

ΑΠΟΡΡΙΠΤΕΙΝ “To pass over in silence”:  
דמה/דמם versus רמה in LXX of Jeremiah and Minor Prophets

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According to the conviction which already prevailed before the times of Schleusner<sup>1</sup> and is widely accepted today, LXX translated forms of the roots דמה/דמם<sup>2</sup> by ἀπορρίπτειν “to throw away,” a compound verb of ρίπτειν “to throw,” supposedly reading or misreading different forms (*qal*, *nip<sup>ca</sup>l*, *hip<sup>ca</sup>il*) of the root רמה “to throw” in the following eight instances:<sup>3</sup>

\* With much pleasure I acknowledge the generous advice received from Shemaryahu Talmon, Michael Segal, Shraga Assif and Noam Mizrahi of the Hebrew University in the preparation of this paper.

<sup>1</sup> Since Johannes Drusius (1550–1616); cf. J.F. Schleusner, *Novus Thesaurus* (5 vols.; Leipzig: Weidmann, 1820–1821) 1:391–392.

<sup>2</sup> דמה, דמם and דמם according to HALOT.

<sup>3</sup> E. Tov, “On ‘pseudo-variants’ in the Septuagint,” *JSS* 20 (1975) 165–177. Section I: Interchanges of similar letters in “difficult” Hebrew words, c. (172), contains the list of the eight instances discussed in the present paper. Tov argues that (170) “the translator misread the roots דמה/דמם as רמה” and (172) “avoided these roots, rendering them as if they were written with a *resh*.” The same list can be found in E. Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* (Jerusalem: Simor, 1981) 106–107, and in the 2nd ed. (1997) 63–64. This list is the basis of C. Rabin, S. Talmon and E. Tov, *The Book of Jeremiah* (HUB; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1997) 48 (Jer 8:14, n. 1). E. Tov’s paper is cited in agreement by M. Harl et al., *Les douze prophètes* (La Bible d’Alexandrie 23/4–9; Paris: Cerf, 1999) 100–101. Of the same opinion are J. Lust et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (2 vols.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1992–1996) 1:55. T. Muraoka, “Appendix 4. Hebrew/Aramaic Index to the Septuagint,” in E. Hatch and H.A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint*, (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1998) 246, 346; T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain: Peeters, 2002) 59.

Jer 8:14 <sup>4</sup>	נְדָמָה(ו)	ἀπορριφῶμεν	נְדָמָה(ו)*
Jer 8:14	הִדְמָנוּ	ἀπέρριψεν ἡμᾶς	הִדְמָנוּ*
Jer 47 (LXX 29):5	נְדָמָה	ἀπερρίφη	נְדָמָה*
Jer 51 (LXX 28):6	תִּדְמוּ	ἀπορριφήτε	תִּדְמוּ*
Hos 10:7	נְדָמָה	ἀπέρριψε	נְדָמָה*
Hos 10:15 (LXX 11:1)	נְדָמָה	ἀπερρίφησαν	נְדָמָה*
Hos 10:15 (LXX 11:1)	נְדָמָה	ἀπερρίφη	נְדָמָה*
Obad 5	נְדָמִיתָה	ἀπερρίφης	נְדָמִיתָה*

The Hebrew root *דמה* is attested only once in MT: Exod 15:1(=21) *דָּמָה בַּיָּם* ἔρριψεν εἰς θάλασσαν viz. “he threw into the sea.”<sup>5</sup> A synonym of this *qal* *דָּמָה* is the frequent *hip<sup>c</sup>il* of *שָׁלַח*, translated 19 times by ἀπορρίπτειν, not only in instances where *הִשְׁלַיִךְ* has the same literal sense like *דָּמָה*, as. e.g. Jonah 2:4 “thou hast cast (ἀπέρριψας) me into the deep, in the midst of the sea,” (KJV) or Mi 7:19 “and thou wilt cast (ἀπορρίψει<sup>6</sup>) into the depth of the sea” (KJV); similarly in the five occurrences, in which *הִשְׁלַיִךְ* has the figurative sense of “to reject (men)”: 2 Kgs 13:23; 17:20; Jer 7:15 (twice); Ps 51:13.<sup>7</sup> In classical Greek ἀπορρίπτειν frequently connotes “to set at naught, to disregard, to despise, to reject,”<sup>8</sup> as e.g. Demosthenes 25,75: “when villainy is honoured and virtue spurned (ἀπορρίπτῆται)”;<sup>9</sup> Sophocles, *Electra* 1017–1018: “I well knew that thou wouldst reject (σ’ ἀπορρίψουσαν)

<sup>4</sup> BHK and BHS note LXX *דָּמָה* in only three instances: BHK Jer 8:14 (twice); BHK and BHS Jer 47:5.

<sup>5</sup> The Aramaic cognate of *דמה* occurs several times in Dan: “to cast (into... a... fiery furnace)” 3:6, 11, 15, 20, 21; or “to cast (into the den of lions)” 6:8, 13, 17, 25. In ch. 6 it is also translated by forms of *רָיַץ*.

<sup>6</sup> Note 3rd person in parallelism!

<sup>7</sup> GB (1915) 835: “verwerfen,” as all German editions of KBL; BDB (1906) 1021: “reject.”

<sup>8</sup> For English “reject” in the literal meaning “to throw back” see *The Oxford English Dictionary* (20 vols.; 2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) 13:543, 9a.

<sup>9</sup> C.A. Vince and J.H. Vince, *Demosthenes* (7 vols.; LCL; London: W. Heinemann, 1930–1962) 3:560–561.

what I proffered.”<sup>10</sup> Dio Chrysostomus uses this term to characterize socially despised people: “they are among the outcast (τῶν ἀπερριμμένων)<sup>11</sup> and lowest group...; they happen to occupy the lowest station in a city of the lowest grade.”<sup>12</sup> Demosthenes 18:48 uses the word ἀπερριμμένοι (“outcasts”)<sup>13</sup> in a double entendre: He speaks about certain “man cast forth from their country “i.e. “banished, exiled men,” and at the same time he calls them “contemptible ones.” The very well read Aquila<sup>14</sup> usually rendered Hebrew מאס “to reject by ἀπορρίπτειν.”<sup>15</sup>

In view of these facts it seems inevitable to accept the *communis opinio* that in the above cited cases LXX read רמה instead of דמה/דמם.<sup>16</sup> The equation—

<sup>10</sup> R. Jebb, *The Tragedies of Sophocles* (Cambridge: University Press, 1904) 256.

<sup>11</sup> For these *principal parts* of the verb ῥίπτειν (ῥίψω, ἔρριψα, ἔρριμμα, ἔρριφην) see H.W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (rev. G. M. Messing; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956) 714.

<sup>12</sup> J.W. Cohoon and H. Lamar Crosby, *Dio Chrysostom* (5 vols.; LCL; London: W. Heinemann, 1932–1951) 4:214–215.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Vince, *Demosthenes*, 2:48–49.

<sup>14</sup> F. Field, *Originis Hexapla* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1875; repr. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1964) xxiii.

<sup>15</sup> J. Reider and N. Turner, *An Index to Aquila* (VTSup 12; Leiden: Brill 1966) 28, 288. In LXX, ἀπορρίπτειν is found only once as equivalent of מאס, in the hexaplaric manuscripts filling in, here on the basis of Aquila, the missing translation of the half-stichs 2 Kgs 17:14–15 אבותם ... וימאסו: ואלהיהם: אשר... (homoioteleuton in LXX<sup>B</sup>). In LXX, howsoever, the most common equivalent of מאס is ἀποθεῖναι (21 times) 2 Kgs, Jer, Ezek, Hos, Amos, Ps, Job, Lam. The verb ἀποθεῖναι exhibits the same semantic development as ἀπορρίπτειν: ῥίπτειν “to throw”, ἀπορρίπτειν “to throw away” → “to despise, to reject”; ὠθεῖν “to push”, ἀποθεῖν “to push off” → “to refuse, to reject,” cf. e.g. ἀπόσσωμαι three times in Sophocles: *Trachiniae* 216: “I will not reject” (Jebb, *The Tragedies*, 286); *Electra* 944: “I will not refuse” (Jebb, op. cit. 254); *Trachiniae* 1249: “then will I do it, and refuse not” (Jebb, op. cit. 322).

<sup>16</sup> This is apparently corroborated by instances in which LXX undoubtedly read forms of the root רום instead of MT דמה or דמם: The noun ὕψος “height” Isa 38:10; Jer 6:2; the verb ὑψοῦν “to lift high, to exalt” Hab 2:19; Ps 131:2; the verb ἐπάριευν “to lift up” Jer 47 (LXX 29):6.

רמה ῥίπτειν “to throw” equals השליך ἀπορίπτειν “to reject”—is quite convincing. But I shall propose a different explanation.

In all the above cases the dictionaries give דמה/דמם the meaning “to destroy, to be destroyed, to perish,” the “traditional”<sup>17</sup> explanation of the semantic development being: “to silence” → “to cause to cease” → “to destroy,” or: “to be still, to become silent, to be silent, to be made silent” → “to cease” → “to cease to exist” → “to be destroyed, to perish.” However, among the twenty Greek renditions of דמה/דמם in LXX there is none which indicates that the translators were aware of such a development. None of these equivalents has the meaning “to destroy”. Therefore I would suggest a different semantic development, which was known to LXX, as I shall show.

The translator<sup>18</sup> of Jeremiah and the Minor Prophets knew that דמה/דמם means “to stand still, to cease,” διαλείπειν, παύεσθαι: Jer 14:17; 25:37 (LXX 32:23); 48 (LXX 31):2.<sup>19</sup> In Amos 5:13 דים is rendered σωπήσεται viz. “shall keep silence,”<sup>20</sup> as expected. σωπάω translates 18 times חרש, חשה, חסה (Num, Judg, 1–2 Sam, Isa, Jer). The compound verb παρασωπάω translates חרש Hos 10:11, 13; Amos 6:12; Hab 1:13,<sup>21</sup> as the compound κατασωπάω translates חסה Num 13:1, חסה Neh 8:11. In classical Greek κατασωπάω, διασωπάω, παρασωπάω frequently have the meaning “to pass over in

<sup>17</sup> KBL (1967) 216–217; HALOT 225; cf. GB (1915) 164–165; BDB (1906) 198–199; A. Even-Shoshan, *A New Concordance of the Bible* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1989) 268–269 (Heb.).

<sup>18</sup> E. Tov, “On ‘pseudo-variants,’” 171: “The *one* translator who rendered both Jeremiah and the Minor Prophets”; cf. n. 2 there.

<sup>19</sup> Similarly the translator of Josh 10:12, 13 and 1 Sam 14:9.

<sup>20</sup> Similarly the translator of Lev 10:3; Isa 6:5; 47:5; Ps 4:5; 30:13; 35:15; Job 30:27; 29:21; Lam 2:10; 3:26, 28; 3:49.

<sup>21</sup> So Gen, Num, 1 Sam, Ps; Hos 10:11, 13 and Amos 6:12. The translation is based upon on a confusion between חרש<sub>1</sub> “to plough” and חרש<sub>2</sub> “to be silent”; cf. J. Joosten, “Exegesis in the Septuagint Version of Hosea,” in *Intertextuality in Ugarit and Israel* (ed. J.C. Moor ; OTS; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 67.

silence,” which then develops into “to despise, to reject, to condemn.” These compounds become almost synonyms of ἀπορρίπτειν used figuratively, as e.g. Isocrates 4:27: “those (scil. benefactions) which because of their slight importance have...been passed over in silence” (κατασιωπηθείσας).<sup>22</sup>

Another compound of σιωπᾶν, with the same meaning “to pass over in silence,” is διασιωπᾶν. Pindar uses this verb in Olympian Odes 13,91 in order to abstain from telling a myth containing the idea of ὕβρις, viz. of insolence arising from the pride of strength. The same idea occurs in Olympian Odes 9,35s., where Pindar uses the expression ἀπορρίπτειν τὸν λόγον viz. “to reject the myth.” In the Thirteenth Olympian Ode, lines 84–90, Pindar relates in 42 words the myth about the heroic deeds of Bellerophon riding the winged horse Pagasos (in Doric the same as Pegasus). But line 91 reads: διασωπάσομαι<sup>23</sup> οἱ μόρον ἐγὼ viz. “On his doom I shall keep silence.”<sup>24</sup> The scholion<sup>25</sup> explains: “He (scil. Pindar) avoids speaking about the end (scil. of Bellerophon’s life)” (my translation).<sup>26</sup> In the Ninth Olympian Ode, lines 29–35, Pindar gives expression to his perplexity about the myths of Hercules ὕβρις: “How could Herakles have... brandished a club in his hand against Poseidon... and Apollon... and Death...?”<sup>27</sup> He continues: ἀπό μοι λόγον τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥίψον,<sup>28</sup> viz. “Fling this tale away, my lips!” (Bowra). Then he adds: “For to

<sup>22</sup> G. Norlin, *Isocrates* (3 vols.; LCL; London: W. Heinemann, 1928–1929) 1:132–135.

<sup>23</sup> For this Doric form cf. E. Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatic* (4 vols.; 3rd ed.; München: C. H. Beck, 1953–1971) 1:245.

<sup>24</sup> C.M. Bowra, *The Odes of Pindar* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1969) 174.

<sup>25</sup> A.B. Drachmann, ed., *Scholia vetera in Pindari carmina* (3 vols.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1903–1927; repr. Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1969–1970) 1:382.

<sup>26</sup> Bowra (*The Odes of Pindar*, 175) writes in his notes: “Bellerophon tries to scale the sky on Pagasos, and is thrown. Pindar may suggest a warning against pride.”

<sup>27</sup> Bowra, *The Odes of Pindar*, 153.

<sup>28</sup> For the poetical “*tmesis*” ἀπό...ῥίψον instead of ἀπόρριψον, cf. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* §1650.

revile the Gods is an odious art, and to boast beyond measure is a tune for the song of madness" (Bowra). The scholion<sup>29</sup> begins: "stop uttering such things about the gods; for speaking blasphemies about the gods is distasteful to wise men, but dear to mindless ones" (my translation). Bowra comments: "Pindar rejects stories that Herakles fought against the gods."

The most instructive example is Dio Chrysostomos 39,28: "Theophilus, they say,... preserved silence toward you (scil. the inhabitants of Alexandria)..., being aware that you were extremely poor, not in money, but in judgment and understanding. Well, then, he is dead, having by his silence passed adverse judgment on your city."<sup>30</sup> The last part of the sentence, "having... city," is a rather condensed English rendering of κατασιωπήσας ὑμῶν τὴν πόλιν, τοῦτ' ἔστι καταδικάσας αὐτήν, viz. "passing in silence over your city, that is to say condemning her."<sup>31</sup>

Such an association of ideas was also vivid in the mind of LXX-translators, as shown by the use of the compound παρσιωπᾶν in the Greek rendition of Prov 12:2 וַאִישׁ מְזֻמֹת יִרְשִׁיעַ, "a man of wicked devices will he (scil. the Lord) condemn." The translator of Proverbs "was a classical scholar and, happily, put much of his work into verse."<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Drachmann, *Scholia vetera*, 279–280.

<sup>30</sup> Cohoon-Crosby, *Dio Chrysostom*, 3:266–267.

<sup>31</sup> It makes no difference whether we take the elucidation "that is to say..." as the author's own one or, with editors since J.J. Reiske (Leipzig, 1784), a scholiastic gloss. For the first possibility see e.g. Plutarch 2,64,c: οὐ δύνασάι μοι καὶ φίλω χρῆσθαι καὶ κόλακι, τουτέστι καὶ φίλω καὶ μὴ φίλω viz. "You cannot use me as both friend and flatterer, that is as friend and not a friend." (F.C. Babbitt, *Plutarch's Moralia* [15 vols.; LCL; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927–1969] 1:342–343). It is evident that καταδικάζειν "to condemn" is used here in the sense "to reject" and not in its common juridical sense; cf. Josephus, *Against Apion* 1,24,222 in the translation of H. St. J. Thackeray et al., *Josephus* (10 vols.; LCL; London: W. Heinemann, 1926–1981) 252–253: "In this expectation they (scil. the critics of Judaism) find fools who do not disappoint them; by men of sound judgment their depravity is severely condemned (καταδικάζουσι)."

<sup>32</sup> H. St. J. Thackeray, *The Septuagint and Jewish Worship* (2nd ed.; London: Oxford University Press, 1923) 13.

The phrase:

ἀνὴρ παράνομος παρασιωπηθήσεται

viz. “a transgressor shall be passed over in silence,”<sup>33</sup> or “l’homme criminel sera passé sous silence,”<sup>34</sup> is a perfect Euripidean *trimeter iambicus*,<sup>35</sup> the felicitous exegetic change of semantics,<sup>36</sup> syntax and style (*paronomasia*) being made *metri causa*. Where Dio Chrysostomos explains: “to pass over in silence (κατασιωπᾶν)” equals “to condemn (καταδικάζειν),” the LXX inverted the statement: “to be condemned (καταδικασθῆναι)” equals “to be passed over in silence (παρασιωπηθῆναι).”<sup>37</sup>

This results in the following conclusion: In seven of the above eight cases one can easily comprehend the translator’s thought sequence—דמך/דמה

<sup>33</sup> L.C.L. Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1851; reprint Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1982) 798.

<sup>34</sup> D.M. d’Hamonville, *Les Proverbes* (La Bible d’Alexandrie 17; Paris : Cerf, 2000) 228–229.

<sup>35</sup> Surprisingly this verse is not mentioned in H. St. J. Thackeray, “The Poetry of the Greek Book of Proverbs,” *JTS* 13 (1911–1912) 46–66 nor in the metrical introduction of d’Hamonville, *Proverbes*, 92–97. The verse has to be scanned as follows (I am using here the sign of *accentus acutus* as symbol for the six metrical *ictus* of the *trimeter iambicus*): ἀνὴρ παράνομος πάρασιωπήθησεται. For the “metrical solution” παράνομος cf. Euripides, *Bakchai* 1275: τίς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις παῖς ἐγένετο σὺ πόσει; One finds more Euripidean examples in W. Christ, *Metrik der Griechen und Römer*, (2nd ed; Leipzig: Teubner, 1879) 324(6). After ἀνὴρ the manuscripts have δέ, which would be unmetrical in this place of the verse in Greek tragedy. Therefore I have omitted it, following Thackeray (58, n. 1) who proposed to omit δέ in Prov 1:21 for the same reason. In my opinion δέ was inserted here by scribes in order to confirm with MT שיא and the 159 instances of *waw* “but” in the clauses of contrast appearing in the 184 verses of Prov 10–15; there the Greek manuscripts add δέ to MT 14 times (10:5, 15, 16, 20; 11:13; 12:5; 13:3, 14; 14:24, 27; 15:3, 10, 12, 30)!

<sup>36</sup> Schleusner, *Novus Thesaurus*, 4:217: “No need to claim that they read שיא or something similar” (my translation).

<sup>37</sup> The verb καταδικάζειν translates the verb להרשיע in Ps 37:33; 94:21; Aquila Isa 54:13; Theodotion Job 34:29.

σιωπᾶν “to be silent” equals “to pass over in silence.” This expression would be considered too figurative and could be misunderstood; it needed an elucidation like that of Dio Chrysostomos: παρασιωπᾶν τοῦτ’ ἔστιν ἀπορρίπτειν viz. “to pass over in silence,” that is to say “to reject.” That makes sense in Hos 10:7 “Samaria rejected her king,” Jer 8:14 “God rejected us,” Jer 47 (LXX 29):5 “Ascalon was rejected,” Hos 10:15 (LXX 11:1) “the king of Israel was rejected,” Jer 8:14 “and we would be rejected ,” Jer 51(LXX 28):6 “in order that you would not be rejected,” Hos 10:15 “they were rejected.”

Obad 5 is a different case: אִיךְ נִדְמִיתָ לַיְלָה אִם שׁוֹדְדֵי לַיְלָה אִם גַּנְבִים בָּאוּ לָךְ אִם נִדְמִיתָ viz. “if thieves came to you if plunderers by night, how you have been destroyed!”<sup>38</sup> In this English rendition אִיךְ נִדְמִיתָ is understood as an exclamatory clause.<sup>39</sup> LXX translates: εἰ κλέπτει εἰσηλθόν πρὸς σὲ ἢ λησταὶ νυκτός, ποῦ ἂν ἀπερρίφης; The syntactic structure is a classic example of a rhetorical interrogative sentence expressed as past unreal condition with indicative aorist in *protasis* and in *apodosis*, there with ἂν:<sup>40</sup> εἰ εἰσηλθόν..., ποῦ ἂν (ἀπερρίφ)ης viz. “if...would have come..., how would you have been...?”<sup>41</sup> Concerning the translation of ἀπερρίφης, correct with

<sup>38</sup> H.G. May and B.M. Metzger eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973) 1118.

<sup>39</sup> GKC § 148; Joüon § 162.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, §§ 2302–2309, 2662; the same structure (with indicative imperfect) is found in Xenophon, *Hieron* 1,9: εἰ γὰρ οὕτως ταῦτ’ εἶχε, πῶς ἂν πολλοὶ μὲν ἐπεθύμουν τυραννεῖν; “Were it so, how should a despot’s throne be an object of desire to many?” (E.C. Marchant, *Xenophon* [7 vols.; 2nd ed.; LCL; London: W. Heinemann, 1968] 7:4–5).

<sup>41</sup> The English and French translations of LXX make no sense here: “If thieves came into thee, or robbers by night, where wouldest thou have been cast away?” (Brenton, *Septuagint*, 1093) and “si des voleurs avaient pénétré chez toi, ou des brigands de nuit, ou aurais-tu été précipité?” (Harl, *Les douze prophètes*, 100–101). Noteworthy is the explanation of Obad 5 ἀπορρίπτειν in Muraoka, *Lexicon*: “thrown out of a house by thieves or robbers.” One would expect the negation οὐκ in the Greek ironic question and apt translations of it. The renditions of ποῦ, “where” and “ou”, are mistaken (cf. the comment in *La Bible d’Alexandrie*: “l’adverbe de lieu ποῦ, ‘ou’, ne



