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A CULTURE “FULL OF CHOICE APOPHTHEGMS AND  
USEFUL MAXIMS”: INVENTED PROVERBS IN C.S. LEWIS’  
*THE HORSE AND HIS BOY*

**Abstract:** The use of created proverbs in fiction by C.S. Lewis' friend J.R.R. Tolkien has been described in detail, but this is the first examination of the creation of proverbs by Lewis. Lewis created several proverbs in his novel *The Horse and His Boy*, part of six-volume work, *The Chronicles of Narnia*. All of these proverbs are found in just three conversations. This paper identifies and examines the proverbs, showing how Lewis used them to help portray the imaginary culture of the Calormen, a culture proudly described as “full of choice apophthegms and useful maxims”. Additionally, Lewis subtly had his characters use proverbs in ways that revealed aspects of the various speakers’ character. The use of proverb creation by other authors of fiction is also discussed.

**Keywords:** invention, pseudo-proverbs, C.S. Lewis, Narnia, fiction, Tolkien, proverb-duel, gnomes

**Introduction**

Many volumes have been written about the work of C. S. Lewis (1898-1963), the widely followed Christian apologist from Oxford, especially about his fictional *Chronicles of Narnia* (e.g. Ford 2005, Lindskoog 1997, Schakel 2002). But despite the fact that Lewis created a number of gnomic expressions or proverbs in *The Horse and His Boy*, the 5<sup>th</sup> volume in the *Chronicles*, there has been no published study of these proverbs. For example, there is no entry for “proverb” among the over 800 entries of *The C. S. Lewis Reader’s Encyclopedia* (Schultz and West 1998) nor the hundreds of entries in *The C. S. Lewis Handbook* (Duriez 1990). This present study examines his creation and use of proverbs in that novel, filling this lacuna in Lewis studies.

In his *Chronicles of Narnia*, C. S. Lewis created and wrote about different cultures in an imaginary world: Narnia, Telmar, Calormen, Archenland. In *The Horse and His Boy* (1954), much

of the story involves the interaction of young people with each other or horses, but there are two scenes in which Calormene adults have conversations, both rich in proverbs. In one, a nobleman bargains with a fisherman (pp. 4-6).<sup>1</sup> The other conversation is set in a palace, between a ruler, his vizier, and the headstrong crown prince (pp. 105-117). Into these conversations, Lewis inserts at least 10 gnomic expressions and proverbs that he created specifically for this book. Intriguingly, he also used one recognizably English proverb, the significance of this one in particular will be discussed below. It is interesting to note that the word “proverb” is never actually used in the novel.

Defining a “proverb” (even in one's own culture) has been described as “too difficult to repay the undertaking” (Taylor 1931:3). Several scholars have devoted entire articles to the problem of defining a proverb (Mieder 1993), four authors using the title “What is a proverb?” (Blehr 1973, Hamm 2004, Jamal n.d., Milner 1969). When examining texts from another culture, it is even more difficult to definitively identify proverbs, and when one is examining fictional texts from an imagined culture, the challenges are amplified further, since we cannot know the traditionality of a saying.

“Numerous proverb scholars have in fact despaired of the task of defining the familiar subject matter of their expertise. It appears that no definition can both map all of Proverbia and protect the neighboring lands of clichés, maxims, slogans, and the like from unwanted annexation. Rather than legislate necessary or sufficient conditions for Proverbian citizenship, we propose to issue residence permits to all brief, memorable, and intuitively convincing formulations of socially sanctioned advice” (Hernadi and Steen 1999:1). In the spirit of Hernadi and Steen, for the purposes of this paper, I will use the term “proverb” in a broad way, knowing that some of these expressions might best be classified in another specific category. Sherzer (1976) dealt with this sort of uncertainty in the data from *Molloy* by using the more generic term “gnomic expression”, but I will use the simpler term “proverb” and trust my readers to understand I use the term here generously.

*Authors who have created proverbs*

Other authors have created proverbs in fiction,<sup>2</sup> also. Probably the best known example in English fiction is the wealth of created proverbs found in *Forrest Gump*, (Winick 1998: 83ff), for which the credit is shared by the novel's author Winston Groom and the screenplay writer Eric Roth, with most Americans knowing the movie, rather than the underlying novel. Invented proverbs from *Forrest Gump*, such as "Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get" and "Stupid is as stupid does" are now well established in American culture. A sign of how established they have become is that these two are each quoted or twisted on at least a dozen different T-shirt designs.<sup>3</sup> As another sign of their establishment in American pop-culture, these proverbs are included with several common American proverbs by Bruce Springsteen in his song "My best was never good enough."

More studied by proverb scholars is J.R.R. Tolkien's (1892-1973) creation of many proverbs in *The Hobbit* (Trokhimenko 2003) and *The Lord of the Rings* (Boswell 1969, Stanton 1996). Of these, at least one of Tolkien's created proverbs has gained some currency in English usage, an anti-proverb based on an existing English one from Shakespeare, reworded as "All that is gold does not glitter." As a sign of its currency in America, this proverb, too, is found on T-shirts and bumper stickers.

Other examples of proverb creation by authors of English fiction include a proverb by Graham Greene (1904-1991) in *The Power and the Glory* (de Caro 1989) and a proverb by Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) in the mouth of Sherlock Holmes (Waterhouse 1990). The proverb creation of R. D. Blackmore (1825-1900) in his British rural novels (Kirwin 1973), Samuel Beckett (1906-1989) in *Molloy* (Sherzer 1976), and E. M. Forster (1879-1970) in *A Passage to India* (de Caro 1986 and Gish 1972) is noteworthy but more difficult to count, some gnomic expressions being specifically labeled as proverbs, with others being less clear.

Beyond the world of English, the contemporary Mozambican writer Mia Couto has also been noted for creating proverbs (as well as riddles and such) in his Portuguese fiction, part of his technique in "magic realism" (Coutinho 2008). Also, in Polish, Stanisław Jerzy Lec (1906-1966) is noted for his creation of proverbs in his essays (Frackiewicz 1990). In his novel *Carmen* (the

inspiration for Bizet's opera of the same name), the French author Prosper Mérimée (1803-1870) used a number of Gypsy proverbs, including one that he seems to have made up (Northup 1915: 153). In a film, rather than a novel, the Russian film director Sergei Eisenstein (1899-1948) used some invented proverbs to shape and convey his message (McKenna 2009).

In a series of novels about a British naval officer of 200 years ago, O'Brian has cleverly developed his main character by having him repeatedly blunder in his attempts to quote proverbs, ending up mixing pieces of proverbs together.<sup>4</sup> Though he cleverly juxtaposes pieces of proverbs together in his fiction, he creates no proverbs but rather creates a more complete character (Brunvand 2004).

Though this brief listing of authors who have created proverbs is in no way meant to be exhaustive, it shows that creating proverbs is a known technique for fiction writers, though one that is not practiced often.

These authors have created proverbs in their fiction to reveal more about a character, to enliven dialogue, to build the plot, or, as in the case of Tolkien and Lewis, they have used proverbs to immerse the reader in the texture of an imagined culture. Of the proverb-creating English authors listed above, only Lewis and Tolkien used their proverbs for creating imagined cultures. Since they were good friends and discussed each other's writing (Coren 1994:45ff), it is natural to wonder if they explicitly discussed the creation of proverbs in fiction.

### ***The culture of the Calormenes***

*The Horse and His Boy* is set in the imaginary land of Calormen, a country whose imperial ruler is the Tisroc. The culture of the Calormenes, as proudly described by Ahoshta, the royal vizier, is "full of choice apophthegms<sup>5</sup> and useful maxims" (p. 113). Rabadash, the young crown prince, however, viewed this situation negatively, complaining to the vizier that the use of proverbs in speech was so common that "I have had maxims and verses flung at me all day" (p. 106). Though these phrases of Calormene wisdom are usually introduced as quotations from poets,<sup>6</sup> even a poor, uneducated fisherman is depicted as quoting them three times.

The speech of the Calormenes is very flowery. Myers describes it as “verbose, sententious, and indirect. Lewis slyly undercuts their gravity and mystery by making their proverbs ridiculous” (1998:162). For example, the fisherman cites a proverb, “Natural affection is stronger than soup and offspring more precious than carbuncles” (p. 4). Myers wryly notes “Soup, of course, varies greatly in its strength; ‘carbuncle’ means ‘a red jewel’ in medieval romances, but its modern meaning is ‘a red sore’” (1998:162).

Their verbose speech is characterized by what she calls the “and syndrome”, using two synonyms when one would suffice, such as “desire and propose” and “prudence and circumspection”. Also, she points out, there is a pattern of inserting “O” before people who are addressed (1998:162), “O enlightened prince”, “O loquacious Vizier”, “O ever-living-Tisroc”, “O most inflammable Rabadash”, etc.

#### ***The proverbs in The Horse and His Boy***

It is not possible for us to know absolutely which statements are to be understood as established Calormene proverbs, and which statements might be spontaneous figures; this study takes a broad view, classifying 10 examples of wise, metaphoric speech as Calormene proverbs.

The Calormene proverbs, most introduced with a reference to a poet, are said to be literary in form, not proverbs that reflect peasant speech (Holbek 1970). They are long and wordy, with little verbal artistry (such as rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, assonance, parallelism), such as the following artless example: ‘Application to business is the root of prosperity, but those who ask questions that do not concern them are steering the ship of folly toward the rock of indigence’ (p. 3). There is one proverb that includes some art, a parallel structure and some alliteration; “Natural affection is stronger than soup and offspring more precious than carbuncles” (p. 4) is quoted by the poor fisherman. Note the repetition of /r/, of labial consonants (*viz.* /f/, /p/, /m/, /b/), and sibilants (/s/, /sh/, /z/). It is interesting that this most artistic of the Calormene proverb forms is spoken by the least educated of the proverb users, the fisherman. Later, the vizier refers to part of the same proverb, saying “sons are in the eyes of their fathers more precious than carbuncles” (p. 112), but he rephrases it into a long-

er, wordier form -- being verbose is one of the hallmarks of Calormene speech (Myers 1998:162).

The proverbs are spoken in two different locations, a fisherman's hut and the palace of the Tisroc. The first is from the fisherman to the boy Shasta, a foundling that he has raised, "One of the poets has said, 'Application to business is the root of prosperity, but those who ask questions that do not concern them are steering the ship of folly toward the rock of indigence'" (p. 3). It is not surprising that a fisherman quotes a proverb about navigating a ship.

The next three are heard in a conversation between the fisherman and a Calormene nobleman who demands to buy the boy Shasta. The fisherman uses a proverb first, claiming a great attachment to the boy (and therefore, requiring a higher price), "Has not one of the poets said, 'Natural affection is stronger than soup and offspring more precious than carbuncles'." (p. 4). The nobleman is demanding, threatening him by replying with, "Another poet has likewise said, 'He who attempts to deceive the judicious is already baring his own back for the scourge'" (p. 5). Realizing that the nobleman has discovered Shasta's foreign origin, the fisherman capitulates saying, "How well it has been said, 'Swords can be kept off with shields but the Eye of Wisdom pierces through every defence!'" (p. 5).

The other set of proverbs are heard in the palace in a conversation between the ruler (the Tisroc), his vizier, and the hot-headed crown prince Rabadash. The prince is angry because the Narnian queen has rejected his advances and is sailing back to Narnia; he proposes to attack Narnia and seize her. His father tries to calm him down, while the poor vizier finds himself in an awkward position, both literally and figuratively, as he is forced to remain in a bowing posture before them, with the prince kicking his posterior when he dislikes the vizier's advice.

The first proverb is spoken by the Tisroc to his son the crown prince in an effort to console him over the departure of the visiting queen, "The departure of guests makes a wound that is easily healed in the heart of a judicious host" (p. 106). As sovereign and father, he cites no poet, having no need to add weight to his argument by referring to any external source for his wisdom.

When the crown prince is still upset, claiming to be passionately in love with the departed queen, the vizier tries to calm him, carefully invoking “a gifted poet” as the source of his thoughts: “How well it was said by a gifted poet... that deep draughts from the fountain of reason are desirable in order to extinguish the fire of youthful love” (p. 106). For this, he earns a kick from the crown prince.

The Tisroc admonishes his son to treat the vizier better, “My son, by all means desist from kicking the venerable and enlightened Vizier... a costly jewel retains its value even if hidden in a dung hill.” Realizing that his son may not understand the proverbial allusion, the ruler feels the need to make it plain that he is referring to the vizier, “So old age and discretion are to be respected even in the vile persons of our subjects” (p. 107). Sadly, a “proverb loses effect if it has to be explained” (Holbek 1970:471), but the Tisroc knows his son lacks insight and needs the explanation.

Lewis teases the reader with the aborted introduction to another proverb. The vizier, still kneeling on the floor, addresses the crown prince, “Gifted was the poet who said...” (p. 109), but noticing “an impatient movement of the Prince’s toe”, the proverb-spouting vizier “became suddenly silent.” With this reference to yet another proverb, Lewis cleverly adds to the tradition of Calormene wisdom sayings without having to actually create a proverb.

Another proverb can be inferred, though it is not actually quoted in full form. When the son proposes an attack on the neighboring kingdom, the Tisroc warns his rash son, “I am determined not to put my hand out further than I can draw it back” (p. 109). Later, as he deliberates on the plan, he alludes to the same proverb by asking his son “How do I draw my arm [back] if all this miscarries?” (p. 111). These two utterances by the king seem to be based on a proverb of the approximate form “Do not put your arm out farther than you can draw it back.”

While the vizier and the Tisroc repeatedly quote wisdom, Rabadash, the crown prince, uses only one proverb, if it can be called that: “It is well known that women are as changeable as weathercocks” (p. 112). This proverb is discussed in greater detail below.

A bit later in the conversation, the vizier says to the Tisroc, “I have often heard that sons are in the eyes of their fathers more precious than carbuncles” (p. 112). Again, the vizier introduces his

proverb with a reference to origin beyond himself. This saying is also used earlier in the book, in fuller form, by the fisherman<sup>8</sup>: “Natural affection is stronger than soup and offspring more precious than carbuncles” (p. 4). As the vizier quotes the latter part of this proverb, the deliberate double meaning of “carbuncle” is delightfully appropriate.

*Conversational analysis of proverb use*

Lewis astutely captures some common patterns of proverb use: from father to son, from underling to ruler, in argument, etc. Also, he is very perceptive in the way the he has characters use (or, in the case of the ruler, *not* use) introductions for their proverbs. Such introductions identify the proverb as something more authoritative than merely the speaker’s own personal viewpoint, appealing to honored words from their shared tradition. Most of the expressions included here are introduced with a reference to the saying’s origin or currency, e.g. “Has not one of the poets said...”. Such an introduction gives evidence that the following is an established saying. Also, such an introduction gives weight to what follows, invoking the authority of someone greater than the speaker. The only proverbs that are not introduced in this way are spoken by the absolute ruler, the Tisroc. Rulers feel no need to invoke any greater authority.

When the boy Shasta asks his foster father, the fisherman, what lies beyond the northern horizon, the father replies “O my son, do not allow your mind to be distracted by idle questions. For one of the poets has said, ‘Application to business is the root of prosperity, but those who ask questions that do not concern them are steering the ship of folly toward the rock of indigence’” (p. 3). A father speaking to a child is a common use of proverbs, found around the world. In fact, one of the oldest documented examples of a proverb used in a context is from Assyria in the 18th century BC, where King Shamshi-Adad I used a proverb when advising his son (Moran 1978:17).<sup>9</sup> Also, at the opening of the Biblical book Proverbs, we read, “Hear, my son, your father’s instruction” (1:8). Coincidentally, both of these are from the region many associate with the culture of the Calormenes, as explained below.

When the fisherman uses a proverb in addressing the nobleman, he uses the proverb from a state of weakness, addressing a



much more powerful figure. This is a common use of proverbs around the world, allowing the weak to borrow the authority of those traditionally accepted as great, gaining leverage on powerful people in an argument: “Has not one of the poets said...” (p. 4). However, the nobleman does not give way. Since “a proverb cannot be refuted unless by another proverb” (Gándara 2004:348), he counters with another poet’s words, “Another poet has likewise said...” (p. 5). When the nobleman deduces that the boy Shasta is not the biological son of the fisherman, thus destroying his argument that the price must be high to compensate for his emotional loss, the fisherman salves his wound with a proverb which says that his defeat was inevitable, “How well it has been said, ‘Swords can be kept off with shields but the Eye of Wisdom pierces through every defence!’” (p. 5). In all four of these cases, the speaker introduced his proverb with a formula that gave it more weight.

This interchange between the fisherman and the nobleman is what some have called a proverb duel, speakers refuting a proverb with another proverb (Welsch 1992). Readers of the genre may recall a parallel interchange from *The Lord of the Rings*, when after a council meeting, Elrond the elf and Gimli the dwarf argue by exchanging proverbs (Stanton 1996:336,337).

Table 1 summarizes some features of the use of proverbs by speakers at the fisherman’s home.

Table 1: Proverb use at fisherman’s home

Speaker	Addressee	Intro formula	Number
Fisherman	Boy	yes	1
Fisherman	Nobleman	yes	2
Nobleman	Fisherman	yes	1

In the palace conversation, the ruler uses proverbs to his son, the vizier uses proverbs to gently advise and steer the behavior of those more powerful than himself, and the hotheaded young crown prince only uses one proverb (and a poor one at that) to justify his rash plans.

Proverbs are addressed to the prince six times (counting the aborted attempt by the vizier); no wonder the prince complained “I have had maxims and verses flung at me all day” (p. 106). Four

times the ruler addresses proverbs to his son, common for a parent. The other two times are by the vizier, though the second attempt was aborted.

On the three occasions when the vizier quotes proverbs, once addressing his sovereign and twice the crown prince, he introduces his proverbs by referencing their origins, therefore invoking the authority of tradition, not asserting his own opinion, e.g. “How well it was said by the gifted poet...” (p. 106). The vizier is also mindful that using proverbs is often a way of mitigating a command, in his case done while advising the two most powerful men in the kingdom.

By contrast, the vizier is never addressed by means of a proverb. Perhaps the king did not feel the need to mitigate his words to his servant, or perhaps he did not feel qualified to bandy such learned speech with his scholarly vizier. He showed his lack of standing in scholarly discussion by dodging an issue, saying “This is a question for the disputations of learned men” (p. 109).

Table 2 summarizes some features of the use of proverbs by speakers at the palace.

Table 2: Proverb use at the palace

Speaker	Addressee	Intro formula	Number
Vizier	Ruler	yes	1
Ruler	Prince	no	3 (one proverb twice)
Vizier	Prince	yes	2
Prince	Ruler	yes	1

*Sources and inspiration of proverbs*

Like Lewis, his close friend J.R.R. Tolkien had created imaginary lands and people, also creating proverbs and riddles as part of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien was explicitly aware of the conscious and unconscious use of existing source materials in writing such, noting that readers might find possible sources of many of his creations. It seems likely that Lewis, like Tolkien, created many of his while still borrowing what Tolkien called “style and method” from existing sources (Carpenter 1981:32,123).

One of the vizier’s quotations, “Deep draughts from the fountain of reason are desirable in order to extinguish the fire of youthful love” (p. 106), seems to find an echo, maybe an inspiration, in English literature. The idea of “Deep draughts from the fountain of reason” is likely inspired by the passage: “...taste not the Pierian spring; there shallow draughts intoxicate the brain, and drinking largely sobers us again,” from Alexander Pope’s “Essay on Criticism” (1711).

However, the single proverb used by the crown prince Rabadash is clearly from an established English heritage: “Women are as changeable as weathercocks” (p. 112). The English saying can be traced back at least as far as the 14th century, though not in precisely this form. In a poem generally attributed to Chaucer (“Against Women Unconstant”), women are compared to weathercocks: “as a wedercok, that turneth his face with every wind.” A later play equated women and weathercocks in its title, *A Woman is a Weathercock* by Nathaniel Field (c. 1612). As a proverb “A woman is a weathercock” was included in the collection of proverbs titled *Bibliotheca Scholastica Instructissima* in 1616 (Pickering 2001:379).

By placing this piece of buffoonery in the mouth of the foolish prince, Lewis accentuated the prince’s lack of wisdom and learning. While his father and the vizier quoted wise and uniquely Calormene proverbs, the prince’s only proverb was the quotation of a shallow English saying, the only proverb in this set that is negative.

*Similarities to real cultures*

It is interesting to speculate concerning the similarities of the Calormene culture to Arabia. Lindskoog explicitly posits a link between *The Horse and His Boy* and the *Arabian Nights*, noting that just two years before Lewis wrote this book, he had supervised an Arab student writing about translations of Arab literature into English. “It is obvious that... Lewis drew on his familiarity with the *Arabian Nights* when he wrote *The Horse and His Boy* (1997:118).<sup>10</sup> Kopp agreed, “The Horse and his Boy shows the strong influence of the classic Arabian literature, *The Thousand and One Nights*” (2005:129).

The illustrations in the book were drawn by Pauline Baynes, the author having personally chosen her to illustrate the *Chronicles of Narnia*. Her drawing of the Calormene court shows a tent, a man wearing a robe, turban, and shoes with toes that pointed up (p. 105). A Calormene nobleman is described as wearing a silken turban and carrying a curved scimitar, with a beard died red (p. 3). All of this is suggestive of the very real cultures of Arabia and Persia. Not coincidentally, both of these cultures are known for their rich inventories of proverbs.



Vizier being kicked by Prince Rabadash, in illustration by Baynes.

Lewis, an articulate Christian, described *The Horse and His Boy* as being about “the calling and conversion of a heathen”<sup>11</sup> (Letter to Anne, Hooper 2007:1245). Based on this, and with hints at an Arabian link, some might think that Lewis cast the Calormenes as Muslims. However, Eugene McGovern gave a pa-

per to the New York C. S. Lewis Society in May 2010 showing that the Calormenes and their religion differ from Islam.<sup>12</sup>

These proverbs used among the Calormenes urge diligence, caution, clear thinking, not judging by appearances, etc. They generally reflect the sorts of positive wisdom found in the proverbs of real cultures (the one used by Rabadash being an exception to “positive”). However, the proverbs are Lewis' original creation, not borrowed. On the hypothesis that he might have borrowed some from Arabic, I searched through Burckhardt's *Arabic Proverbs* (1875), the standard collection of Arabic proverbs that would have been available to Lewis when he wrote. However, a search through this volume failed to find any of the proverbs in *The Horse and His Boy*.

### ***Conclusions***

This brief study has presented 10 proverbs used by Lewis in three scenes from *The Horse and his Boy*, all but one of which seem to be original. The use of these proverbs in these passages is part of the author's technique to convey a culture where things were often expressed artfully.

The use of the proverbs in conversations is in line with common patterns of proverb use in many cultures. Though all of the possible proverbs listed above are similar in topic and structure to familiar proverbs from the Middle East and Europe, Lewis skillfully created new proverbs and inserted them into a believable fabric to create the aura of a unique, foreign culture for his readers.

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*Notes*

<sup>1</sup> Page references to the text are to the Collier edition of 1974.

<sup>2</sup> This present discussion is about authors of fiction, excluding the invented proverbs of poets, such as William Blake's "Proverbs of Hell". Also, I do not include the many sayings of Charles Dickens' character Samuel Weller in *The Pickwick Papers*. Scholars of phraseology have often referred to his quotation sayings as "wellerisms", but Weller's quotations, though many are quite witty, are not true proverbs. Of Norrick's 11 criteria for a "linguistically founded proverb definition", wellerisms differ from proverbs on four of these 11 (1985:73). Though some wellerisms may contain a quoted proverb, the overall statements are not proverbs.

<sup>3</sup> The shirts that misquote these proverbs knowingly do so, creating anti-proverbs, such as "Life is like a box of chocolates, now get your own box!" and "Cupid is as cupid does."

<sup>4</sup> As an example, "Only this morning I was thinking how right they were to say it was better to be a dead horse than a live lion... No. I mean better to flog a dead horse than a live lion... Yet even that is not quite right, neither. I know there is a dead horse in there somewhere" (O'Brian 1984:341).

<sup>5</sup> It is worth noting that "apophthegm", an uncommonly erudite word, can also be spelled in a shorter, simpler form "apothegm", but Lewis chose to write the flowery speech of the learned vizier with the more archaic and difficult spelling.

<sup>6</sup> The fact that the saying is from a poet in no way negates its status as a proverb. Around the world many gnomic expressions and proverbs are taken from poets, e.g. "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive" is from the poet Walter Scott, and Shakespeare has given us (among others) "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

<sup>7</sup> Note, the sibilants are not all spelled as sibilants, but can be heard in such words as "natural" and "affection".

<sup>8</sup> The vizier introduces it with "I have often heard", but the fisherman introduced the proverb citing "one of the poets". Was the fisherman pretending to cite a poet while merely quoting a common proverb, trying to give himself the air of being learned?

<sup>9</sup> The context of King Shamshi-Adad's proverb is similar to that found with the Tisroc's advice to Prince Rabadash. The ruler reminds his son not to be hasty: "Heaven forbid that, as in the ancient proverb, 'The bitch by her acting too hastily brought forth the blind [pups], you now do likewise'" (Moran 1978: 17,18).

<sup>10</sup> This conclusion should not be lightly discounted since Lewis thought very highly of Lindskoog's book, writing to her "You are in the center of the target everywhere," (Lindskoog 1997: unnumbered front matter).

<sup>11</sup> The heathen that is converted in the book is not a Calormene, but rather the foundling boy Shasta.

<sup>12</sup> I am grateful to Mr. McGovern for helpful explanations by correspondence.

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