

**FEMALE HUMANIMALITY:  
ANIMAL IMAGERY IN THE SONG OF SONGS  
AND ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN ICONOGRAPHY**

---

Yvonne Sophie Thöne

University of Kassel

E-mail: yvonne.thoene@uni-kassel.de

(Received 07/12/2015: accepted 18/03/2016)

---

**ABSTRACT**

This article examines the interconnectedness of humans and animals in the biblical Song of Songs. After giving an overview about the Song's use of metaphor, the humanimal association of woman and animal is analysed. The image of the woman as a mare drawing the chariots of the Egyptian king (Song 1:9) evokes the impression of a strong and precious being but one simultaneously under male command. The metaphor of the woman as a dove in the clefts of the rock (Song 2:14) shows an independent person, who is hard to reach and is closely associated with the ancient love goddess in her temple.

**INTRODUCTION: HUMAN-ANIMAL STUDIES AND HUMANIMALITY**

Animals as well as the relationship of humans to animals have been focused on recently not only in ethical debates in the media, but also in the humanities, the cultural and social sciences. The cultural and social relevance of non-human animals in the past and present as well as the ethical and political dimension of the human-animal relationship are analysed in the context of the interdisciplinary Human-Animal Studies framework. Within Human-Animal Studies, the focus shifts from treating animals as mere objects to regarding animals as living beings with agency and influence, as active subjects in social (or literary) processes.

In theology, the focus on human-animal relationships, as it is usually studied in the social sciences, is extended to the triad of animal-human-God. Of high interest are those texts and images where the boundaries between humans and other animals overlap or dissolve. This manifests particularly in the field of metaphorical language. The biblical Song of Songs is renowned for its excessive use of metaphor and therefore serves as an example in this article.

By regarding the social, literary or theological connectedness of humans and other animals I speak of “humanity”, following the German sociologist Rainer Wiedemann (2003:passim). Subsequently a special analytical focus lies on the aspects of species, gender and hierarchy in text and image. According to the hermeneutics of exegetical Human-Animal Studies I am trying to avoid an exclusive anthropocentric view and to change the perspective, to make the animal’s weight in texts and images felt.

## **ANIMAL IMAGERY IN THE SONG OF SONGS**

### **Overview**

The Song of Songs is a collection of ancient erotic love poetry. It deals with human love and sexuality, i.e., it was not composed as an allegory, depicting the love of God for Israel (or to the church). Nevertheless there lies a theological dimension in the text, as “the divine is present in the human and inseparable from it because the love between man and woman is at the same time sensual and spiritual, human and divine” (Barbiero 2001:41). Regarding the biblical context the Song shows an unusually active and eloquent female protagonist, who may be considered as “the most autonomous of biblical women” (Exum 2005b:88). Exuberant use of metaphorical language is also one of the Song’s typical features, which conforms to ancient Near Eastern love poetry in general.

Ground breaking and still relevant are the works of the Swiss Old Testament scholar Othmar Keel, who has published several studies concerning the interpretation of the Song of Songs through the evaluation of the iconography of the ancient Near East and Egypt since the 1980s (see Keel 1984; Keel 1992), which I am following in this paper.

The protagonists of the Song of Songs describe each other or themselves in sensual images. These images derive from different domains:

- a) Architecture (e.g., the woman’s neck is like a tower, Song 7:5; the men’s legs are like pillars, Song 5:15).

- b) Geography (e.g., the woman's head is like the Carmel, Song 7:6; the man's shape is like the Lebanon, Song 5:15).
- c) Precious items (e.g., the woman's thighs are like jewels, Song 7:1; the man's head is gold, Song 5:11).
- d) Colours (e.g., the woman's lips are red, Song 4:3; the man's hair is black, Song 5:11).
- e) Flora (e.g., the woman's cheeks (or palate) are like halves of a pomegranate, Song 4:3; the man's cheeks are like beds of spices and herbs, Song 5:13).
- f) Fauna.

The ancient Near Eastern fauna takes up much space in the Song's imagery. Different animal species appear in relation to man, woman and their body parts. Within the Song of Songs the dove (יונה) is related to human characters six times (1:15; 2:14; 4:1; 5:2; 5:12; 6:9). It is followed by the gazelle (צבִי, צבִיָּה). Five times a single gazelle or a pair of gazelles is related to the protagonists (2:9; 2:17; 4:5; 7:4; 8:14), additionally a collective of gazelles appears in the context of the adjuring of the daughters of Jerusalem (2:7; 3:5). The stag (אֵיל) is compared three times to the protagonist (2:9; 2:17; 8:14); its female part in plural, the does (לְעֵפֶר הָאֵילִים), are also mentioned in the context of the adjuring of the daughters of Jerusalem (2:7; 3:5). The goat (עֵז) appears twice (4:1; 6:5), just like the implicitly mentioned sheep (הַקְּצוּבוֹת: "shorn", 4:2; 6:6). The female horse, i.e., the mare (סוּסָה), is related to a human character once (1:9), as well as the raven (עֵרָב, 5:11).

Concerning the Song's animal imagery it manifests that only the gazelle and the dove are related to both male and female protagonist, while the mare, the goat, and the sheep are connected with the woman only, whereas the stag and the raven are associated with the man. As a result the human's gender does not have to match the animal's gender; for example, both woman and man are compared to a grammatical female dove and the male goat is connected with the female protagonist. On the other hand, the gazelle is adjusted to the human's gender (צבִיָּה or צבִי).

The animals can be related to the human character as a whole or to a single body part. Concerning body parts both the woman's and the man's eyes are compared to

doves (1:5; 4:1; 5:12). The woman's hair appears like a flock of goats (4:1; 6:5), while the man's locks are "black as a raven" (5:11). Furthermore the woman's teeth are compared to "a flock of shorn (sheep) that have come up from the washing" (4:2; 6:6) and her breasts are "like two fawns, twins of a gazelle" (4:5; 7:4). All in all, the female protagonist's body is connected more often with animals than the man's, whilst he is compared frequently to plants, to architecture and to precious items.

Concerning the person as a whole the man is associated with the gazelle (2:9; 2:17; 8:14) and the stag (2:9; 2:17; 8:14), the woman is connected with the mare (1:9) and the dove (2:14; 5:2; 6:9).

Regardless of whether a character's body part or whole person is related to an animal, all the images used refer to the animal as a whole. It follows that while in the Song of Songs the human body is fragmented, the animal's is not. Its integrity persists. Obviously it is not the single parts of an animal that are important, but its meaning in its entirety. The Song's animal imagery has the effect of animalising the human as well as humanising the animal.<sup>1</sup>

In the following I take a closer look at both animal images that are related to the woman as a whole, generating humanimity, i.e., the mare and the dove.

### **The horse and the woman: "I compare you to a mare on the chariots of pharaoh, my beloved" (Song 1:9)**

Song 1:9–11 offers a royal setting. More precisely this setting is Egyptian, which becomes obvious by the reference to the pharaoh (פַּרְעֹה, 1:9). In these verses the male protagonist is speaking to and about the woman, comparing her to a female horse (הַסֹּדֶה) among the chariots of the Egyptian king. That means the woman *in toto* is parallelized with the mare *in toto*. Their gender is equal as both are female. The feminine form of the Hebrew noun סוּד occurs in the OT only here (see Stoop-van Paridon 2005:72). Reading on until 1:11 the comparison is narrowed to the woman's head, more precisely her cheeks and neck, mentioning the woman's jewellery, which corresponds to the ornamental decoration of the horse (see below).

<sup>1</sup> See Viviers (2001:149f.), who speaks of "Humans 'becoming Nature and Nature 'becoming' human" in the Song of Songs.

Despite the fact that generally the woman in the Song of Songs is a strong, active and eloquent character, in this part no action or utterance is mentioned — neither of the woman nor of the mare. Both appear as passive objects of the male speaker.

Important in this context is that the mare is not independent, but described as a mare “on/among the chariots of Pharaoh” (בְּרֶכְבֵי פָרְעֹה). This implies that a horse in a cultural context, namely in a working context, is described. The horse pulling a cart can be regarded as a typical image in the cultural area of the Old Testament. Regarding ancient Near Eastern iconography there are several stamp seals and cylinder seals showing horses pulling a carriage or a chariot. These seals derive from Babylonia, Assyria or Egypt. Many of them show war scenes. As an example the depicted scarabs (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2) from the thirteenth or twelfth century B.C. in each case show one single horse, pulling a cart, which is not simply walking but dynamically galloping from left to right. Each horse’s head is decorated with high feathers. One or two dead enemies lie underneath the horse. A male person (the king) is standing in the chariot; in one scene he is holding a cocked bow. Human and horse are connected by the clearly sketched reins.



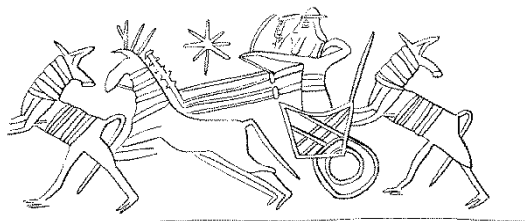
**Fig. 1:** Scarab (1292–1190 B.C.), Akko.



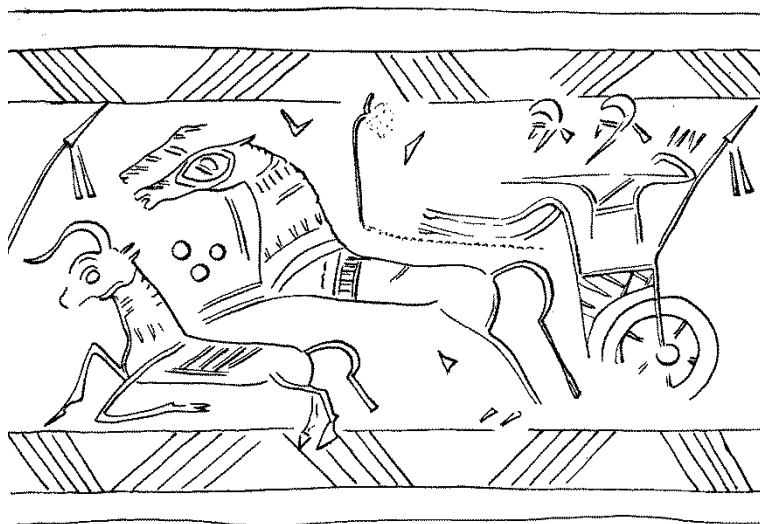
**Fig. 2:** Scarab (1279–1213 B.C.), Tell el-‘Ağgūl.

The two cylinder seals below show hunting scenes (Fig. 3 and Fig. 4), both with two galloping horses pulling a chariot. The horses are decorated with feathers and ribbons. Two male persons, wearing beards, are standing on the chariot. One holds a weapon,

the other holds the reins. A cow nearly lies under the horses' hooves, similar to the defeated human on the scarabs above. In each instance the horses are connected to the humans by the reins; they are obviously controlled by them and do not act on their own.



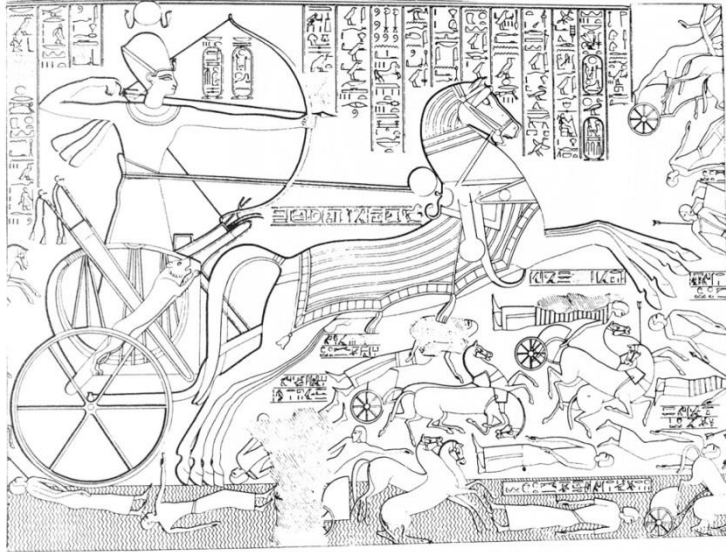
**Fig. 3:** Cylinder seal (1000–730 B.C.), Babylonia



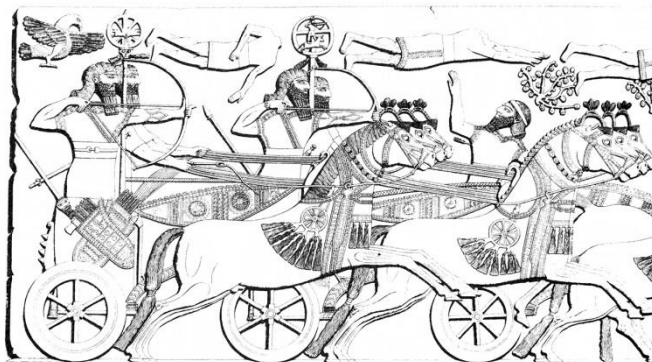
**Fig. 4:** Cylinder seal (900–700 B.C.), Assyria

Beyond ancient minor arts Egyptian and Assyrian reliefs provide even more details (Fig. 5 and Fig. 6). In general they have many elements in common with the seals shown above: two or even three horses are pulling a chariot, on which one or two men are standing. While on the Assyrian relief one man is holding a bow, the other leading the horses by the reins, the pharaoh depicted on the Egyptian relief combines both

functions in his person, the reins looped around his belly. Both images show extensively decorated horses, with a headdress, a necklace or blankets. Above that the horses are depicted explicitly male, as their sexual organs are shown — a detail that probably would be too particularised for small seals.



**Fig. 5:** Relief (about 1250 B.C.), temple of Ramses II. in Theben West/Egypt.



**Fig. 6:** Relief (about 850 B.C.), Nimrud/Assyria.

Obviously horses pulling the (war) chariot were male (Keel 1992:62). Hence Loretz (2005:223–225) concludes that the sentence “I compare you to a mare among the chariots of Pharaoh, my beloved (my girlfriend)” originally must have read: “I compare you to a stallion among the chariots of Pharaoh, my boyfriend” — to emphasise the agility of the lover, running towards his beloved.

Instead of changing the wording Keel (1992:62, in reference to M. Pope) refers to an old war trick. The Egyptian officer Amenemheb (about 1450 B.C.) reports of a battle near Kadesch, Syria, when a mare was driven among the enemy army to confuse the male war horses. As a result the verse “I compare you to a mare among the chariots of Pharaoh, my beloved” means: Like a mare among the war stallions of the pharaoh the woman confuses all men with her beauty and her attraction (Keel 1992:62). Several exegetes follow this interpretation of an attractive woman bringing chaos to even a well-organised army (Bühlmann 1997:30; Peetz 2015:101; Steinberg 2014:120; Zakovitch 2004:127f.).

Furthermore the reflection of the constellation of gender, species and hierarchies in the images gives even deeper insights. The horses attached to the chariot are not capable of acting independently, as they are directed and controlled by men — symbolised by the reins. This means their agency is radically limited or at least directed. Certainly they are decorated, precious and beautiful. But in the end they are tamed and dominated. The same situation underlies the text. Song 1:9 does not mention any actions of either the woman or the mare; instead the attraction of both is stressed, gazed at by a male view, expressed by a male speaker. Of course there are biblical texts speaking of horses acting independently (e.g., Job 39:19–25) just as there are seals showing independent horses, not bound to human figures. But the image used here of the mare in connection with the pharaoh’s chariots stresses the woman’s and the horse’s status as an object of a male artist.

At the same time this image, deriving from a military context, depicts the mare drawing the chariots of pharaoh as a strong being, dangerous to enemies. While being directed or even controlled by the pharaoh, i.e., the male protagonist, she has a certain



“freedom of movement” (Fontaine 133:132)<sup>2</sup> and is able to attack his competitors, who will possibly end up under the mare’s hooves as shown in the images above.

In this respect in Song 1:9–11 the male speaker appeals an explicit male view — and, following Brenner/van Dijk-Hemmes (1993), probably there is a “male voice” behind the text. This voice expresses an androcentric and an anthropocentric worldview, showing men as the hegemony, as those who have dominion over women and animals for their own benefit.

### **The dove and the woman: “My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places on the mountainside ...” (Song 2:14)**

Humanity grown out of a combination of human and dove appears six times in the Song. In 1:15 and 4:1 the woman’s eyes and in 5:12 the man’s eyes are compared to doves (plural). Beyond, in 2:14; 5:2; 6:9 the woman *in toto* is said to be a dove.

Regarding ancient Near Eastern iconography there are several contexts in which the dove appears. There are images of a solitary dove, the combination of two or more doves as well as the conjunction of the dove with anthropomorphic figures. These figures can be either humans or deities. A typical image shows a goddess surrounded by doves (see figures 8–11) or a human couple together with one or more doves (see Fig. 7). Furthermore the dove can be depicted with other animals, e.g., caprine, lion, hare or scorpion. It is important to stress that there is no image of a single male god with doves, whereas there are several illustrations of female figures or heterogendered couples with doves.

This finding becomes relevant reading the dove metaphors in the Song. Regarding the image of the human’s eyes, which are doves, Othmar Keel (1992:71–74) has pointedly explained its meaning: in ancient Near Eastern art there are miscellaneous illustrations of human couples, sitting face to face, drinking together, raising their glasses to each other (Fig 7.). A dove is flying from the man to the woman. Beyond this secular scene there are several illustrations of the goddess, meeting the male god

<sup>2</sup> Fontaine does not refer to the mainstream interpretation of the attractive woman, confusing men, but stresses the aspect of the mare’s free movement, although — as she admits — she is “controlled by humans” (Fontaine 2011:132).

or a ruler (figs 8–10). Typically she is undressing herself in front of the male, accompanied by doves. In one cylinder seal one can find a combination of both motifs (Fig. 11): the undressing goddess is standing on a bull while a dove is flying from her to a ruler; in a sub-scene a banquet is shown, a man and a woman are sitting and drinking together, a dove is flying from the man to the woman. All these scenes between male and female have a strong erotic connotation, which becomes obvious through the aspects of drinking and undressing, the animals like the hares, the fighting lion with the gazelles — and the dove. The reason for the dove appearing so often in the context of ancient Near Eastern deities, especially the love goddess (Ishtar, Astarte, Aphrodite) is that it is the attribute animal of the love goddess. The reason for this association can probably be found in the mating behaviour of doves: their billing obviously was interpreted as kissing (Fig. 12).

In addition to that the dove played an important role as messenger in the Bible as well as in the ancient Near East (Gen 8:8–12; Mark 1:10f.). Furthermore in an OT view it was not the colour or the form of the eyes that was important, but their function (Schroer & Staubli 2001:105f.), so one can rather speak about the gaze, the eye's expression. As a result Keel translates the sentence “your eyes are doves” with “your gazes are messengers of love” (Keel 1992:74).

This metaphor is used both for the woman's and the man's eyes. This matches with the iconographical findings — indeed the dove is flying mostly from the female to the male figure, but also sometimes from the male to the female.



**Fig. 7:** Cylinder seal (about 1750 B.C.), Syria

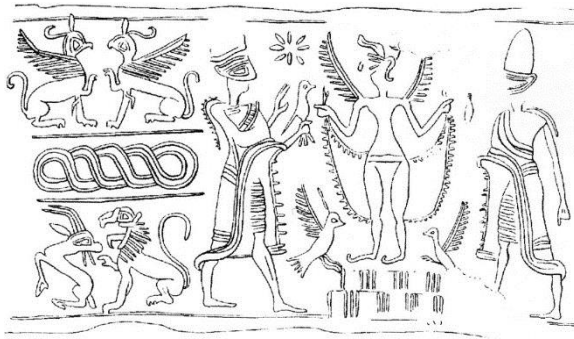


Fig. 8: Cylinder seal (1850-1720 B.C.), Syria



Fig. 9: Cylinder seal, about 1750 B.C., Syria



Fig. 10: Cylinder seal, about 1750 B.C., Syria

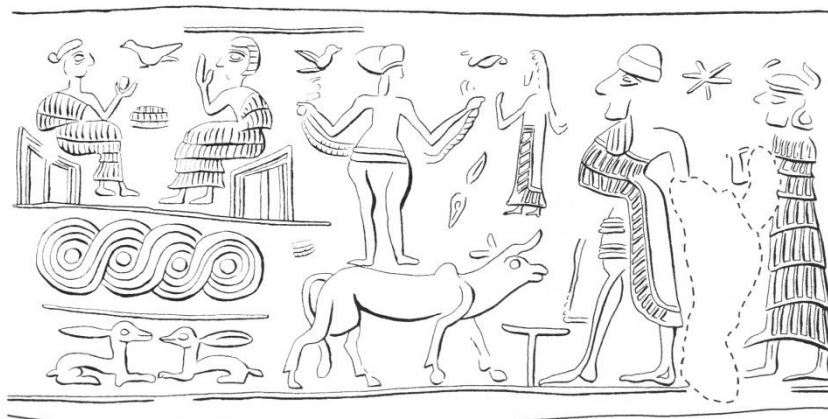


Fig. 11: Cylinder seal (about 1750 B.C.), Syria

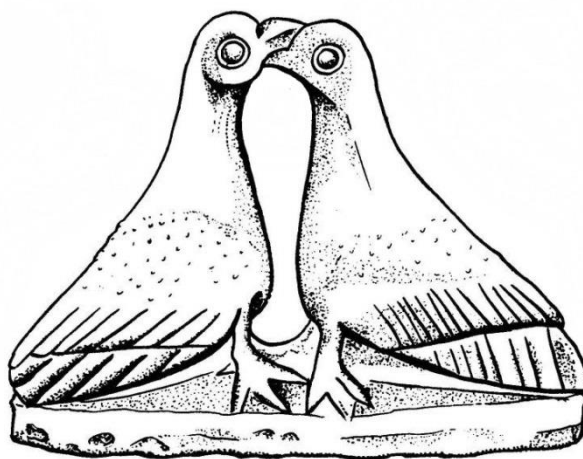


Fig 12: Sculpture (fourth/third century B.C.), Cyprus

In three verses (Song 2:14; 5:2; 6:9) not a human's eyes, but the woman *in toto* is said to be a dove:

Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one ... (5:2)  
... my dove, my perfect one, is unique, the only daughter of her mother,  
the favourite of the one who bore her (6:9)

My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places on the mountainside, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely (2:14)

In the following I concentrate on Song 2:14, which is part of the longer passage 2:8–14. The woman is the speaker of this scene. She functions as a narrator (Exum 2005a:124) as well as the focaliser (Exum 2000:28), as she narrates a progressive story from her point of view. She is telling about her lover jumping and leaping over the mountains and the hills like a gazelle and a stag, both animals that were associated with deities (Carr 2003:118), conveying a dynamic image of agility and playfulness. By being depicted as going over the mountains, the man is reminiscent of the ancient weather god, who is often depicted as going over mountains. While the woman recounts how the man approaches it becomes evident that she herself is positioned inside a house, not outside like the man. This becomes clear by referring to wall, window and lattice (Thöne 2012:178). Now her lover gazes inside the house, begging her to come out to him (not to let him in like in Chapter 5). This spatial separation of the couple leads to a conflict, because the lovers always strive after unity (Thöne 2012:172). Obviously the man is not capable of crossing the borders on his own, which seems quite ironic in this context: he was just jumping over the hills like a god and is now standing in front of her house, facing an insurmountable obstacle. For this reason he requests her to come out,<sup>3</sup> telling certain attractive aspects that make coming out pleasurable, like the end of winter, the blooming flowers, and the singing of the turtle dove. In the very end of his speech he asks his girlfriend to show him her face, to let him hear her voice — imagining her as a dove in the clefts of the rock, the hiding places of the mountains. By doing so the man, coming from the mountains, projects “his own spatiality onto the woman and her room” (Meredith 2012:377), i.e., the “two characters are viewing the same image, the same underlying spatial configuration, but are looking from different positions in space” (Meredith 2012:376f.). She sees through a pair of domestic spectacles (herself in the house), he

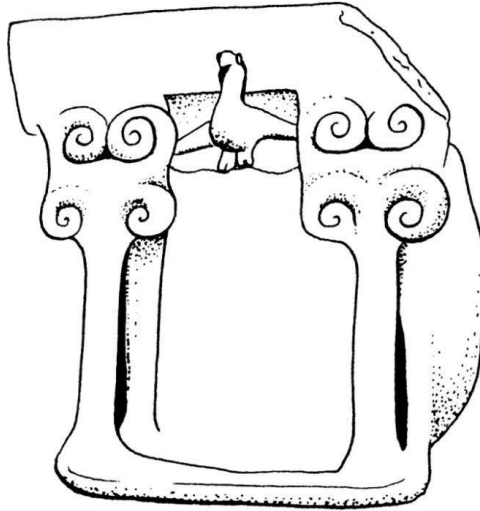
<sup>3</sup> This means that the narrating woman is quoting the man, while the man never quotes her; see Exum (2000:28). “Through putting words in his mouth when she tells stories in which he courts her, she controls the way we view him” (Exum 2005b:87).

sees through a pair of gazelle's eyes (her as a dove in the rocks). Woman and dove become a unity. The woman in the house seems not to be shy (against Exum 2005b:88), but as inaccessible for the man as the dove in the clefts of the rock. Unreachability is an important aspect: Contrary to the cultured and dominated horse on the chariot in Song 1:9, the dove is sitting enthroned solitary in the cliffs. This gives an impression of a proud and autonomous dove as well as a proud and autonomous woman.

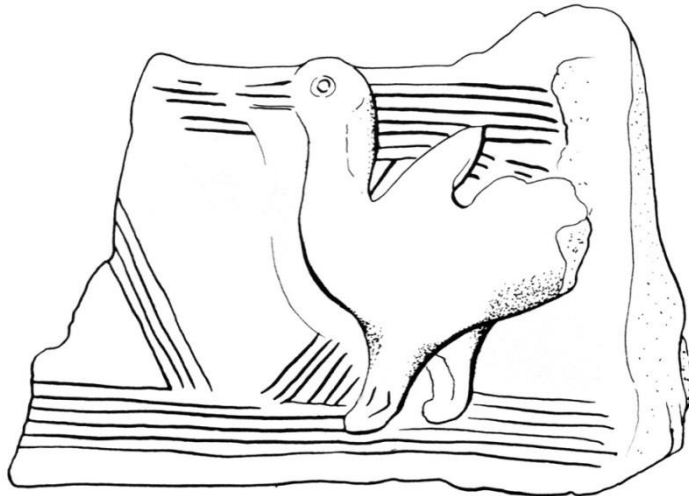
In this context the iconography of solitary doves in the ancient Near East is illuminating. Fig. 13 shows a clay model of a sanctuary, found in Israel/Palestine. A single dove is sitting in its gable. This temple obviously belonged to a goddess, whose attribute animal was the dove. There is even more evidence for the appearance of the dove in the context of the sanctuary. Fig. 14 is a fragment of a clay model of a sanctuary of a love goddess, showing a dove. Several single doves are the decoration of another model of a two storey temple of the Syrian love goddess (Fig. 15). Numerous single figurines of doves were found in Israel/Palestine and the surrounding areas in a sacred setting, like the clay sculpture pictured below (Fig. 16), which was found in the temple of Nahariya, near Haifa, Israel/Palestine. Several figurines of the female deity and more than ten figurines of doves have been found there, making visible the close connection of dove and goddess.

The temple is considered to be the marked out area of the deity, where the god or the goddess lives like a king or a queen in the palace. The temple marks the passage from earth to heaven. Although it is possible to experience the presence of the goddess in the temple she still remains unreachable for the humans (Niehr 2013:387).

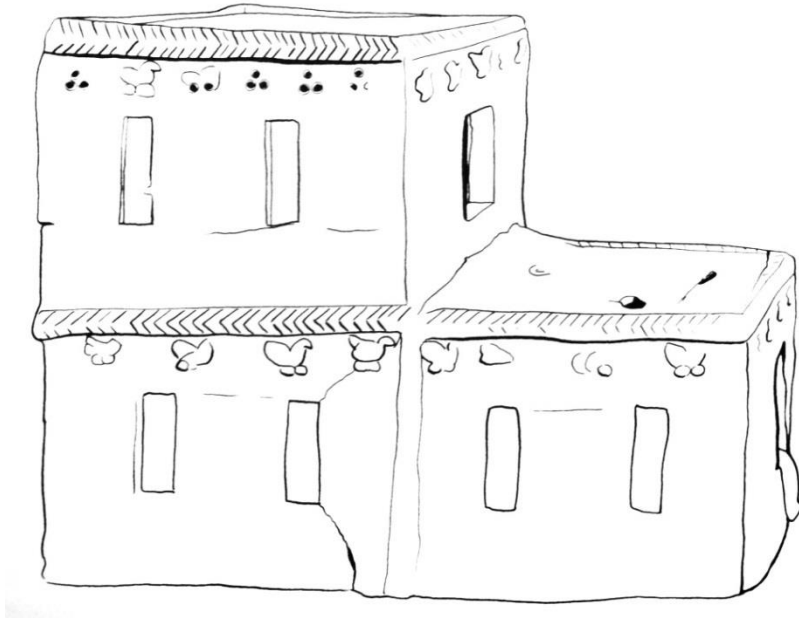
It follows that there is a strong analogy between the unreachable woman in the house and the unreachable dove in the mountains as well the unreachable goddess in the temple. The metaphor of Song 2:14 expresses the admiration and appreciation of both woman and dove. Both are parallelised with each other and at the same time associated with the goddess of love. In contrast to the dominated horse-woman in 1:9, 2:14 presents an image of a sovereign and autonomous dove-woman.



**Fig. 13:** Temple model (about 800-700 B.C.), Israel/Palestine



**Fig. 14:** Fragment of a clay model of a sanctuary (About 1750 B.C.), Syria



**Fig. 15:** Clay model of a sanctuary (1700–1550 B.C.), Syria



**Fig. 16:** Clay sculpture (about 1700-1600 B.C.), temple of Nahariya, Israel/Palestine



## CONCLUSION

Concerning animal imagery in the biblical Song of Songs it manifests that the female protagonist is related to animals more often than the male. She is associated with horse, dove, goat, sheep and gazelle — both single body parts and the woman *in toto*. The woman as a whole is connected to the female horse (Song 1:9) and the female dove (Song 2:14; 5:2; 6:9). Depending on the gendered perspective of the text both images give a different view of both woman and animal, both interweaved closely to a humanimal being.

On the one hand, the image of the horse-woman pulling the chariot depicts a tamed, domesticated and subordinate being, controlled by the leading man. The male can use this strong and dangerous animal to attack his enemies. Further, the carriage horse is beautiful and valuable; the beloved woman is as graceful and of royal kind like the richly decorated mare (Peetz 2015:100). Strong erotic aspects lie within the image of the dominated and attractive woman as a mare.

On the other hand, the image of the dove-woman in the clefts of the rock shows a free and autonomous being. She exists independently from the man. Like a goddess in her temple the dove-woman seems to be unreachable or at least difficult to access. This aspect even increases her attraction towards the man.

Both horse and dove are desirable in their own ways — either being dominated (like the horse) or revealing dominion (like the dove).

All in all we find a strong appreciation not only of the woman, but also of animals in the Song of Songs. Comparing each other to animals “is not just a matter of aesthetics [...], but a fundamental admission” that humans and animals “are of the same ‘fibre’” (Viviers 2001:149). So certainly the lovers compare each other to elements they appreciate. However the text’s perspective and with this the gendered view differs and so does the autonomy conceded to woman and animal.

**List of figures:**

Fig. 1: Scarab, war scene with horse I.

<http://www.bible-orient-museum.ch/bodo/details.php?bomid=19458> [Accessed 2016/03/30]

Fig. 2: Scarab, war scene with horse II.

<http://www.bible-orient-museum.ch/bodo/details.php?bomid=15733> [Accessed 2016/03/30]

Fig. 3: Cylinder seal, hunting scene with horses I.

<http://www.bible-orient-museum.ch/bodo/details.php?bomid=397> [Accessed 2016/03/30]

Fig. 4: Cylinder seal, hunting scene with horses II.

<http://www.bible-orient-museum.ch/bodo/details.php?bomid=460> [Accessed 2016/03/30]

Fig. 5: Relief, war scene with horses I.

Keel (1992:63)

Fig. 6: Relief, war scene with horses II.

Keel (1992:66)

Fig. 7: Cylinder seal, banquet scene with dove.

Keel (1992:87)

Fig. 8: Cylinder seal, undressing scene with dove.

<http://www.bible-orient-museum.ch/bodo/details.php?bomid=564> [Accessed 2016/03/30]

Fig. 9: Cylinder seal, undressing scene with dove.

<http://www.bible-orient-museum.ch/bodo/details.php?bomid=563> [Accessed 2016/03/30]

Fig. 10: Cylinder seal, undressing scene with dove.

Keel (1992:73)

Fig. 11: Cylinder seal, combination of undressing and banquet scene with dove.

IPIAO (II: fig. 438)

Fig. 12: Sculpture, billing doves.

Keel (1992:73)

Fig. 13: Temple model with dove I.

Keel (1992:101)

Fig. 14: Temple model with dove II.

Keel (1984: fig. 44)

Fig. 15: Temple model with dove III.

IPIAO (II: fig. 436)

Fig. 16: Clay model, dove.

IPIAO (II: fig. 443)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barbiero, G 2011. *Song of Songs. A close reading*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum. Leiden/Boston: E. J. Brill.
- Brenner, A & Fontaine, C R (eds) 2000. *The Song of Songs. A feminist companion to the Bible* Second Series. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Brenner, A & van Dijk-Hemmes, F 1993. *On gendering texts. Female and male voices in the Hebrew Bible*. Biblical Interpretation Series. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Bühlmann, W 1997. *Das Hohelied*. NSKAT 15. Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk.
- Carr, D M 2003. *The erotic word. Sexuality, spirituality and the Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Exum, J C 2000. *Ten things every feminist should know about the Song of Songs*, in Brenner & Fontaine 2000:24–35.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005a. *Song of Songs. A commentary*. Louisville KY: John Knox Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005b. *The poetic genius of the Song of Songs*, in Hagedorn 2005:78–95.
- Fieger, M, Krispenz, J & Lanckau, J (eds) 2013. *Wörterbuch alttestamentlicher Motive*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Fontaine, C 2001. “Go Forth into the Fields”: An earth-centered reading of the Song of Songs, in Habel & Wurst 2001:126–142.
- Habel, N C & Wurst, S (eds) 2001. *The earth story in wisdom traditions*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Hagedorn A C 2005. *Perspectives on the Song of Songs. Perspektiven der Hoheliedauslegung*. BZAW 346. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Keel, O 1984. *Deine Blicke sind Tauben. Zur Metaphorik des Hohen Liedes*. SBS 114/115. Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1992. *Das Hohelied*. ZBK 18. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich.
- Klinger, E, Böhm, S & Seidl, T (eds) 2000. *Der Körper und die Religion. Das Problem der Konstruktion von Geschlechterrollen*. Würzburg: Echter.
- Loretz, O 2005. Das pharaonische Wagengespann mit Stute des Canticums (1,9–11) in hippologisch-militärgeschichtlicher Sicht, *Ugarit-Forschungen* 36:205–234.
- Meredith, C 2012. The lattice and the looking glass. Gendered space in Song of Songs 2:8–14,

- JAAR 80:365–386.
- Meredith, C 2013. *Journeys in the songscape. Space and the Song of Songs*. Hebrew Bible Monographs 53. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press.
- Niehr, H 2013. *Tempel*, in Fieger, Krispenz & Lanckau 2013:387–391.
- Peetz, M 2015. *Emotionen im Hohelied. Eine literaturwissenschaftliche Analyse hebräischer Liebeslyrik unter Berücksichtigung geistlich-allegorischer Auslegungsversuche*. HBS 81. Freiburg i. Br.: Herder.
- Schroer, S 2008. *Die Ikonographie Palästinas/Israels und der Alte Orient. Eine Religionsgeschichte in Bildern. Band 2 – Die Mittelbronzezeit (IPIAO II)*. Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg.
- Schroer, S & Staubli, T 2001. *Body symbolism in the Bible*. Collegeville MN: The Liturgical Press.
- Seidl, T 2000. „Schön bist du meine Freundin“. Wahrnehmung des Körpers im Hohen Lied, in Klinger, Böhm & Seidl 2000:129–157.
- Steinberg, J 2014. *Das Hohelied*. Edition C Bibelkommentar Altes Testament Bd. 26. Witten: SCM R. Brockhaus.
- Stoop-van Paridon, P W T 2005. *The Song of Songs. A philological analysis of the Hebrew book*. ANESS 17. Louvain/Paris/Dudley MA.: Peeters.
- Thöne, Y S 2012. *Liebe zwischen Stadt und Feld. Raum und Geschlecht im Hohelied*. ExuZ 22. Münster/Berlin: LIT-Verlag.
- Viviers, H 2011. *Eco-delight in the Song of Songs*, in Habel & Wurst 2001:143–154.
- Wiedenmann, R E 2003. *Die Tiere der Gesellschaft. Studien zur Soziologie und Semantik von Mensch-Tier-Beziehungen*. Konstanz: UVK Universitätsverlag Konstanz.
- Zakovitch, Y 2004. *Das Hohelied*. HThKAT. Freiburg i. Br.: Herder.