At Canticles Rabbah 1.9.6 the entry of the Egyptians into the Red Sea is described. An Egyptian horseman is addressed by his steed, "Behold what is in the sea. Behold what is prepared for you in the sea." Commentators wrestle with the unknown word. Brüll suggests ὅπτασσα (Schauspiel), while noting also ὄψασας and τάφος.² Jastrow reads ἐπιθετορις (= ἰπποθήρηρος, sc. νῦμος) and comments "a satire on Egyptian lasciviousness." Löw (apud Krauss) emends the text in two places and argues for ἀρφατήσις. All these are vain conjectures. Most hold ἀρφατήσις to be ἐπιθέσις (e.g., Levy, Krauss, Aruch) in the sense "an attack." This seems possible though the phrase ἐπιθέσις ἐν θάλασσαι is a bit strange and neither the sense nor the rhetoric is eminently suitable.

Another option seems better. The noun is ἀποθέωσις. This usually means "deification," but it also occurs in the sense "burial," which is precisely what is desired here (cf. CIG 2832.3). It is, however, possible that the noun may retain its fundamental sense here and reflect a touch of humor. Given the Imperial custom of automatic deification upon


²) N. Brüll, Jahrbücher f. jüd. Gesch. und Litt.5-6 (1883) 121.
death, the horse's remark may signify, "look; you are about to be deified"; i.e. you are about to die. This would be the sort of humor embodied in Vespasian's observation when on the point of death, vae, puto deus fio (Suet. Vesp. 23.4). may be the correct spelling. For ἂν = θεσσ cf. ἄριστον = θεσσρία. 3)

(2) At Esther Rabbah 3.12 God is said to instruct his angel to inflict punishments on the chamberlains of the king Ahasuerus. The punishments are listed in a series of word-plays based on the names of the chamberlains. Most are fairly clear but the final one is difficult and the text may show some degree of corruption. The earlier section states, "despoil his house, destroy his house, spoil and plunder it... behold the profligacy of that evil man." The text continues with an obscure play on the name of the last chamberlain Carcas. It concludes, "it is Greek. As one says, כראט(...)".

A number of views have been offered as to the Greek involved here and the sense of the final item in the series. Brüll suggests κηρύσσα, 4) Fürst καρχησατούν (Weinfass), 5) Levy κηρο-κός, Kohut (s.v. שברך כּראץ = קַרְתָה, while also noting κοῦριξ. All these are far-fetched and unpersuasive.

Jastrow, however, takes כּראט as κηρύσσא, "proclamation has been made." This is, I think, close to the truth. But the context should lead us to a slightly different understanding of the Greek behind כראט, one which also better suits the spelling, namely κηροῦ. Thus we have "behold the profligacy of that evil man and proclaim it." κηροῦ is the order to proclaim issued by the figure of authority; cf. ἐκλέουσεν κηροῦ. 6) For the aorist active imperative transliterated we may have rabbinic examples in כּראט = בּרְכָע and כּראט = אָפָנְיַסא. 7)

4) Brüll (supra n. 2) 128.
5) J. Fürst, Glossarium Graeco-Hebraicum (Strassbourg 1890).
6) See Preisigke, Wörterbuch, s.v. κηροῦσα.
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(3) The Aruch cites from Yelamdeenu Shmini (s.v. מִֽעֲלָהָּוּ, וָלֹא רָעָה לִֽקְוִפְסָרָהוּ), אָאוֹרָה עֲשֵׂרָה לִֽקְוִפְסָרָהוּ, וָלֹא רָעָה לִֽקְוִפְסָרָהוּ. The unknown word is generally taken to be οὐκοφολογία = empty talk.\(^8\) But this simply makes no sense. The context is God's commission of Moses at the burning bush. Moses seeks to turn down the appointment. In the words of the Bible (Exodus 3:11), "who am I to go unto Pharaoh and to take the children of Israel out of Egypt" and (4:10) "I am not a good speaker." Within this context what genuine sense could one derive from such a description of Moses, "he is not suited for empty talk."? This is not merely inappropriate but probably inconsistent.

We should rather take מִֽעֲלָהָּוּ to be a slightly corrupt ed form of καλοπραγία. The text would then mean, "he is not suited for noble, heroic acts" and makes perfect sense. The word καλοπραγία is only known to us from schol. ad Apollonius Rhodius 3.68 where it appears to mean "justice, righteousness." But there is no reason to believe that its range would not have been broader, as is the case for its relatively common counterpart καλοπραγία, (failure, misdeeds, evil actions). We know that מִֽעֲלָהָּוּ was used in the sense "to do noble acts" (e.g., Thuc. 6.16). This may also suggest that the exegete was taking דֱּרֵי = action. We might compare Philo's paraphrase at Moses 1.83, ταί λίαν μεγάλα μηρίς, ὥσ τοις αὐτῶν, which is virtually "not suited for great deeds," as in our text.

(4) In the Midrash Aggadat Ester 5.2 we read that the sons of Haman, believing the queen doomed, proceed to divide up her possessions.\(^9\) They all seize items at random. But when they come upon her תְּרוּפְּרָה (the royal robe of purple), they decide to cast lots:

8) See N. Brüll, Jahrbücher f. jüd. Gesch. und Litt. 8 (1887) 70f. Levy (s.v. מִֽעֲלָהָּוּ, מִֽעֲלָה) translates the sentence "er ist nicht zur Verbindung, Ordnung der Worte geeignet" which would fit the context. Unfortunately, he gives us no indication as to how he gets this sense from the text.

9) See S. Buber's edition (Cracow 1897); also W. Bacher, MGWJ 41 (1897) 356.
"but as for her purple robe which is for this they cast lots". Krauss (568) believed the word a corrupted form of κράτης, and Sperber improved on this with κραταίωσις. The point then is clear. The courtiers can haphazardly divide up the queen's possessions, but when they come to the purple robe "which is the symbol of the royal authority," they pause and decide that so significant an item should be given away by lot.

Sperber's suggestion is brilliant, but entails two difficulties. First, the word κραταίωσις is extremely rare. Second, it does not occur in the sense "majesty, authority." Thus, I should like to offer another possibility, one which is paleographically reasonable (if not as good as Sperber's), is fairly common, and occurs in precisely the sense desired, namely καθοσίωσις. This Greek word was used as the equivalent of Latin maiestas (CICL 2.335.36) and was employed in the sense "majesty, authority" with reference to officials (cf. e.g., SIG³ 905.11). We find it as the Greek equivalent for the Latin (laesa) maiestas (Suda, s.v. ένονοχος). It is then the appropriate word in the present context.

(5) At Midrash Haggadol ad Gen. 24:53 we read that the gifts the servant brings are various fruits, silk, pepper and κάμηλος. Krauss lists the word with a question mark. Kohut (supp. p. 69) offered πίσον and Sperber πίσινος. The latter is open to objection as it is an adjective and we expect a noun here. But both seem unlikely since the context and the other gifts in the series suggest a luxury item, something exotic. I would propose φασιανός which occurs often in Rabbinic texts, though usually in the form γάλακτος (vel sim.). The glossator of Sepher Ha Margalit evidently under-

11) The identification of "the purple" and "royal authority" is evident in various texts from the Empire. Note e.g., Lucan's purpuram su-
mere (7.228) and Claudian's Tyria maiestas with reference to "purple" (Stilicho 1.79-80).
stood the word in this way for he explains, "a kind of quail."

(6) At the end of this text we read that the servant also took grain with him. This teaches us, the Midrash elaborates, that if a man goes on a journey without אָסָפָרָאֶה, he will suffer. Two manuscripts read ג in place of ד. The word clearly means "travelling necessaries, provision" (Jastrow). It occurs again (in the form אָסָפָרָאֶה) at Koh. Rab. 11.1, where the context also makes it clear that it means "provisions." Indeed, the Yalkut ad Gen. 24:53 gives the same exegesis as is found in Midrash Haggadol but substitutes פִּיוֹדֶה for פִּיוֹדֶה.

Now it is a well known and fascinating fact that occasionally Greek loan words are assimilated to Semitic roots. Perhaps the best examples are טֵאָרָן (= ῥαμπίον, but "related" to מַסְכֶּרָה) and פֵּסָרָה (= μυστηρίον, but "related" to מַסְכֶּרָה). It is generally believed that the word under discussion here is merely an Aramaic noun from the root פַּר. Thus, the form פִּיוֹדֶה does not even occur in the lexica. I suspect, however, that טֵאָרָן is no error, but rather an illuminating clue to the real word here. The noun is the common Greek word for "provisions," namely σίταρχία. It has evidently been "semiticized" into an Aramaic noun as if from the root פַּר. In the process it has acquired an א at the beginning. I am not sure whether there is any guaranteed example of such syllabic prosthesis in a loan word preceding a single consonant. Thus, for example, מַסְכֶּרָה from σάκκος, מַסְכֶּרָה from secretarius, פֵּסָרָה from λόξον are possibilities, but all are disputed. However, the fact that this loan word is fashioned so as to seem Aramaic makes such prosthesis more readily understandable and acceptable.

(7) A passage in Midrash Tanhuma relates how God bestows His personal apparatus on only a very few select individuals. Thus, for example, Elijah received His chariot, Solomon His throne. Verses from the Bible are brought as evi-

13) See the edition of S. Buber (Vilna 1913; reprint Jerusalem 1964) p. 51.
idence for the various gifts. Moses, we are told, was the sole recipient of God's crown. As proof, Exodus 34:29 is quoted: "Moses' face shone." The difficulty is patent. How can a verse "Moses' face shone" be evidence for his use of God's crown?

We might argue that a mystical doctrine equating light and God's crown functions here. But the answer is simpler. The Rabbis are working with a bilingual pun. קַדְרַנְתָּא is associated with Latin corona. Such bilingual word play is attested elsewhere in Rabbinic texts. A nice example occurs at Pesiqta deRav Kahana 3.1 (Mandelbaum p. 40) where the Biblical קַדְרַנְתָּא is interpreted as if it were קַדְרָנִית. 14)

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14) For another example see D. Sperber's discussion of Lekah Tov ad Lam. 3:65 at Sinai 79 (1976) 57-8.

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