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## Notes on Psalm ii. 11–12 and on אָרֶן, Isaiah xlv. 14.

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THE Masoretic Hebrew text of the last strophe, v.<sup>10–12</sup> of Ps. 2,  
is as follows :

1 וַתֵּת מַלְכִים הַשְּׁבִילוֹ	5 פֶּן יֵאָנֶף וְתֵאָבְרוּ דָרֶךְ
2 הַיָּסֹרֹ שֹׁפֵט אֶרֶץ	6 כִּי יִבְעַר כַּמַּעֲט אִפּוֹ
3 עֲבְדוּ אֵת יְהוָה בִּירֵאָה	7 אֲשֶׁר כָּל חֹסֵי בּוֹ
4 וַיִּלְווּ בְרַעְדָּה נִשְׁקוּ בָר	

The above division into lines is necessitated by the trimeter rhythm, which is fairly constant throughout the poem. In the fourth line of the strophe two unusual expressions occur, viz. *וַיִּלְווּ בְרַעְדָּה* and *נִשְׁקוּ בָר*. The first of these is translated slavishly by *G αγαλλιασθε αὐτῶ ἐν τρόμῳ* (*V exultate ei cum tremore*) but there is really no parallel for *וַיִּלְווּ בְרַעְדָּה* which seems impossible, or, at least, very improbable. The stem *נִל*, cognate with Arabic *ḡala*, means only 'go around in a circle, be excited to laughter, rejoice,' and is certainly very strange in connection with *רַעְדָּה*. The only other passage besides Ps. 2<sup>11</sup> where *נִל* appears in a sense different from its ordinary meaning is Hos. 10<sup>5</sup>, where it occurs in parallelism with *אָבַל* 'mourn.' Here, however, it may well be a clerical error for *חִיל*, as Ewald and Cheyne clearly saw. Grätz and others, following Ps. 48<sup>7</sup>, accordingly substitute *חִילוֹ* in Ps. 2<sup>11</sup>, which would be a possible reading, were it not for the following *נִשְׁקוּ בָר*.

The translation of this by 'kiss the son' is not impossible from a purely textual point of view. The Aramaic form *בָּר*<sup>1</sup> might have been used by our poet instead of the Hebrew *בֶּן*, to avoid a disagreeable assonance with the following *פֶּן*, especially as the Aramaic form *רַעַץ* (root *רַעַע* for Hebrew *רָעַץ*) occurs v.<sup>9</sup>. The existence of

<sup>1</sup> *בָּר* occurs also in the Aramaized Hebrew of Prov. 31<sup>2</sup>.

the purely Heb. בן in v.<sup>7</sup> does not militate against this suggestion, as there would have been no reason to use a different expression in that passage. Some expositors, in fact, insist on translating 'kiss the son,' owing to the allusion to the sonship of the divinely appointed king in v.<sup>7</sup>, but if the context of Ps. 2<sup>12</sup> be examined carefully, it will be seen that neither the subject of אֱנִי nor the person to whom the possessive suffix in אֱנִי refers can possibly be the Son-Messiah. "Lest he be angry and ye wander on your way, for his wrath is easily kindled. Happy are all who put their trust in him." This can refer only to Jahveh Himself, whom the heathen kings are especially adjured to serve in v.<sup>11</sup>, and not to the divinely appointed king. The translation 'son' then is clearly inadmissible from a critical point of view.

Jerome translates נִשְׁקוּ בַר *adore pure*,<sup>2</sup> which is followed by some modern commentators — notably Briggs, *Mess. Proph.*, p. 136, who renders 'and reverence with trembling, render sincere homage.' This is not satisfactory because בַר occurs nowhere else as an adverb, although בַר appears Is. 33<sup>7</sup> in the sense 'bitterly.' The stem נִשְׁק, moreover, never appears in classical Hebrew without an object: cf. Job 31<sup>27</sup> 1 K. 19<sup>18</sup> Hos. 13<sup>3</sup>. Turning now to G and V, we find the translation δράσαθε παιδείας *apprehendite disciplinam*, which, as Grätz saw, must presuppose a text קָחוּ בְמוֹסָר. In his *Psalmen*, p. 158, he accordingly substitutes this for נִשְׁקוּ בַר. This seems much too radical a change for serious consideration. The widely divergent text of G here would rather imply the existence of a different Hebrew original. Baethgen, *Psalmen*, p. 7, very ingeniously conjectures that the original of G depended on some haggadic interpretation of בַר in the sense of מוֹסָר or תּוֹרָה. He advances this suggestion on the analogy of the Talmud which understood נִשְׁקוּ בַר as 'cleave to the law,' בַר = תּוֹרָה.<sup>3</sup> Lagarde reads נִשְׁקוּ מוֹסָרָו 'put on again his bonds,' referring it to the allusion in v.<sup>3</sup>, but this is equally unsatisfactory, as נִשְׁק is never found in this sense.

It is evident that the text of this whole passage is extremely corrupt, both from the fact that the versions differ so widely from M and that it is practically impossible to get any sense from M as it stands. The verses <sup>11-12</sup> may be altered as indicated in the following revision of the strophe :

1 וְתַחַה מַלְכִים הַשְׂכִּילוּ	And now, ye kings, take heed!
2 הַיְסִירוּ שַׁמְטֵי אֲרֶץ	Be warned, ye rulers of earth!

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sym. προσκυνήσατε καθαρῶς. Ἀφ. καταφιλήσατε ἐκλεκτῶς.

<sup>3</sup> See Weber, *Altynagogale Theologie*, p. 148.

עבדו את יהוה ביראה 3	Serve ye Jahveh with fear,
ונשקו לו ברעדה 4	And cleave to him with trembling.
מן יאנה ותאבדו דרך 5	Lest he be angry and ye wander on your way!
כי יכשר כמעט אפו 6	For easily kindled is his wrath.
אשר כל חסי בו 7	Happy are all who put their trust in Him.

The chief points to be noted are : *a*) The verb נשק, meaning 'cleave to, kiss,' is nearly always<sup>4</sup> construed in classical Hebrew with the preposition ל. *b*) It is possible, therefore, that the last syllable of the otherwise unsatisfactory גילו stands for an original לו. Erasing the unnecessary גי, we get לו . . . ו.<sup>5</sup> *c*) The next step is to transpose נשקו, so as to read ונשקו לו. The גי of גילו may possibly have arisen from dittography of קו in נשקו. *d*) This leaves ברעדה, of which בר may be cancelled as a dittography. This gives the perfect trimeter line ונשקו לו ברעדה, and makes the last strophe seven lines long, as are the first and third. The second has but six. The word דרך in the fifth line of the strophe may be construed as an accusative of respect dependent on תאבדו as in Dt. 32<sup>28</sup>: כִּי נֹי אֲבָד עֲצוֹת הַפֶּה.

אֲרִן occurs twice in the Old Testament,<sup>6</sup> namely, Is. 44<sup>14</sup>, in the evident sense 'fir, cedar,' and in 1 Chr. 2<sup>23</sup> as the name of one of the descendants of Judah. This word is plainly not a variant of the usual expression אֲרִז, Ez. 17<sup>21</sup>, but is a derivative from a stem אֲרִן, which, as may be shown from the Assyrian, probably means 'to be high,' or 'strong.' There can be little doubt that אֲרִן is a cognate of the common Assyr. *êrinu*, *êrnu*, 'cedar, fir,' which is used individually and collectively. The plant name *arantu* seems to furnish the key to the exact meaning of the stem, as it is defined in K. 271, 12, by *U. SAG. EL* 'a high-growing plant.' This meaning appears to be further confirmed by the existence of such forms as *irintu* 'power, victory,' *urnatu* 'strength,' *urinnu* 'staff, sceptre (?),'<sup>7</sup> all of which are cognate in meaning with the idea 'high, strong.' It is probable also that the substantive *urnakku*,<sup>8</sup> occurring V. R. 29, 41 *c. f.* in

<sup>4</sup> With the accus. Prov. 24<sup>26</sup> 1 S. 20<sup>41</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> So also Wellhausen, *Psalms*, Hebrew Text (SBOT).

<sup>6</sup> Cf., however, אֲרִינִים Para 3, 8 in connection with אֲרָדִים; also אֲרִינִים, probably an error for אֲרִינִים, Rosh ha-shana, 23a.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *irintu*, Tig. viii. 62; *urnatu*, II. R. 31, nr. 3, 28; *urinnu* explained by *ibirru* (= *xaffu*), K. 437<sup>8</sup> c. vi. 74.

<sup>8</sup> *Urnakku* explained by ŠEŠ. NA. and in connection with *bituni*, 'house,' and *siqurrdtuni*.

connection with *ziqurrátum* 'temple-tower,' is a derivative from the same stem. I suggest, moreover, that *súrinnu*, which appears in several passages with the apparent meaning 'pillar,'<sup>9</sup> may be a *shaphel* formation from אָרָא. It is not likely that there is any close connection between אָרָא = *érinu* and אָרָא which is cognate with the Arab. 'arz' 'cedar,' Eth. 'arz, Syr. אָרָא, although the consonantal root אָרָא, common to both words, may connote the idea 'high, strong.'

It is probably this tree which is represented on the monuments as bearing three cones at the end of the branch,<sup>10</sup> although this is clearly the fancy of the Assyrian artist.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *šurinni bábi bli Istar*, 'pillars of the gate of the house of Istar.' K. 891, Obv. 5. See *Hdwb.*, p. 691, and Delitzsch, *Assyr. Gr.*, § 65, nr. 33, for *shaphel* noun-formations.

<sup>10</sup> See Bonavia, *Flora of the Assyrian Monuments*, plate 25 and pp. 90-92.