interpretations of **רצמ** are collected in M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1–11: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 5; New York, 1991), 332, 339–40.

Beginning with the words *ἄ ἐγώ* in Line III.10, the text segues into a translation of Deut 11:13. This transition is made possible by the similarity between phrases in the two verses. However, it results in the omission of the condition presented at the beginning of Deut 11:13.

III.10–13, IV.1–3, V.1–6 [= Deut 11:13]

ἄ ἐγὼ ἐντέλομε ὑμῶν (= MT אַנְכִי מְצוּחַ אֶתְכֶם)] *λ' ὅσας ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι ὑμῖν*; LXX ὅσας ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι σοι

τοῦ ἀγαπᾶν] LXX ἀγαπᾶν

τὸν κ(ύριο)ν [θεό]ν ὑμῶν (= MT אֱלֹהֵי הוּא יְהוָה)] LXX κύριον τὸν θεόν σου

τοῦ δουλεύειν αὐτοῦ] LXX λατρεύειν αὐτῷ

ἐν {ἐν} πάσι καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν κὲ ἐν πάσι ψυχῇ ὑμῶν(ν) (= MT בְּכָל לִבְבְּכֶם וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁכֶם)] LXX ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδιάς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου

V.7–12, VI.1–3, VII.1–4 [= Deut 11:14]

κὲ δῶσο *σ' θ'* (= MT וְנָתַתְּ)] LXX καὶ δώσει (= SP וְנָתַתְּ)

ὄμρους ὑμῶν] *α' θ'* (*θ'* τὸν ὑετὸν) τῆ γῆ ὑμῶν; *σ'* τὸν ὑετὸν τῆς γῆς ὑμῶν (= MT מַטְרַם אֶרֶץ)); LXX τὸν ὑετὸν τῆ γῆ σου (= SP מַטְרַם אֶרֶץ)

ἐν κερουῦ αὐτοῦ, *α'* ἐν καιρῷ] *λ'* κατὰ καιρόν; LXX καθ' ὥραν

συλ<λέ>σις] *λ'* συνάξεις; LXX εἰσοίσεις

χειῦμα, *α'* χεῦμα (Jerome PL 22:577–78)] LXX τὸν σῖτον

[ο]<ῖνόν>ν ≈ LXX τὸν οἶνόν] *α'* ὀπωρισμόν (Jerome PL 22:577–78)

εἰστιλπνότηταν, *α'* στιλπνότητα (Jerome PL 22:577–78)] LXX τὸ ἔλαιόν

Commentary

In *Epistle to Pammachius*¹² Jerome criticizes Aquila's translation of MT נגד ויזהרך as *χεῦμα, ὀπωρισμόν, στυλπνότητα* and provides the Latin translation *fusionem, pomationemque, splendentiam*. Thus *χειῦμα* follows Aquila. *εἰστυλπνότηταν* (= *στυλπνότητα*) also follows Aquila, and reflects his awareness of the connection between the Hebrew words *יזהר* and *זהר/זהר*.

VII.5-8 [= Deut 11:15]

καὶ δῶσο (= MT ונתתי) LXX καὶ δώσει (= SP ונתן)

χλόιν, α' χλόην] LXX χορτάσματα

ἐν τι χόρα] LXX τοῖς ἀγροῖς

τοῦ [κ]τίνι] LXX τοῖς κτήνεσιν

καὶ φάγεις [κ]ἐ ἐνπλίσθεις] LXX καὶ φαγών καὶ ἐμπλησθεῖς

VII. 8-14, VIII.1-4, IX.1 [= Deut 11:16]

παραφυλάξτε ὑμῖν (= MT כבדו) LXX πρόσεχε σεαυτῶ

μίποτε θελχθῆ (θ' θελχθῆ) καρδία ὑμῶν (= MT פן יפתה לבבכם) σ' ἀπατηθῆ; LXX μὴ πλατυνθῆ ἢ καρδία σου

ἀποστῆτε] LXX παραβῆτε

δουλεύσατε] LXX λατρεύσατε

IX.2-13, X.1-5 [= Deut 11:17]

ὀργισθῆτι] LXX θυμωθεῖς ὀργισθῆ

¹² Jerome, *Epist.* 57, 11 (PL 22:577-78). This source is noted in J. R. Labendz, "Aquila's Bible Translation in Late Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Perspectives," *HTR* 102 (2009), 353-88, at 383, n. 118.

ἐν {ἐν} ὑμῖν] LXX ἐφ' ὑμῖν

ἐπέχει] LXX συσχῆ

ἰ χθ<ό>ν] LXX ἡ γῆ

φυῖν αὐτῆς] LXX τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς

ταχέος] LXX ἐν τάχει

ἴς κ(ύριος) διδῖ ὑμῖν] LXX ἦς ἔδωκεν κύριος ὑμῖν

Commentary

The translation ἴς κ(ύριος) διδῖ ὑμῖν follows the present tense vocalization of MT, in contrast to LXX.

XI.1-12 [= Deut 11:18]

θίσατε] LXX ἐμβαλεῖτε

τὰ ρίματά{ματα} μου ταῦτα (= MT הָאֵלֶּיךָ דְּבַרֵּי תַא) LXX τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα

ἐπὶ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν] LXX εἰς τὴν καρδίαν ὑμῶν

<ἐ>πὶ ψυχῶν ὑμῶν] LXX εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν ὑμῶν

συνδίσατε, α' συνδήσετε] LXX ἀφάψετε

σιμίον ἐπὶ χιρῶν ὑμῖν (= SP כִּימִיּוֹן) LXX σημείον ἐπὶ τῆς χειρὸς ὑμῶν (= MT כִּימִיּוֹן)

ἔσοντε διανυκτὰ (α' ἔσονται εἰς νακτὰ; σ' ἔσονται διεσταλμένοι) μεταξὺ ὀφθαλμῶν ὑμῶν] LXX ἔσται ἀσάλευτα πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ὑμῶν

Commentary

The translation κὲ ἔσοντε διανυκτὰ μεταξὺ ὀφθαλμῶν ὑμῶν is similar to the one attested for Aquila, καὶ ἔσονται εἰς νακτὰ μεταξὺ ὀφθαλμῶν ὑμῶν, and, to a lesser extent, to that of Symmachus, καὶ ἔσονται διεσταλμένοι μεταξὺ ὀφθαλμῶν ὑμῶν. εἰς νακτὰ translates the rare and enigmatic Hebrew word תַּשׁוּט along with its particle לְ, literally, “to,” as it appears in the present verse. It is difficult to

understand what Aquila meant by *νακτά*. In the neuter plural, the term refers to the matted fabric “felt,” based on *νακτός*, meaning “close-pressed, solid,” from the verb *νάσσω*, but he could have been referring to something pressed close or solidly affixed between the eyes (cf. LXX: *καὶ ἔσται ἀσάλευτα*). Another possibility is that the term refers to the felt hat called a *pileus* (*πίλος*), which was worn low over the brow: Hesychius defines *νακτά* as “*τοὺς πῖλους, καὶ τὰ ἐμπίλια*” (i.e., “felt hats, and felt shoes”).¹³ Aquila used this term to translate *תַּטִּיט* not only in our verse, but in Exod 13:16 and Deut 6:8 as well. Apart from these three verses, the word *תַּטִּיט* is unattested in the Bible.¹⁴ *δισσταλμένοι* (*δισσταλμένα* in Deut 6:8), used by Symmachus, is the perfect passive participle of *διασταλάσσω*, “to shed,” which is based on *σταλάσσω*, “to drop, drip,” together with the preposition *διά*, “through, or in between.” This translation reflects the apparent connection between *תַּטִּיט* and the biblical and rabbinic Hebrew words for “drop” and “to drip,” suggesting that the word might have meant a kind of pendant. In the Aramaic translations *תַּטִּיט* are rendered *תַּפְלִיט*, a word that originally may have meant amulet and which was the usual rabbinic word for the phylacteries worn on the forehead and arm in compliance with these verses. Returning to our translation, one cannot help but wonder if there is a connection between Aquila’s *εἰς νακτά* and the enigmatic hapax *διανυκτά* used in our inscription. Is it possible that over the course of the transmission of the text, the original meaning of *εἰς νακτά* was no longer understood and the similarly sounding *διανυκτά* was supplied instead? This word seems to have been associated with the *διανυκτερεύω*, “pass the night, keep vigil,” and *διανυκτέρευσις*, meaning vigil by night,¹⁵ or night-watch¹⁶ and may convey the notion of phylacteries as vigilant, watchful, protective objects.

¹³ M. Schmidt, ed., “*νακτά*,” *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon* (Jenae: sumptibus Dufftii, 1867), 1073.

¹⁴ For a detailed discussion of the word *תַּטִּיט*, parts of which are referred to here, see Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 333–35, 341–43.

¹⁵ G. W. H. Lampe, “*διανυκτέρευσις*” and “*διανυκτερεύω*,” *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961), 357.

XI.12-13, XII. 1-5, XIII 1-12, XIV.1-5 [= Deut 11:19]

καὶ διδάξατε αὐτὰ (= MT ׀קח ׀תדל) LXX καὶ διδάξετε

τοὺς υἱοὺς υἱ<μ>ῶν] LXX τὰ τέκνα υἱῶν

τοῦ λαλῖν ἐν αὐτοῦς, α' θ' τοῦ λαλεῖν] LXX λαλεῖν αὐτὰ

ἐν τοῦ καθίστέ σε ἐν ἕκόν σου (= MT תיבב; cf. Deut 6:8 λ' ἐν τῷ καθῆσθαι σε ἐν οἰκία σου)] α' σ' θ' καθημένου ἐν οἴκῳ σου; LXX καθημένους ἐν οἴκῳ (= SP תיבב)

ἐν τοῦ πορεύεστέ σε ἐν ὁδοῦ (cf. Deut 6:8 λ' ἐν τῷ πορεύεσθαι σε ἐν ὁδῷ)] α' σ' θ' πορευομένου ἐν ὁδῷ; LXX πορευομένους ἐν ὁδῷ

ἐν τοῦ κυταζέστε σε (cf. Deut 6:8 λ' καὶ ἐν τῷ καθεύδειν σε)] α' σ' θ' καὶ κοιταζομένου; LXX καὶ κοιταζομένους

ἐν τοῦ ἀν[σ]ταστέ σε (cf. Deut 6:8 λ' ἐν τῷ ἀνίστασθαι σε)] α' σ' θ' διανισταμένου; LXX διανισταμένους

Commentary

Note the lack of a conjunction before ἐν τοῦ κυταζέστε (in contrast to MT).

XV.missing lines, 1-3 [= Deut 11:20]

ἐπὶ στ[αθμούς?], α' σταθμούς] LXX ἐπὶ τὰς φλιάς

[το]ῦ ἕκου σου (= MT תיב) LXX τῶν οἰκιῶν υἱῶν (cf. SP תיב)

καὶ [ἐν] πύλις <σ>ου] LXX καὶ τῶν πυλῶν υἱῶν

XV.3-11, XVI.missing lines, 1-2 [= Deut 11:21]

ὄπος πλιθυνθ{θ}οῦσιν ἡμέρε υἱῶν] LXX ἵνα πολυημερεύσητε

¹⁶ F. W. Danker, "διανυκτέρευσις," *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (3rd. ed., revised and edited, based on W. Bauer, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, 6th edition; Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 234.

ἡμέρε υῶν <ύ>μῶν] LXX αἱ ἡμέραι τῶν υἰῶν ὑμῶν

ἐπὶ τῆς χθ<ο>νό<ς>] LXX ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

τοῦ δοῦνε αὐτοῦς] LXX δοῦναι αὐτοῖς

ὅς ἡμέρε] LXX καθὼς αἱ ἡμέραι

Relation to LXX

The Greek version of the biblical verses preserved on the armband is not that of LXX, but a different Greek translation. These differences go beyond the orthographic changes and confusion of cases typical of inscriptions of the Byzantine Period. Many of the differences are lexical, but there are also significant stylistic differences, including:

1. Placement of the definite article before κύριος (τὸν κύριον θεόν) when the Tetragrammaton is followed by יהוה, whereas LXX places the article between κύριος and θεός.
2. A tendency toward a literal translation of Hebrew prepositional particles, especially כ, for which the Greek ἐν is given (e.g., ἐν πάσι καρδίᾳ σου, ἐν κερῶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὀργισθῆτι κύριος ἐν ὑμῖν).
3. A tendency to avoid the definite article before nouns that do not have the definite article in MT (e.g., καὶ ἐπέχει τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ οὐκ ἔστε ὑετός καὶ ἰ χθὼν οὐ δόσι φυὴν αὐτῆς).
4. Use of the definite article in the genitive singular before infinitives for the purpose of connectivity (e.g., τοῦ ἀγαπᾶν τὸν κύριον θεόν ὑμῶν καὶ τοῦ δουλεύειν αὐτοῦ).
5. A closer adherence to the word order of MT (e.g., ἴς κύριος διδῆ ὑμῖν).
6. The careful translation of specific words, such as דאמ, rendered σφοδρότιτι, and the closely related terms דמה and אר, differentiated respectively as χθῶν and γῆ.

The translation thus exhibits a literal style that clings tightly to the source language. Its *Vorlage* appears to have been closer to MT than the *Vorlage* of LXX, as suggested by its greater correlation with MT, particularly in matters of number and person. The lack of consistency in the application of the abovementioned principles of translation might reflect changes introduced into the translation over the years, and, perhaps, the incorporation of parts of other available translations.

Relation to the Other Greek Translations

The translation has quite a few words and phrases in common with what we know of the famous second-century Greek Bible translation of Aquila, and to a lesser extent, with the translations of Theodotion and Symmachus. The strongest ties to Aquila's translation include:

1. ἐν πάσι καρδίᾳ σου καὶ ἐν πάσι ψυχῇ σου κὲ ἐν πάσι σφοδρότιτι σου (III.4–8) from Deut 6:5, which is closely linked to the translation of 2 Kgs 23:25 attributed to Aquila on the late fifth–early sixth century palimpsest from the Cairo Genizah. The formula recurs in V.4–6 (Deut 11:13) as well.
2. The translation of Deut 11:14, which contains a phrase linked to Aquila – ἐν κεροῦ (V.8) and two single words – χειῦμα (VI.1–3) and εἰστιλπνότηταν (VII.3–4).
3. Additional single words linked to Aquila are χλόιν (VII.5, Deut 11:15), συνδίσατε (XI.7, Deut 18), and, in all likelihood, σταθμούς (partially restored on XV, Deut 11:20).

The literal approach that characterizes this translation dovetails with many of the stylistic features that have been attributed to Aquila's translation, such as his fidelity to the Hebrew text; expression of the same Hebrew words with the same Greek words; translation of Hebrew words with an eye on etymology; careful translation of particles; and a close connection to (but not

necessarily identity with) MT.¹⁷ However, there is no trace of Aquila's characteristic use of *σύν* for *תא* whenever *תא* is followed by the definite article (but not before proper nouns or nouns with suffixes or in the construct state)¹⁸ – though there is only one place in the present text where this might have occurred: Deut 11:17 *את-השמים*. Moreover, the Tetragrammaton is translated *κύριος* and not written in Paleo-Hebrew characters, which is found in some of the manuscripts containing translations close to Aquila's. In addition, some of the variants are attested for *οἱ λοιποὶ* (*λ'*) – thus collectively referring to the other, non-LXX translations – Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotian; and one is linked to Theodotian alone. The style of *τοῦ* with the infinitive is attested for both Aquila and Theodotian in the translation of Deut 11:19 (XIII.3-4 *τοῦ λαλῆν*), and in the translation of the parallel verse Deut 6:8 for *οἱ λοιποὶ* (*λ'*), which preserves a translation practically identical to ours. Finally, the translations of both Aquila and Symmachus for Deut 11:18 are both very close to ours, the only difference being the translation of the word *טופת*. In this case, the inscription's translation of *טופת* as *διανυκτά* may stem from Aquila's *εἰς νυκτά*.

Special Variants and Possible Exegesis

Apart from the words *σφοδρότιτι* for *מאד* and *διανυκτά* for *טופת* already mentioned, there are a few translations for which I have found no parallels in the Greek witnesses to these verses: the use of *καὶ τοῦ δουλεύειν αὐτοῦ* and *καὶ δουλεύσατε* for *ולעבדו* and *ועבדתם* (Deut 11:13, 16); *ἄμρους ὑμῶν* for *מט-ארצכם* (Deut 11:14); *καὶ ἐπέχει* for *ועצר* (Deut 11:17); *καὶ ἰ χθόν* and *ἐπὶ τῆς χθονός* for *והאדמה* and *על האדמה* (Deut 11:17, 21); *φύλιν αὐτίς* for *יבולה* (Deut 11:17); and *τοῦς ὑδῶς ὑ<μ>δῶν* for *את-בניכם* (Deut 11:19).¹⁹

¹⁷ N. Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 115–118.

¹⁸ Burkitt, *Fragments*, 12.

¹⁹ It is possible that these words were used in the translations of other verses. The evidence will be examined and presented by the author in a forthcoming publication.

The additional translation of וּבְכָל מְאֹדָד as $\kappa\acute{\epsilon} \acute{\epsilon}\nu \pi(\acute{\alpha})\sigma(\eta) \acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\epsilon$ might reflect an understanding of the word מְאֹדָד as wealth or property, as found in a number of Jewish contexts, including the Aramaic *Targumim* and early rabbinic exegesis (see above).

The Source of the Translation: A Tentative Conclusion

In his studies on the development of the Greek Bible within the Jewish milieu, N. de Lange has demonstrated that the influence of the ancient Greek versions, particularly Aquila's version, continued to be felt on the Greek translations of the Bible used by Jews well into medieval times, though it gradually weakened over time:²⁰ "A striking feature of these medieval texts is their relationship to the ancient versions, particularly that of Akylas ... It would probably be mistaken, however, to think of the medieval versions as being solely derived from Akylas. The distinctive features of Akylas's translation do not appear consistently in the medieval versions, and we have also noted some hints of plurality of versions circulating side by side."²¹ The translation preserved on our armband, which shows pronounced ties to Aquila's version as well as some affinities with the translations of his contemporaries, is not Aquila's translation, but it seems to be based on it. It was one of the translations that circulated among Jews and evolved dynamically over the course of many centuries; a translation that was used in a given place at a given time, that was known by or available to the maker of the armband or to the individual who commissioned it, that preserved features of the ancient versions while incorporating later and contemporary developments, and that may have even been a basis for later medieval

²⁰ See especially N. de Lange, "The Greek Bible Translations of the Byzantine Jews," in *The Old Testament in Byzantium* (ed. P. Magdalino and R. Nelson; Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2010), 39–54, and idem, "The Greek Bible in the Medieval Synagogue," in *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures* (ed. R. Bonfil et al.; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 371–84.

²¹ De Lange, "The Greek Bible Translations," 51.

versions. To ascertain where and when the armband was produced, we must now turn to the artifact itself.

*The Date, Provenance, and Function of the Armband: Preliminary Remarks*²²

Typologically, the armband belongs to a group of Byzantine amuletic armbands that has been studied by scholars for over a century.²³ Its closest parallels are to a subgroup of armbands dated to the mid-sixth to mid-seventh century, which appear to have been produced in Egypt, and I propose that this date and provenance also be adopted for our armband as well.

The armbands of the group exhibit a variety of protective and magical symbols, including Christian iconography based on scenes from the life of Jesus: the Annunciation, the Visitation of the Magi, and so forth. We may therefore assume that they were at least for the most part Christian objects. The majority are also inscribed with at least part of the first verse of Ps 91(90) in Greek translation. The function of these armbands was, presumably, apotropaic.

While our armband resembles some of the other members of the group in terms of its general design concept and is linked to them inscriptionally by the use of Ps 91(90), it is nevertheless unique. If the reconstruction proposed

²² The following conclusions will be presented in detail in the forthcoming Proceedings of the Fifteenth International Orion Symposium.

²³ From J. Maspero, "Bracelets-amulettes d'époque byzantine," *Annales du service des antiquités de l'Égypte* IX (1908), 246–58, through G. Vikan, "Two Byzantine Amuletic Armbands and the Group to Which They Belong," *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 49/50 (1991/92), 33–51; T. J. Kraus, "Fragmente eines Amulett-Armbands im British Museum (London) mit Septuaginta-Psalms 90 und der Huldigung der Magier," *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 48/49 (2005/6), 114–27, and idem, "'He That Dwelleth in the Help of the Highest': Septuagint Psalm 90 and the Iconographic Program on Byzantine Armbands," in *Jewish and Christian Scripture as Artifact and Canon* (ed. C. A. Evans and H. D. Zacharias; Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity 13; Library of Second Temple Studies 70; London: T & T Clark, 2009), 137–47; see also additional references cited in these publications.

here for the missing medallion (I) is correct, the armband originally bore a Greek translation (possibly abbreviated) of Deut 6:4 and Ps 91(90):1 followed by a conflation of Deut 6:5–9 and Deut 11:13–21, also in Greek translation. The combination of Deut 6:4–9 and Deut 11:13–21, with or without Ps 91(90), is characteristic of rabbinic Jews. Indeed, Deut 6:4–9 and Deut 11:13–21 play a paramount role in rabbinic Jewish rituals that had already crystallized by the time this armband was made: They are inscribed upon the parchments inserted into *mezuzot* and *tefillin* (phylacteries) and form part of the liturgical text known as “the *Shema'*” or the “*Shema'* liturgy.”²⁴ For this reason, I have referred to the inscription on the armband as the “rabbinic *Shema'*,” even though it is, in fact, an excerpt.²⁵

Since the group of armbands to which our armband belongs had an apotropaic function, it is reasonable to assume that our armband was an apotropaic object too. Though it lacks the usual magical symbols, its inscription, a Greek translation of biblical verses traditionally combined in

²⁴ Rabbinic *tefillin* also contain parchments inscribed with Exod 13:1–10 and Exod 13:11–16, in addition to Deut 6:4–9 and Deut 11:13–21. Not all *tefillin*, however, were rabbinic. Evidence for *tefillin* that were not produced in accordance with rabbinic law has come to light at Qumran; see E. Tov, “*Tefillin* of Different Origin from Qumran?,” in *A Light for Jacob: Studies in the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls in Memory of Jacob Shalom Licht* (ed. Y. Hoffman and F. H. Polak; Jerusalem: Bialik and Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1997), 44*–54*. The rabbinic *Shema'* liturgy includes, in addition to Deut 6:4–9 and Deut 11:13–21, a third biblical passage (Num 15:37–41) as well as several blessings; see R. Kimmelman, “The *Shema'* Liturgy: From Covenant Ceremony to Coronation,” in *Kenishta: Studies of the Synagogue World 1* (ed. J. Tabory; Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University, 2001), 1:9–105. According to Kimmelman (p. 13, and n. 14), “between 70 and ca. 200 the three *Shema'* sections received their present liturgical status and order. The third section of the *Shema'* [i.e., Num 15:37–41 — NB], however, was still not the universal norm in the evening service as late as the amoraic period.” For an overview of the protective/magical and liturgical uses of Deut 6:4 from the Bible through Late Antiquity, see E. Eshel, H. Eshel, and A. Lange, “‘Hear, O Israel’ in Gold: An Ancient Amulet from Halbtturn in Austria,” *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 1/1 (2010), 43–64.

²⁵ The use of partial verses or formulae to stand for the whole is common on inscribed Byzantine amuletic jewelry. See also n. 29, below.

Jewish amulets, *mezuzot*, *tefillin*, and prayers, must have been regarded as a powerful source of protection in its own right.²⁶ The particular combination of biblical verses, coupled with the absence of Christian iconography, strongly suggest that the armband was made for a Jew.²⁷ It would appear, then, that it was a Jewish adaptation of the common Christian model. Though it is theoretically possible that a Christian patron sought to enlist the power of Jewish magic by copying a powerful Jewish text onto a classically Christian amuletic armband, it is difficult to imagine that the use of the Jewish text would be to the complete exclusion of the traditional Christian symbols and iconography.

Conclusion

The armband presented here preserves a lost Greek translation of a conflation of Deut 6:5–9 and Deut 11:13–21, along with the end of Ps 91(90):1; it probably originally also featured Deut 6:4, perhaps with the beginning of Ps 91(90):1. The translation shows notable ties to Aquila's second-century translation and seems to have been based significantly on it. At the same time, the text exhibits linguistic features typical of Byzantine inscriptions. On the basis of the object's similarity to a subgroup of Christian armbands used for magical protection, I have proposed that our armband should be dated to the mid-sixth to mid-seventh century and that it was probably manufactured in Egypt.

Like its Christian parallels, this armband was an apotropaic object; but its lack of Christian iconography and the fact that it is inscribed with biblical

²⁶ While it is tempting to imagine that this object, worn on the arm, might have been a non-rabbinic form of *tefillin*, I am personally more inclined to a simpler scenario, according to which verses regarded as apotropaic by Jews were co-opted for use on an apotropaic piece of jewelry.

²⁷ On the difficulty of securely establishing Jewish ownership of magical objects inscribed in Greek, see G. Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 209–14.

passages traditionally combined by Jews indicate that its owner was probably a Jew — presumably, an inhabitant of the Egyptian diaspora. Moreover, as these passages are particularly associated with rabbinic *mezuzot*, *tefillin*, and prayers, we may posit that the hypothetical Egyptian Jewish patron who commissioned the armband was at least to some degree within the sphere of rabbinic influence. At the same time, he obviously felt free to express his religious identity in a magical format used by his Christian neighbors.

The Greek translation that was engraved on the armband must have been in current use among the Jews of Egypt in the mid-sixth to mid-seventh century, the eve of the Arab conquest, and perhaps even later. We need not assume, however, that this translation was only used in Egypt. Indeed, in view of the part that Palestinian Jews played in the reestablishment of the Jewish community of Egypt at the end of the third century (after its devastation by Trajan in the early second century) and the strong ties between the communities over the following centuries,²⁸ it is possible that the translation was also used in the Greek-speaking Jewish communities of the Land of Israel.

²⁸ I thank Hillel Newman for sharing with me the text of his paper “The Jews of Egypt and North Africa in the Orbit of the Land of Israel,” delivered at the recent conference “Mapping the Jewish Diaspora of Late Antiquity.” See also A. Kerkeslager, “The Jews in Egypt and Cyrenaica, 66–235 CE,” *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, Vol. IV, *The Late Roman – Rabbinic Period*, (ed. S. T. Katz; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 53–68; see 63–68. On the Jews of Alexandria in Late Antiquity, see G. G. Stroumsa, “Jewish Survival in Late Antique Alexandria,” in *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures* (ed. in R. Bonfil et al.; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 257–69; see 261–62. On the presence of a community of Egyptian Jews in Jaffa, see J. J. Price, “Five Inscriptions from Jaffa,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 22 (2003), 215–31 and idem, “The Ancient Necropolis of Jaffa,” in *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*, Vol. III, *South Coast 2161–2648* (ed. W. Ameling et al.; Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2014), 36–38.

*Appendix: Epigraphic and Orthographic Comments**I.5-6?, II.1-5*

Owing to the fragmentary state of the first medallion (I.5-6?) and its connection to the link that follows it (II.1-5), the two are discussed here together. Only a fraction of the medallion has survived. Three broken letters from the ends of its middle rows are visible. Judging from the size of the letters and the space between them, it seems that the medallion, which was one of the four small ones, contained only 5-6 lines of text, with 3-6 letters per line. This distinguishes it from the other medallions and may have even served to indicate its importance. The first surviving letter, presumably from Line 2, appears to be an *alpha*. Below it, at the end of Line 3, there seems to be the upper tip of a *sigma*. At the end of Line 4 there may well be a very narrow *sigma* with the end of the stroke designating the *nomen sacrum* above it. In view of this and in view of the continuation of the inscription on the remaining medallions and the links, I propose that at least part of the text on the missing medallion was a Greek translation of Deut 6:4. The two *sigmas* surviving at the ends of the lines of the partial medallion, one of which seems to be surmounted by the end of a stroke indicating a *nomen sacrum*, may be from the words *κύριος* and/or *θεός*, which are likely to have been used in the Greek translation of this verse.

The link following this partial medallion (II.1-5) preserves part of the second to last word and an abbreviation of the last word of Ps 91(90):1. The letter at the top of the link is worn and cannot be read with certainty. While it is possible that it is the *rho* from *οὐρανοῦ*, it could also be a *kappa* from the word *ἰκανοῦ*. Whatever the case may be, it is likely that the beginning of this verse was inscribed on the first medallion.²⁹ The link (h. 1.7 cm) is slightly

²⁹ Owing to the uncertainty regarding even the three partially surviving letters on the missing medallion, I have not proposed a hypothetical reconstruction of the text here. The inclusion of almost two full verses on the first medallion, without abbreviation, would be difficult. For the time being, I can only suggest that either the text, possibly only of Ps 91(90):1, was significantly abbreviated, or that a mishap occurred during the production of the armband or its engraving that resulted in the

larger than the other links and, like the medallion, its letters are larger too. The final letter, an *iota*, is followed by what seems to be a stroke indicating abbreviation.

III.1–13

Lines 1–2: **ἀγαπίσις** for ἀγαπήσεις.

Lines 4–5: **πάσι** for πάση (here and below). **κα<ι>**. The *kappa* and *alpha* are clearly visible, and I have thus read *καί*, even though *κέ* is more common in this inscription. The alternation of *καί* and *κέ* in a single inscription is common in Byzantine inscriptions.

Line 6: **ψυχῖ** for ψυχῆ (here and below).

Lines 7–8: **σφοδρότιτι** for σφοδρότητι.

Line 9: **ρήματα**, with a ligature of *eta* and *mu*.

Lines 10–11: **ἐγώ** for ἐγώ. **ἐντέλομε** for ἐντέλλομαι. **ὕμδν**, in the genitive instead of the dative ὕμῖν – an instance of the confusion of cases common in this inscription.

Line 12: **σίμερον** for σήμερον.

Line 13: The top of the “figure-eight” at the base of the medallion protrudes into line 13, resembling an *omicron*, but it is merely a decoration.

IV.1–3

Line 3: Horizontal stroke over the abbreviated *nomen sacrum*.

omission of some of the text. Indeed, the numerous errors in the inscription, such as the accidental repetition of letters, suggest that even if the engraver understood the inscription (an assumption that cannot be made), the engraving of such a long and apparently uncommon inscription must have been a challenging task. While the continuation of the inscription does not employ significant abbreviation, the fact that the last word of Ps 91(90):1, *ἀλι(σθήσεται)*, is abbreviated on II may indicate that the first part of the inscription, namely, the text of I and II, was indeed more abbreviated than the rest of the inscription. The abbreviation of Ps 91(90) in general, and of its first verse in particular, was very common on the amulets of the region during this period.

V.1-12

Line 4: **αὐτοῦ**. In the genitive instead of the dative.

Line 7: **δῶσο** for δῶσω (here and below). **δμρους** for ὄμβρους.

Lines 8-9: **κεροῦ** for καιροῦ, and in the genitive instead of the dative.

Lines 11-12: **συλ<λέ>σις** for συλλέξεις. The second *lambda* and the *epsilon* were accidentally transposed, and there is a *sigma* instead of a *xi*. For examples of *sigma* in place of *xi*, see, for instance, *SEG* XVI, 814 and *IGLS* XIII, 1, 9002 (Arabia); *IGLS* 1, 183 (Syria); *SEG* XXXV, 1072 (Minorca). The top of the “figure-eight” at the base of the medallion protrudes into line 12, in between the *lambda* and the *sigma*.

VI.1-3

Lines 1-3: **χειῦμα** for χεῦμα.

VII.1-14

Lines 1-2: **[κἔ ο]<ἰνό>ν**. The first line of this medallion is worn and it is impossible to make out the last letters, though there may have been at least a *kappa* or *kappa epsilon* for *καί* there. **κἔ ο<ἰνό>ν** is tentatively restored based on the assumption that the *iota* and *nu* were accidentally switched and that a first declension as opposed to second declension accusative singular ending was used. This is far from certain, and another word may well have been employed.

Lines 3-4: **εἰσιλπνότηταν** for σιλιπνότητα, with the addition of the euphonic vowel, spelled here *ει*, before the sound *στ*, a common feature of Hebrew/Aramaic speakers (for example, the Greek *στάδιον* became the Hebrew *ʾštdn* [*m. B. Qam. 4*] or the Aramaic *ʾstdn*;³⁰ for an example in a Greek inscription from Evron written by an Aramaic speaker, see *SEG* XXXVII, 1516, in which the name Strategios is spelled Ἰστρατήγιος); *iota* instead of *eta*; and the addition of a *nu* at the end, creating a false accusative of the first declension as opposed to a third-declension accusative.

³⁰ M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1990), 51.

Line 5: **χλόιν** for χλόην.

Lines 6–7: **τι κόρα** for τη χώρα. **τοῦ [κ]τίνι σου** for τῷ κτήνει σου, with the usual iotacism and substitution of genitive for dative. κτήνος is more common in plural, but is acceptable in the singular, when it refers to a single beast. **φάγισ** for φάγης.

Line 8–10: **ἐνπλίσις** for ἐμπλησθῆς, with a *nu* instead of a *mu* before the *pi* and the usual iotacism. **παραφυλ<ά>ξεστε** for παραφυλάσσεσθε. **μίποτε θελχθῖ** for μήποτε θελγθῆ.

Line 11: **ἀποστίτε** for ἀποστήτε.

Lines 12–13: **δουλεύσατε** for δουλεύσητε. **θεύ[ς] ἐτέрус** for θεοῖς ἐτέροις.

Line 14: The top of the “figure-eight” at the base of the medallion protrudes in between the *kappa* and the *upsilon*.

VIII.1–4

Lines VII.13–14, VIII.1–2: **προσκυνίσατε** for προσκυνήσητε.

IX.1–13

Lines VIII.3–4, IX.1: **αὔτους**. προσκυνέω takes the accusative in Attic and later Greek, but the Koine also uses the dative.³¹

Lines IX.2–3: **ὀργίσθτι** for ὀργισθήσεται. **κύ(ριος)**. Faint trace of a horizontal stroke over the *nomen sacrum*.

Line 5: **ἐπέχι** for ἐπέχει. The present is used, though the future would have been expected and is used in the following verbs in this sentence.

Line 7: **ἔστε** for ἔσται, future.

Line 8: **ι χθ<ό>ν** for ἡ χθών. A lunate *sigma* was mistakenly written instead of an *omicron*, which consistently replaces *omega* in this inscription. **δ<σ>ι** for δώσει. The *sigma* seems to have been accidentally omitted.

Lines 8–9: **φυίν** for φυήν. **αὔτις** for αὐτῆς. **ἀπολίστε** for ἀπολείσθε. **ταχέος** for ταχέως. **τίς γίς** for τῆς γῆς.

³¹ Danker, “προσκυνέω,” *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 882.

Lines 12–13: **τίς ἀγαθὶς ἴς** for τῆς ἀγαθῆς ἥς. **κ(ύριο)ς**. Horizontal stroke over the *nomen sacrum*.

X.1–5

Lines 1–3: **διδῖ** for διδοῖ, the present indicative, using the thematic form of the verb frequent in Epic and Ionic Greek.

XI.1–13

Lines 1–2: **θίσατε** for θήσετε.

Lines 2–3: **ρήματα** for ῥήματα. Cf. Line III.9, above: ῥήματα.

Line 5: **κὲ <έ>πί**. It is likely that the engraver accidentally omitted the second *epsilon*; an alternate restoration would be κ(αὶ) ἐπί.

Line 7: **συνδίσατε** for συνδήσετε.

Line 8: **σιμίον** for σημεῖον.

Lines 8–9: **χιρῶν** for χειρῶν. **ὕμῖν**, in the dative instead of genitive.

Lines 9–10: **ἔσοντε** for ἔσονται.

Lines 11–12: **ὀφθαλμῶν** for ὀφθαλμών.

XII.1–5

Lines XI.13, XII.1–4: **διδάξατε** for διδάξετε.

XIII.1–12

Lines 1–3: **τοῦς** for τοῖς. **ὕδς** for υἰοῖς. **ὕ<μ>δν** for ὑμῶν. Magnification shows that there may have even been an attempt to correct the *nu* to *mu* already at the time of the writing of the inscription.

Lines 3–4: **λαλίῖν** for λαλεῖν. **ἐν αὐτούς**, with the pronoun in the accusative instead of the dative.

Lines 5–6: **καθίστε** for καθῆσθαι. **ἕκον** for οἶκον, in the accusative as opposed to the dative.

Lines 7–8: **πορεύεστε** for πορεύεσθαι.

Lines 9–10: **κυταζέστε** for κοιταζέσθαι.

XIV.1–5

Lines XIII.12, XIV.1–5: ἀνί[σ]τασθε for ἀνίστασθαι.

XV.2–4 missing lines, 1–11

Missing lines: [κὲ γράψις? αὐτά]. Tentatively restored with spelling characteristic of the inscription.

Line 1: στ[αθμούς?] may have been abbreviated or spelled differently.

Line 2: ὕκου for οἴκου.

Lines 3–6: πύλις for πύλης. ὄπος for ὄπως. πλιθυνθοῦσιν for πληθυνθῶσιν. ἡμέρε for ἡμέραι. ὕδν for υἰῶν. <ὕ>μδν for ὑμῶν, with the *upsilon* accidentally rendered as an *iota*.

Lines 6–8: τίς for τῆς. In the word χθ<ο>νό<ς>, the engraver mistakenly made the first *omicron* like a *delta* and the final *sigma* like an *epsilon*. ἴς for ῆς. ὄμοσεν for ὄμοσεν. κ(ύριο)ς, with a horizontal stroke over the *nomen sacrum*. τῦς for τοῖς.

Lines 9–10: δοῦνε for δοῦναι. αὐτούς, with the accusative instead of the dative.

Line 11: ὄς ἡμέρε for ὡς ἡμέραι.

XVI.2–3 missing lines of 1–2 letters, 1–2

Missing lines: [τοῦ οὐρανοῦ]. The text has been tentatively restored based on LXX, but the spelling might have been different and the word would have had to have been abbreviated.

Lines 1–2: ἐ[πι τίς γ]|ῆς. The restored text would have had to have been abbreviated, as the longest lines of the connecting lozenges have at the most three letters. γῆς for γῆς.

Fig. 1 Silver armband in the Israel Museum collection. Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, by Vladimir Naikhin



Fig. 2 Panoramic view of the armband. Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, by Vladimir Naikhin



Fig. 3 View of the armband showing the place where the partial final link joins the remains of the first medallion. The separation may have been intentional. Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem



Fig. 4 View of the armband showing the place where Link VIII and Small Medallion IX seem to have naturally separated. Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem

