Hyperbole and the Cost of Discipleship: A Case Study of Luke 14:26*

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Abstract

Luke 14:26 has commonly been viewed as an example of hyperbole. This article applies modern studies on hyperbole that hold as its principle criteria both a scalar property and an evaluative/expressive function. We apply these criteria, analyzing Luke 14:26 in terms of encoded language, co-text, and context. We argue that hyperbole arises from the choice to use "hate" rather than "love more than" but also that the hyperbolic usage relies on a CAUSE FOR EFFECT (EMOTION FOR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE) metonym.[1] In terms of language, we show that "hate" has variant meanings that may be different in their degrees of encoding. In terms of co-text, we argue that Luke's use of "hate" and Matthew's use of "love more than" are relevantly chosen; in other words, they are suited to and to be interpreted against their co-texts.

Keywords

Luke 14:26, Matt 10:37, hyperbole, discipleship, encoded language, co-text, context

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[1] Small caps will be used to indicate concepts as well as the metaphors and metonyms in which they feature.

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Introduction

In the history of interpretation, Luke 14:26—"Whoever comes to me and does not hate (μισεῖ) father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple (οὐ δύναται εἶναί μου μαθητής)"—presents as a problematic text. Is it an *ipsissimum verbum* and, if so, in what context did Jesus utter it? In so far as both Luke and Matthew share the logion, it appears to go back to Q; however, their versions are quite different, as any reading of Matt 10:37—"Whoever loves father or mother more than me (ὁ φιλῶν . . . ὑπὲρ ἐμέ) is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me (οὐκ ἔστιν μου ἄξιος)—makes evident. Did the tradition speak of "hate" or "love more than"? Also, the apodosis differs between them, that is, "cannot be my disciple" or "is not worthy of me." The consensus holds that the Lukan text better reflects the tradition here.[2] Again, though Matthew's logion by itself (i.e., divorced from its utterance in the mission of the Twelve) can be read to include both men and women, the presence of familial relations of the same generation as the addressee (i.e., "wife . . . brothers and sisters"), and more particularly by the presence of "wife"[3] at Luke 14:26 (as also at Luke 18:29), makes the logion androcentric.[4] The Lukan addition seems to imply that only males can detach themselves from families and become disciples. One might also ask where this logion sits in relation to other logia (esp. Q 9:59–60a and 12:51–53) that are understood to be antifamily. Be that as it may, the consensus view holds: the presence of "wife" is a Lukan innovation that is found also as an addition to the list at 18:29 (par. Mark 10:29 without "wife"),[5] and the same parallel logion influences the addition of "brothers and sisters" to Luke 14:26. Finally, the third evangelist adds ἔτι τε καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἑαυτοῦ. We will return to this important addition as our argument unfolds below.

The aim of the paper is to offer clarity to the discussion of "hate" in Luke 14:26, and to achieve this, it will bring to bear the insights of modern linguistic theory on hyperbole. Accordingly, our focus will be on interpretations that see the logion as

[2] Paul Hoffmann and Christoph Heil, *Die Spruchquelle Q. Studienausgabe Griechisch und Deutsch* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002) 96, reconstruct Q to read: [[<ὃς>]] οὐ μισεῖ τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα οὐ <δύναται εἶναί> μου <μαθητής>, καὶ [[<ὃς>]] <οὐ μισεῖ> τ<ὸ>ν υἱὸν καὶ τ<ὴ>ν θυγατέρα οὐ δύναται εἶναί μου μαθητής. See also Gos.Thom. §55 and §101.

[3] "Wife" is added to the list of family associations derived from Mark 10:29. See Luke 18:29.

[4] Mary Rose D'Angelo, "The ANHP Question in Luke-Acts: Imperial Masculinity and the Deployment of Women in the Early Second Century," and Esther A. de Boer, "The Lukan Mary Magdalene," in *A Feminist Companion to Luke* (ed. A.-J. Levine and M. Blickenstaff; London: Sheffield Academic, 2002) 44–69, at 64, and 140–60, at 145, respectively; Sabine Van den Eynde, "Come and Hate? On the Interpretation of Luke 14,26," in *Luke and His Readers: Festschrift A. Denaux* (ed. R. Bieringer, G. Van Belle, and J. Verheyden; BETL 182: Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005) 281–97, at 287; and Arland D. Jacobson, "Divided Families and Christian Origins," in *The Gospel behind the Gospels: Current Studies on Q* (ed. R. A. Piper; Leiden: Brill, 1995) 361–80, at 363.

[5] The addition of marriage to a wife (14:20) as one of the excuses in the preceding parable of the wedding invitation is also noted as relevant.

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an instance of exaggeration. The argument has been structured as follows: First, we give an overview of the two principal approaches to it, that is, the more literalist, eschatological view and the view that recognizes some form of figurative sense, whether it be named exaggeration or implied by how the terminology is glossed. Second, we distinguish the three sources from which meaning can be inferred, namely, the encoded text, the co-text, and the context. Relevance theory is used to analyze hyperbole, as it highlights the significance of pragmatic factors (i.e., co-text and context) in inferring meaning. Third, we turn to the description of hyperbole and its function as a vehicle for conveying an evaluative or attitudinal sense, that is, the speaker's attitude to what she says. Hyperbole is viewed as ascribing to something, or someone, a property or characteristic that is either more or less than what the hearer can properly understand that the speaker believes to be the case. An intended meaning is then sought in the utterance's co-text and/or context. Fourth, we offer a short discussion of how the theory works in a number of other New Testament passages. Fifth, we analyze Luke 14:26 in terms of encoded text, co-text, and context. In examining encoded text, we look at the Hebrew and LXX uses of the terms "love" and "hate" and their metonymic uses to access such concepts as PREFERENCE and REJECTION. The argument then moves to a consideration of the co-text and whether this serves to disambiguate possible meanings of Luke 14:26. Here we argue that the sequence of figurative expressions in Luke 14:27–34 would lead its hearers to revise their interpretation of v. 26. Finally, we look at Matthew's use of the logion and argue that he understood "hate" as hyperbole and rendered its intended meaning, though now with a reduced evaluative sense.[6]

Status of Interpretation

The interpretation of Luke 14:26 shows two principal trajectories. The first places the saying in the context of the end times and the type of radical demand that this places on Jesus's followers; this interpretation favors a literal meaning.[7] The second places the saying within the context of Jesus's ambiguous attitude to the family—sometimes explained by the existence of two types of disciples, itinerant versus settled—and the implications of his ethical teachings more generally;

[6] The use of male pronouns for the evangelists reflects the gender entailed by each named gospel and makes no assumption about the actual gender or nature of that authorship.

[7] E.g., Johannes Weiss, *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God* (trans. and ed. Richard H. Hiers and D. Larrimore Holland; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985) 112; Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (trans. S. H. Hooke; London: SCM, 1963) 195; Gerd Theissen, *The First Followers of Jesus: A Sociological Analysis of the Earliest Christianity* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM, 1978) 11 and 61; Martin Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers* (trans. James Grieg; New York: Crossroad, 1981) 13 and 33; Gerd Theissen, *The New Testament: History, Literature, Religion* (trans. L. M. Maloney; London: Continuum, 2003) 37; Philip F. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lukan Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 118; and Keith A. Reich, *Figuring Jesus: The Power of Rhetorical Figures of Speech in the Gospel of Luke* (BibInt 107; Leiden: Brill, 2011) 133–35.

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this interpretation favors a figurative meaning,[8] and, more particularly, views it as an instance of hyperbole/exaggeration.[9] Some will not use these terms but instead speak of the usage of "hate" in terms of intensification (e.g., to express the inestimable worth of the decision to follow Jesus), comparison (e.g., Matthew's version as softened or less offensive), or precedence/priority of God over family (e.g., "hate" expresses a reasoned choice rather than an emotional response).[10] In so doing, they may tacitly indicate the presence of hyperbole in Luke's use of the term. Also within this trajectory are found interpretations that construe Jesus's negative attitude to the family as a reframing of agency, for example, where the roles of the perpetrator (i.e., the family as the agent of ostracism) and the victim (i.e., the follower of Jesus as the ostracized) are inverted[11] and in which "hate"

[8] See J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Hating Father and Mother (Luke 14:26; Matthew 10:37)," *Downside Review* 117 (1999) 251–72; and Michael D. Goulder, *Luke: A New Paradig*m (2 vols; JSNTSup 20; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989) 2:596.

[9] Editorial, "Jesus' Use of Hyperbole," *The Biblical World* 19 (1902) 2–8; Craig A. Evans, *Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1990) ad loc. 14:26; Darrell L. Bock, *Luke* (2 vols.; BECNT 3; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996) 2:1284; Samuel Byrskog, "The Transmission of the Jesus Tradition," in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus* (ed. Tom Holmén and Stanley E. Porter; 4 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2011) 2:480; John T. Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012) 307; Mikeal C. Parsons, *Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015) ad loc. 14:26; Pablo T. Gadenz, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015) ad loc. 14:26; Amy-Jill Levine and Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Luke* (New Cambridge Bible Commentary; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) 401.

[10] Theodor Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Lucas* (Leipzig/Erlangen: Brockhaus, 1920) 553–54; Fritz Reinecker, *Das Evangelium des Lukas* (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1959) 358; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke X–XXIV* (AB 28A: New York: Doubleday, 1985) 1063; Robert Tannehill, *The Gospel According to Luke* (vol. 1 of *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986–1989) 149; Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993) 504; François Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas. Lk 9:51–14:35* (ed. Norbert Brox et al.; Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament III/2; Zürich/Düsseldorf: Benziger, 1996) 532–34; James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 55, 607 and 702; Robert H. Gundry, *Commentary on Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010) ad loc. 14:26; Peter Balla, "Did Jesus Break the Fifth (Fourth) Commandment?," in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, 4:2947–72, at 2970; Frederick W. Danker, *Jesus and the New Age: A Commentary on St. Luke's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 272; Judith Lieu, *The Gospel of Luke* (Epworth Commentaries; Peterborough: Epworth, 1997) 117; David E. Garland, *The Luke Commentary Collection: An All-In-One Commentary Collection for Studying the Book of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016) 3329.6/5713 (e-book); Walter L. Liefeld and David W. Pao, *The Luke Commentary Collection*, 5357.1/5713 (e-book); and James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Luke* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2018) 1409.2/2655 (e-book).

[11] See C. Tuckett, "Q and Family Ties," in *Metaphor, Narrative and Parable in Q* (ed. Dieter T. Roth, Ruben Zimmermann, and Michael Labahn; WUNT 315; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014) 57–71; Jerome H. Neyrey, "Loss of Wealth, Loss of Family and Loss of Honour: The Cultural Context of the Original Makarisms in Q," in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context* (ed. Philip F. Esler; London: Routledge, 1995) 145 and 150; and Brittany E. Wilson, *Unmanly Men: Refigurations of Masculinity in Luke-Acts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) 70, 193–94.

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is glossed as expressing "detachment" or "severing one's relationship with."[12] Adherents of both trajectories recognize that the saying has to do with discipleship and the redefinition of kinship relations that it implies. They also agree that "Semitic idiom"—that is, polysemy, where "hate" can mean "actually hate" and "love/like less"—underlies Jesus's usage of the term.[13] If pressed, adherents of the literal meaning would perhaps also concede that Jesus meant "love/like less";[14] however, given that polysemy assumes a choice, why choose "hate" rather than "love/like less"? What added purpose does the choice serve, and what helps an Aramaic speaker to disambiguate one meaning from the other? Indeed, if there is such a purpose, can one properly assert that Matthew's "love more" (Matt 10:37) offers a "real paraphrase of the same idea" and represents "well the content of the idiom" in Q 14:26?[15] Adherents of both trajectories need also to ask whether the "idiom" was at all recognizable to Luke's Greek-speaking audience, or perhaps even to Luke himself. If he deliberately chose to adhere to a verbatim translation in faithfulness to the Jesus tradition in Q, has he not left confusion instead of the clarity that Matthew offered to his Jewish-Christian audience?

Methodology

We distinguish encoded text (i.e., the written or spoken expression) from co-text (i.e., the discourse that surrounds a written or spoken expression, including intertextual referencing) and context (i.e., nondiscursive factors that situate the written or spoken expression that include social, cultural, and embodied settings, participants, past events, and the cognitive-conceptual system that both enables and constrains what can be expressed).[16] As meaning is rarely fully encoded (i.e., various meanings can be inferred from the encoded text), co-text and context play a vital role in disambiguating the meaning of any speaker. For example, consider the expression, "Can you drive?" It can have various meanings, for example, as a question of ability or as a polite request. These are the explicatures of the encoded text; however, its co-text or context allows inferences to be drawn as to which meaning is germane: in a discussion about who holds a driver's licence, the encoded text is best understood as a question; however, when uttered by someone

[12] See Van den Eynde, "Come and Hate?," 293; and Jacobson, "Divided Families and Christian Origins," 363–64.

[13] See Jeremias, *Parables*, 203; Van den Eynde, "Come and Hate?," 290–91; and I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Exeter: Paternoster, 1978) 592.

[14] See Gerd Theissen, *A Theory of Primitive Christian Religion* (trans. John Bowden: London: SCM, 1999) 66–67.

[15] Peter Balla, "How Radical Is Itinerant Radicalism? The Case of Luke 14:26," in *Jesus—Gestalt und Gestaltungen: Rezeptionen des Galiläers in Wissenschaft, Kirche und Gesellschaft* (ed. Petra von Gemünden, David G. Horrell, and Max Küchler; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013) 51–68, at 53 and 58; Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 594.

[16] Zoltán Kövecses, *Where Metaphors Come From: Reconsidering Context in Metaphor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) 176–200.

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who has been driving for two hours and who also knows that their passenger can drive, it is best understood as a polite request asking the passenger to drive. These are the expression's implicatures, and they are afforded by a pragmatic system that allows one to convey more meanings than the limited resources that language itself provides.[17]

To assist in the analysis of hyperbole, we will employ relevance theory[18] and Claudia Claridge's study of hyperbole in English.[19] Both postulate a central role for hearer inferencing based on the explicatures of the encoded text and the implicatures of the co-textual/contextual factors of its utterance.[20] At the outset, we note the more complex nature of the enterprise when it concerns the gospel tradition. Specifically, the encoded text is complicated, as we are dealing with: 1) languages that are no longer spoken (i.e., the native speaker's intuition and competence in the language is largely absent); 2) various acts of transmission, either spoken or written reiterations, with uncertain co-texts and contexts; 3) translation(s) presumably from Palestinian Aramaic into Koine Greek; and 4) the likelihood that an evangelist's words may not always be his own when constrained by an authoritative tradition. The co-text of an expression is well established if we limit our scope to a particular gospel; however, as an *ipsissimum verbum* and its iterations in pre-gospel transmission, the co-text is only hinted at probabilistically. So too context and the quest for a saying's *Sitz im Leben* more generally; however, here even the gospel's context is the product of a largely circular argument based on the reading of the text as a whole and what can be reasonably postulated about the early churches from other external sources. Fortunately, there are sometimes mitigating circumstances that cut across the difficulties inherent in our threefold division by text, co-text, and

[17] Robyn Carston, "Relevance Theory and the Saying/Implicating Distinction," in *The Handbook of Pragmatics* (ed. Laurence R. Horn and Gregory Ward; Oxford: Blackwell, 2004) 633–56, at 633.

[18] Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995); Robyn Carston, "Truth-Conditional Content and Conversational Implicature," in *The Semantics/Pragmatics Distinction* (ed. Claudia Bianchi; Stanford: CSLI Publications, 2004) 65–100; Deirdre Wilson and Robyn Carston, "Metaphor, Relevance and the 'Emergent Property,'" *Mind & Language* 21 (2006) 404–33; Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, "A Deflationary Account of Metaphors," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (ed. Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 84–105; Nicholas Allott, "Relevance Theory," in *Perspectives on Linguistic Pragmatics* (ed. Alessandro Capone, Franco Lo Piparo, and Marco Carapezza; Heidelberg: Springer, 2013) 61–84; Robyn Carston and Catherine Wearing, "Hyperbolic Language and Its Relation to Metaphor and Irony," *Journal of Pragmatics* 79 (2015) 79–92.

[19] Claudia Claridge, *Hyperbole in English: A Corpus-based Study of Exaggeration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Claridge favors a Gricean approach by redefining the maxim of quantity (do not say more than is necessary).

[20] Relevance theory assumes that meaning is not completely encoded in language and that the intended meaning of any expression is determined 1) by its explicatures or 2) in the case of metaphor from an ad hoc concept (seen as the pragmatic adjustment or broadening of its encoded concept), but more particularly 3) by their implicatures. The latter can be inferred by the hearer's use of co-textual and contextual assumptions as well as other inputs (including encyclopedic knowledge) in a heuristic procedure guided by the aims of maximizing cognitive effects or benefits, and minimizing the mental effort or cost.

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context that provide an expanded situation for approximating meaning. These are: 1) the synoptic parallels and analogues that allow a saying to be better co-textualized within the traditions of each evangelist; 2) the literary traditions of the Hebrew Bible that were starting to be fixed in our period and that help situate the text again principally in terms of co-text; and 3) narratives or discourses where a spoken word can be interpreted against the story or pericope within which it occurs, the latter providing both co-text and context. Specifically, though the evangelists might be constrained in their repetition of a tradition (i.e., its encoded text), they appear somewhat freer in where that tradition is placed (i.e., its co-text) in their narrative. The last point relies on the distinction between author, narrator, and character and the recognition that, though we might not know much about the context of the actual author of a gospel, the gospel itself is a narrative that provides its own context for what its characters say.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is "an overt and blatant exaggeration of some property or characteristic. The speaker does not intend to be taken literally and the hearer recognises this. So, assuming the communication is successful, both parties recognise that the literal description is an overstatement of the actual state of affairs," the effect of which "does not seem to consist of a distinct thought or proposition but rather to be something evaluative or emotional."[21] Accordingly, hyperbole is both: scalar, that is, indicating the more or less of that property or characteristic;[22] and evaluative, as in it expresses "an element of evaluation of the state of affairs described."[23]

Exaggeration relies on recognition of "the evident gap" between "how things are described" and what the speaker could reasonably know or believe about them.[24] For example, if one accepts that Jesus shared a traditional Jewish view of familial duty,[25] then one will conclude that if Jesus did utter Luke 9:60 (par. Matt 8:22)—"Let the dead bury their own dead"—then the saying would not represent "what the speaker could reasonably be taken to believe" and might therefore be hyperbole

[21] Carston and Wearing, "Hyperbolic Language," 80 and 81.

[22] Concerning the scalar criterion, Claridge, *Hyperbole in English*, 7–9, distinguishes between *semantic scale*s (i.e., those grounded in the linguistic structure—e.g. <adore, love, like> and <despise, hate, dislike>) and *pragmatic scales* (i.e., those "grounded in assumptions and expectations about the world" or "extralinguistic facts" giving rise to an ordered set—e.g. <mountain, hill> and < garden, park, forest, jungle>). Of course, one should recognize that what might once have been a pragmatic scale can, through frequent usage, become a semantic scale, so the distinction between them can be fuzzy.

[23] Concerning the second criterion, Carston and Wearing, "Hyperbolic Language," 89, contend that evaluation is perhaps the main reason for employing hyperbole.

[24] See ibid., 90, or, in the words of Wilson and Carston, "Metaphor, Relevance," 404, "the gap between the encoded linguistic meaning of an utterance and the speaker's meaning." On the fallacy of a purely encoded view of language, see Sperber and Wilson, "A Deflationary Account," 84–105.

[25] On familial duty, see Balla, "Did Jesus Break the Fifth (Fourth) Commandment?," 2947–72, esp. 2952–56 and 2959; and Tuckett, "Q and Family Ties," 57–71.

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(or irony). In Claridge's analysis, hyperbole sacrifices factuality for emotional or "deeper" truth (e.g., the speaker's attitude to facts as a form of self-presentation) with the degree of contrast between what is said (i.e., the encoded meaning of a hyperbolic expression) and the facts (or more properly the expression that best represents the facts)[26] "correlat(ing) in some way with the strength of the emotion to be expressed."[27] This expressive/evaluative quality provides motivation for its use rather than the use of some non-hyperbolic expression. But she further notes that the identification of hyperbole is context and knowledge bound, and it is this that allows the "transferred, emotively coloured meaning"[28] of the hyperbolic expression to be inferred from its implicatures. That is to say, the interpretation of hyperbole depends on a sufficient and shared knowledge of co-textual and contextual factors[29] that allows the hearer to guess its subjective meaning.[30]

Understanding the gap between what is described by an encoded text and what a speaker could reasonably know or believe forms a critical deficit in any contemporary analysis of Luke 14:26, given that we are not its intended audience but are far removed in terms of time, place, and cultural beliefs and practices. In terms of relevance theory more generally, the issue becomes that of being able to maximize the relevance of the saying for its intended hearers, where the modern reader no longer has immediate access to the co-textual and contextual assumptions that were available to the ancient audience and that made some meanings more likely or accessible than others; after all, it is these that yield by inference the so-called positive cognitive effects (i.e., implicatures) that determine an expression's optimal relevance.[31] Indeed "what makes the resulting interpretation intuitively literal, approximate, hyperbolical or metaphorical is simply the particular set of encyclopedic assumptions (information) actually deployed in making the utterance relevant in the expected way."[32]

Hyperbole and the Gospels

Some terms such as "all," "every," "always," and "never," because of their frequent use in hyperbole, prime the hearer to expect it. Such is the case at Mark 1:5—"And

[26] Carston and Wearing, "Hyperbolic Language," 90, view the "gap" in terms of the perspective of the hearer (i.e., "what the speaker could reasonably be taken to believe").

[27] Claridge, *Hyperbole in English*, 20. Claridge argues that there is a preference in hyperbole for "extreme case formulations" (p. 9, e.g., "dead sure" and "dying to know") and that the expression is then interpreted away from that extreme with the difference in scalar quantity expressing the emotional/interactional/evaluative quality of the hyperbole (p. 12). See, originally, Anita Pomerantz, "Extreme Case Formulations: A Way of Legitimizing Claims," *Human Studies* 9 (1986) 219–29.

[28] Claridge, *Hyperbole in English*, 263.

[29] Ibid., 215, where, for Claridge, contextual factors include "cultural beliefs and practices" as well as "general and shared world knowledge."

[30] Ibid., 24.

[31] See further, Wilson and Carston, "Metaphor, Relevance," 407, and Sperber and Wilson, "A Deflationary Account," 89–90.

[32] Wilson and Carston, "Metaphor, Relevance," 413.

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people from the whole (πᾶσα) Judean countryside and all (πάντες) the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins"; and Luke 9:25—"What does it profit them if they gain the whole (ὅλος) world, but lose or forfeit themselves?" These examples entail a scalar continuum (e.g., one that operates between nil and all people) that places quantity at its maximal end. The audience can also readily assume that the speaker did not literally mean that "all the people" actually went out to John and were baptized by him. Their past experience and social knowledge would lead them to assume that some people would not have been in a position to leave. Also, the opposition and imminent imprisonment that John faced, asserted in the tradition and the text itself, would mark the expression for a hearer as one that the speaker did not believe to be the case. Unfortunately, however, not all cases show such cues as "all" or "every," yet they are still readily recognized as hyperbole from the hearer's and/or reader's encyclopedic knowledge: John 12:19—"The Pharisees then said to one another, 'You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world (κόσμος) has gone after him!'"; and Luke 21:18—"But not a hair of your head (θρὶξ ἐκ τῆς κεφαλῆς) will perish." Again, a scalar continuum is assumed (i.e., a single hair of the head being the least or smallest body part), and the co-text of utterance, which concerns the trial and persecution, even death, of believers, entails the assumption that the speaker did not literally mean what he said. However, as the last example shows, hyperbole can be: 1) associated with the whole expression and not just the single word; and 2) combined in other figures of speech to form what is called domain-switching hyperbole.[33] At Luke 21:18 the context indicates that the evangelist understood "a hair of your head" as the conceptual metaphor (indicated by small capital letters) THE SOUL IS A BODY;[34] for as the evangelist continues, it is by endurance that the believer will gain her soul (Luke 21:19). The metaphor may seem odd to the Western reader influenced by Platonic and Cartesian dualisms, but for ancient speakers such dualisms were not so apparent or significant as the fact that they had no other way to speak about the soul in a scalar fashion. In terms of relevance theory, the least part of the soul had no linguistic encoding; however, the concept could be accessed in a very concrete and lived fashion by thinking of the soul in terms of its body and the least part of the soul as a hair on the head. Another example of an association with metaphor is found at Matt 7:3 (par. Luke 6:42)—"Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?" Here the metaphor KNOWING/JUDGING IS SEEING is used and within that metaphor "log" is hyperbolic, that is, it is both scalar (at the opposite imaginable extreme to the speck)

[33] Claridge, *Hyperbole in English*, 41, distinguishes between domain-preserving (basic hyperbole involving amplifying synonyms "beyond the limits of credibility," e.g., "freezing" for "cold," "always" for "often") and domain-switching (composite or metaphorical hyperbole, e.g., "petrified" for "unable to move or speak," "asking for his head" for "blaming him"), with the latter type often being phrasal in nature.

[34] On the common metaphor, THE MIND IS A BODY, see Kövecses, *Where Metaphors Come From*, 4.

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and expresses a view that the speaker could not literally hold.[35] Significantly, we would argue that the physical and embodied nature of such examples makes them easier for us to identify as hyperbole.[36]

As already stated, the assessment of the above expressions as hyperbolic depends on the co-textual and contextual assumptions that a reader brings to them. As Dan Sperber and Deidre Wilson note: "the same utterance can be properly understood hyperbolically, loosely, or literally, depending on the facts of the matter, with no sharp dividing line between the different interpretations."[37] Robyn Carston and Catherine Wearing[38] offer as an example the concept of BOILING and a hearer's access to encyclopedic knowledge about boiling water that might include that it:

1) "seethes and bubbles, has hidden undercurrents, emits vapour, etc."
2) "[is] too hot to wash one's hands in, too hot to bathe in, etc."
3) "[is] suitable for making tea, dangerous to touch, etc."

According to co-text/context of utterance and accessibility to this encyclopedic information, the assertion "the water is boiling" might be construed either as literal (on hearing a kettle whistle), hyperbolic (stepping into a bathtub), or metaphoric (on describing a violent storm at sea).

Luke 14:26 and Hating Parents, Dependants, Siblings, and Self

As the saying is often viewed as hyperbolic, we must ask what factors bear on an understanding of it in terms of encoded text (i.e., language and the potential meanings it conveys), co-text (e.g., textual considerations within Luke, the synoptic tradition, etc.) and context (e.g., the sociocultural considerations in its utterance or reproduction).

A. Encoded Text

On conventionalization, Claridge describes the stages through which hyperboles can pass as their usage increases.[39] Overuse creates polysemy and new encoded meanings as the implicatures or invited inferences of a once novel and striking

[35] Space forbids a consideration of hyperbole's evaluative function and the relative ease in finding a paraphrase for it. The latter is one important way hyperbole differs from metaphor.

[36] For the combined use of metonymy and hyperbole, see Stephen Robert Llewelyn and William Robinson, "'If Your Hand Causes You to Stumble, Cut It Off': Questions over the Figurative Nature of Mark 9:43–47 and Its Synoptic Parallels," *NovT* 63 (2021) 425–51.

[37] Sperber and Wilson, "A Deflationary Account," 93.

[38] Carston and Wearing, "Hyperbolic Language," 86–87. Recent studies have underlined the continuum that exists between types of meaning from the "literal" to the "metaphorical": Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002) 140–43, and their discussion of the degrees of figurativeness in the use of "father"; René Dirven, "Metonymy and Metaphor," in *Metaphor and Metonymy in Comparison and Contrast* (ed. René Dirven and Ralf Porings; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003) 75–111; and Sperber and Wilson, "A Deflationary Account," 84–105.

[39] Claridge, *Hyperbole in English*, 170–215.

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hyperbole become increasingly generalized and "meanings based in the external described situation turn into meanings based in the internal described situation, in this case by integrating the evaluative component into the meaning."[40] Importantly, both the difference in salience of variant meanings (i.e., by usage, some meanings are more readily accessible and require less mental processing to access than others) and co-text/context contribute to the determination of the appropriate meaning. In terms of "hate" we are therefore interested in whether there are variant meanings (polysemy) and, if so, whether one meaning is more salient than another. As most uses of "hate" indicate "real enmity,"[41] that meaning is likely to be the most salient; however, other, less salient meanings, such as "dislike," "like less," or "prefer less," may also be present in any utterance. It is this play between the salience of meanings that lies at the center of Luke 14:26 where the disambiguation between meanings rests on the general and shared (particular) knowledge of speaker and hearer. But first we must rehearse the evidence for variant meanings.

Within the literary tradition of the evangelist, the terms "love" and "hate" are used in close proximity to express opposing relationships, and they seem to be mutually exclusive concepts. Prov 13:24—"Those who spare the rod hate (שונא – μισεῖ) their children, but those who love them (אהבו – ἀγαπῶν) are diligent to discipline them"; Luke 16:13 (par. Matt 6:24)—"No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate (μισήσει) the one and love (ἀγαπήσει) the other, or be devoted to (ἀνθέξεται) the one and despise (καταφρονήσει) the other"; Rom 9:13 (Mal 1:3?)—As it is written, "I have loved (ἠγάπησα) Jacob, but I have hated (ἐμίσησα) Esau." At first sight, these occurrences might seem to be examples of hyperbole, but one might equally ask whether "hate" is not better seen as an instance of metonymy, a way of accessing one set of concepts (i.e., ACCEPTANCE and REJECTION) through another set of contiguous concepts (LOVE and HATE). For example, at Gen 29:30 Jacob is said to love Rebecca more than Leah (ἠγάπησεν . . . μᾶλλον ἤ), but then in the following verse God understands this to mean that he hates (μισεῖται) her. Are we to construe "to love less" to mean the same as "to hate," or is "to hate" used to access "to reject"? Deuteronomy 21:15–17 also deals with an analogous (polygamous) situation and the preference for one wife over the other. Again, this is framed in terms of loving one and hating the other. More precisely, the above texts appear to be accessing, in their use of "love" and "hate," the concepts ACCEPTANCE and REJECTION. If so, Luke 14:26 is an instance of EMOTION FOR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE (i.e., HATE FOR REJECTION) or, more broadly, CAUSE FOR EFFECT. In other words, in using the term "hate" a speaker uses the emotion that gives rise to the action in order to access the action itself. Further evidence for the possible metonymic association between "hate" and "rejection" can be found in: 1) the use

[40] Ibid., 214. Overuse leads to loss of expressiveness and potentially dead hyperbole where the original meaning is no longer salient.

[41] Balla, "How Radical Is Itinerant Radicalism?," 53–54.

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of μισέω[42] to translate the Hebrew term for "reject" (מאס) at Prov 15:32; Isa 33:15; 54:6; Sir 31:16;[43] and 2) the parallelism between the concepts HATE (or cognate terms) and REJECTION at Isa 5:24 (disdain – נאץ); Isa 53:3 (despised – בזה; rejected/forsaken – חדל); and Isa 66:5 (מאס). That said, it still remains unclear where the evaluative element of hyperbole is to be found in the metonymic use of "hate" rather than "reject." It may reside in the highlighting of the vehemence of the emotion lying behind the act. One clue to the hyperbolic nature of Luke 14:26, we believe, is given by Matthew's use of "love more than." We will return to this issue but first we need to address another related matter.

Though both Hebrew and Greek have terms for "hate" and "love," they are, as has been noted, otherwise "defective in the intermediate terms for liking and disliking."[44] In English we have the semantic scales of <adore, love, like> and <despise, hate, dislike>. The absence of terminology in Hebrew and Greek, however, does not mean that the concepts themselves were also absent; metonymy, as Jeanette Littlemore notes, "often involves using a simple or concrete concept to refer to something that is more complex or more abstract, or even sensitive."[45] As such, like metaphor, it plays a role "in the development and expression of ideas."[46] The question thus arises as to whether the concepts of HATE and LOVE, as primary emotions of human experience, were used to access the more nuanced concepts of DISLIKE and LIKE. If so, the presence of hyperbole in Luke 14:26 might just result from the act of translation itself that is felt by the modern reader but not the ancient hearer. Where there was no alternative way for a speaker to express "dislike," there was no possibility of choice; she would need to use "hate" to access the concept. But again, even when we substitute the term "dislike" for "hate," we still sense a degree of exaggeration, though to a lesser degree than in the case of "hate." Why?

As indicated above, the clue is to be found in Matt 10:37 and the way in which it expresses the concept. Given that the concepts of HATE and LOVE are distinct and indeed antonyms, if there are nascent semantic scales that mirror (in part through metonymy) the ones in English, then the scales also will be distinct. What Matthew, then, appears to have done is to change semantic scales and to introduce the element of comparison. At the same time, his use of "love" may still be metonymic—an instance, as noted above, of EMOTION FOR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE—and in this there may be a degree of hyperbole. However, on the whole it is evident that Matthew's phrasing has reduced the hyperbolic element and it has achieved this by making "love" a relative term that expresses by comparison (ὑπὲρ ἐμέ) the concept of

[42] Other concepts translated by μισέω include "be angry" (זעם: Prov 22:14) and "be hostile to" (צרר: Ps 74:4; LXX 73:4).

[43] The Hebrew text of Sirach is of further interest in that it shows two readings of the line, one with געל (abhor) and the other with מאס (reject).

[44] Derrett, "Hating Father and Mother," 261.

[45] Jeannette Littlemore, *Metonymy: Hidden Shortcuts in Language, Thought and Communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 1.

[46] Ibid., 196.

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PREFERENCE. Since this phrasing may best express the speaker's meaning (see above, "what the speaker could reasonably be taken to believe") and was available not only in Greek but also in Hebrew/Aramaic, the use of "hate" rather than "love more" represents a real choice. And herein lies the hyperbolic element, namely, that PREFERENCE (a concept accessed through the use of "love more") is now expressed in absolute terms as REJECTION (a concept accessed through the use of "hate").

In terms of variant meanings and their possible interference in the translation/transmission of Luke 14:26, one might further consider work done on the concept of LOVE in the Hebrew Bible. Susan Ackerman[47] argues that the ancient Hebrew concept LOVE must be construed differently from that of the modern English. It is asymmetrical and hierarchical, an emotion expressed by a superior over an inferior, be it political (suzerain to vassal, God to Israel) or interpersonal (male partner to female and parent to child). It is for this reason that it can be used "subtly and almost ironically to suggest the narrators' condemnation"[48] in instances of nonconsensual sex, as in the cases of Dinah (Gen 34:2–3) and Tamar (2 Sam 13:1, 4, 15). Ackerman sees this as semantically embedded (encoded) in Hebrew usage.[49] Ellen van Wolde also analyzes both anger and love in the Hebrew Bible, observing that

> the verb אהב functions in a different cultural context and that it is an instantiation of a cultural schema different from our Western idea of love. In the Hebrew Bible "love" is not described as reciprocal, not as love *between* a man and a woman, but as the sentiment, attitude and behaviour of a man *towards* a woman.[50]

One might conclude, mutatis mutandis, that just as אהב cannot simply be translated by "love," שנא cannot properly be rendered by "hate." Would it not also entail generalized conversational implicatures both through its frequent usage with specific textual and contextual associations and through related conceptual frames/scenarios that are peculiar to its cultural situation? In terms of the present analysis of Luke 14:26, one may ask whether a variant, though less salient, meaning in Hebrew has in this instance influenced the evangelist's usage of "hate." In other words, has the evangelist's familiarity with, or reverence toward, his co-text (the LXX) affected his expression so that for him "hate" means "prefer less"? At issue also is Luke's tendency to follow the form and expression of his sayings source.

Of course, this approach focuses on the evangelist and not the hearers of Luke's text. As the latter were Greek speakers and their familiarity with Septuagintal idiom is unknown, misunderstanding of the encoded text was a distinct possibility. We are, as indicated, on surer grounds when it comes to Luke, who shows himself

[47] Susan Ackerman, "The Personal Is Political: Covenantal and Affectionate Love (*'āhēb, 'ahăbā*) in the Hebrew Bible," *VT* 52 (2002) 437–58.

[48] Ibid., 454.

[49] Ibid., 449 and 451.

[50] See Ellen van Wolde, "Sentiments as Culturally Constructed Emotions: Anger and Love in the Hebrew Bible," *BibInt* 16 (2008) 1–24, at 19.

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to be familiar with that idiom. The question thus becomes whether the audience shared this familiarity or, failing that, whether they possessed the facility to access such knowledge. And here we do well to remember that the hearing of the gospel was a communal rather than individual experience, where enlightenment as to an intended meaning might be sought from others. Be that as it may, we now turn to look at co-text to see whether it helps to disambiguate possible meanings.

B. Lukan Co-text

So far, the discussion has principally treated the encoding of meaning and shown that hyperbole can be associated with other figurative devices (e.g., metaphor and metonymy) that affect how one apprehends it. We have not, however, considered as yet co-text and context taken as instances of both particular and shared (general) knowledge. But, as noted above, in the case of the gospel tradition, one immediately faces the problem of multiple performances of the saying: as an *ipsissimum verbum*; as acts of oral or written transmission; and as acts of inscription in the gospels and their sources. Since access to the first and second stages of performance are now largely denied by our ignorance about them, any discussion as to the meaning of the saying in its various iterations must remain fluid and open-ended.[51] We are, however, on somewhat firmer ground when it comes to the co-text of the gospels and their recording of the saying.

In terms of the Lukan co-text, one notes its location within the larger section after Jesus turns to go up to Jerusalem (9:51) and where much of his Q material is to be found. The more immediate location is after Jesus's attendance at a Sabbath meal in the house of a leading Pharisee. The occasion gives rise to: 1) Jesus's questioning the host and his learned friends about the lawfulness of Sabbath healing (14:1–6); 2) a parable about a wedding guest taking a place of honor that is prompted by Jesus's observation of similar behaviour at the Sabbath meal (14:7–11); 3) teaching that the invitees to such meals should comprise the poor and lowly (14:12–14); and 4) Jesus's response through parable to a guest who observed the blessedness of those who partake of the heavenly banquet—the parable tells of the open invitation to all and sundry after the refusal of the previously invited guests to come when called to attend (14:15–24); their excuses are largely based on propertied concerns of land and oxen. The Lukan interest in the lowly and poor is clearly in focus, together with its corollary that the influential and rich by their very attitude exclude themselves from the kingdom. However, one also notes in the parable the alleged excuse of marriage (14:20).[52] Indeed, as marriage and its resulting familial relationships are the

[51] For example, one might consider the effect on meaning that results from reading Luke 14:26 in relation to other possible synoptic analogues as co-texts. If read alongside a literal interpretation of Luke 9:57–62 (par. Matt 8:18–22), Luke 14:26 might be construed literally. Or, if read in conjunction with Mark 7:9–13, Luke 14:26 might well be understood as ironic; it would now be seen to express a proposition, namely, that a child can dishonor and disdain a parent, that Jesus himself did not hold.

[52] Marriage with its dowry system and the family more generally had strong propertied associations. See Neyrey, "Loss of Wealth," 139–58, and Santiago Guijarro, "The Family in First-Century

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central issue at Luke 14:26, there is a possible link between it and the excuse in the parable (v. 20). Be that as it may, the parable clearly tells of persons who, because of their worldly concerns, fail to accept the call to participate in the (heavenly) banquet. They place the management of their own affairs before the invitation. As to the connection between the parable and the teaching on discipleship that follows, Julius Wellhausen is probably right when he terms it antithetical: 14:15–24 speaks of the many that are invited to the kingdom, whereas 14:25–35 acts as a warning to them (note the wide audience, ὄχλοι πολλοί, to whom 14:25 is addressed) about the cost of being a true citizen.[53]

Luke 14:25 marks an abrupt change of situation and audience; as such, it resumes the theme of Jesus's journey to Jerusalem. The journey had commenced at Luke 9:51 with the words "When the days drew near for him to be taken up (ἀνάλημψις), he set his face to go to Jerusalem," which anticipate the events that will occur there. The modern reader in the first instance thinks of Jesus's crucifixion. However, at this turning point in his narrative, Luke emphasizes Jesus's ascension,[54] and this emphasis appears to suit the Lukan passion narrative where Jesus's suffering and anguish is largely passed over and the portrayal is instead one of an individual assured in his deliberations and actions. As Raymond Brown notes: "there is much less of the negative in Luke's presentation of the passion. If for Mark/Matt victimization and failure dominate a passion where sudden reversal by God comes only after Jesus' death, for Luke the healing and forgiving power of God is already active in the passion before Jesus' death."[55]

The logion on family relation follows on from the scene change at Luke 14:25 and now heads a teaching on the cost of discipleship. The theme is repeated in 14:27[56]—"Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple"—with verbal ties that link it closely with 14:26; compare the linguistic structure of a condition in the negative (Εἴ τις . . . οὐ in v. 26 and ὅστις οὐ in v. 27) followed by

Galilee," in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (ed. Halvor Moxnes; London: Routledge, 1997) 42–65, at 62.

[53] Julius Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Lucae* (Berlin: Reimer, 1904) 79–80.

[54] Ἀνάλημψις probably refers to Jesus's ascension to heaven. Cf. Acts 1:2, 11, and 22, as well as Acts 10:16, on the use of the cognate verb.

[55] Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave* (ABRL: New York: Doubleday, 1994) 30. Among a number of differences, one notes the Lukan changes to the Gethsemane scene (Luke 22:40–46, we concur with the doubtful textual status of 22:43–44, par. Mark 14:32–42), Jesus's healing of the slave's ear (22:51 no par.), his concern for the women rather than himself (23:27–32 no par.), his intercession on behalf of the soldiers (23:34 no par.), his words to the criminal crucified with him (23:39–43 no par.), the omission of the cry of dereliction (Mark 15:34) and its replacement with the words "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (23:46). Jesus is portrayed as a just martyr (cf. Luke 23:47 and Mark 15:39) who dies by divine necessity.

[56] Luke 14:27 is a doublet with parallels at 1) Mark 8:34, par. Matt 16:24 and Luke 9:23; and 2) Matt 10:37. Luke 14:26–27 is likely derived from Q, as both Luke and Matthew independently place the two sayings together. See Hoffmann and Heil, *Die Spruchquelle Q,* 96. For a contrary view, see Donald R. Fletcher, "Condemned to Die: The *Logion* on Cross-Bearing; What Does It Mean?," *Int* 18 (1964) 156–64, at 158.

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a consequent also in the negative, as well as verbal equivalences such as "comes to me" (ἔρχεται πρός με, v. 26) and "comes after me" (ἔρχεται ὀπίσω μου, v. 27), and "cannot be my disciple" (vv. 26 and 27). The cost is then further underlined in the two parables concerned with counting the cost before embarking on building a tower or going to war (14:28–33). As Jane D. Schaberg and Sharon H. Ringe note of the pericope: "It details a period of intensive training in discipleship: its demands, powers, and dangers. . . . This section is less about the geography of the journey than about the escalation of warnings and calls for preparedness that have been introduced earlier."[57]

The teaching appears to make extraordinary demands on a disciple's family (14:26), own person (14:27), and property (14:33). The question, however, is whether these, and 14:27 in particular, express an "extreme case"[58] that a disciple might never be called upon to make but which, all the same, they must be prepared to make. First, to address the scalar criterion, we note that the expression "carry one's cross" is figurative, where "cross" is used metonymically to access the more abstract idea "death" and a fate that stands at the extreme end of the sufferings that a disciple might expect to experience. Moreover, the use of "cross" rather than "death" offers a concrete image[59] of an extremely cruel, drawn-out, and humiliating form of death[60] and as such further meets the scalar criterion on types of death. Second, to address the evaluative criterion, the choice of such an image is calculated to evoke an emotive response that serves to impress on the hearer the cost of discipleship. Like most punishments meted out before the nineteenth century, crucifixion was a public display that sought to impress on its audience the dire consequences of the alleged crime, and it achieved this by evoking in them a range of emotional responses. The term "cross" would bear the same associated connotations. On both counts, then, "carry one's cross" should be deemed hyperbolic, yet when one considers whether there is an "evident gap" between how a thing is described and

[57] Jane D. Schaberg and Sharon H. Ringe, "Gospel of Luke," in *Women's Bible Commentary* (ed. Carol Ann Newsom, Sharon H. Ringe, and Jacqueline E. Lapsley; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012) 1268. The argument here tends to a non-hyperbolic interpretation of Luke 14:26, especially given the implication of the cost of discipleship implied in the following verse. A contrary view on Luke 14:27 is taken by Tuckett, "Q and Family Ties," 65–66. The argument concerning v. 27, however, depends on whether the hearer would find the possibility of crucifixion unlikely. Tuckett acknowledges this, noting the critical importance of an early date for the understanding of the logion.

[58] See n. 25.

[59] Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas*, 528 and 536, considers v. 27 a possible *ipsissimum verbum* that had as its point of reference the fate meted out to zealots and that therefore offered a concrete view (cf. the use of βαστάζω) of the martyrdom required of a disciple. Cf. also Martin Hengel, *Crucifixion in the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978) 32, "even where crucifixion is only used as a simile or metaphor, its gruesome reality could very well be before the eyes of the writer."

[60] See Hengel, *Crucifixion,* 22–38 and 86–87. Hengel notes that the methods of crucifixion varied considerably. On the role of Jesus's crucifixion as creating the concept of crucifixion, see Gunnar Samuelsson, *Crucifixion in Antiquity: An Inquiry into the Background and Signficance of the New Testament Terminology of Crucifixion* (WUNT 2/310; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

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what the speaker could reasonably be taken to know or believe about it, a problem arises; for when an expression occurs in a conditional clause, one can no longer speak of what is the case and therefore what the speaker could reasonably think about it. In terms of Luke 14:27, "carrying one's cross" does not express a fact but indicates a condition that a disciple must be prepared to meet; the fate is entirely hypothetical. Even so, in choosing what appears to be the worst-case scenario, one senses that the speaker has used hyperbole. And what we have said of the hypothetical nature of the condition in 14:27 applies equally to the condition found in 14:26. We have already rehearsed the difficulties faced by the modern reader of an ancient text and have highlighted the importance of co-text to its interpretation. We now turn to consider it.

Luke 14:27 is the second occurrence of the logion. Importantly, in the first occurrence, Luke adds the significant modification "daily" to his Markan *Vorlage*—"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily (καθ' ἡμέραν) and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Clearly, "cross" at 9:23 is used figuratively; "taking up one's cross daily" does not necessarily entail death, which is anything but a daily activity. Aside from verbal variation, other differences between 9:23 and 14:27 are also noted: Luke 9:23 is in the form of a command, expressed without the use of negative particles, and inverts the subject matters of the clauses, that is, the condition of 14:27 (οὐ βαστάζει τὸν σταυρὸν ἑαυτοῦ) is expressed as the consequent of 9:23 (ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ) and vice versa. Other important differences in Luke should also be noted, namely, the presence of the expression "let him deny himself" (ἀρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν) in 9:23 and its absence in Q 14:27, and the addition of ἔτι τε καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἑαυτοῦ to the end of 14:26. At Luke 9:23, the addition of "daily," as we have seen, leads the hearer to infer a figurative meaning for the expression "take up his cross." According to relevance theory, the speaker's intended meaning is inferred from the utterance's co-text and/or context; for Luke that co-text is the preceding expression, "let him deny himself." In other words, for Luke the meanings of "let him deny himself" and "to take up his cross daily" are equivalent. If so, the absence of "let him deny himself" in Luke's reading of Q 14:27 is made up for by his addition of ἔτι τε καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἑαυτοῦ to 14:26. The ideas of "hating oneself" and "denying oneself" can be linked metonymically (i.e., EMOTION FOR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE) where "hate oneself" functions as a domain-switching (metaphorical) hyperbole. We have already seen that HATE FOR REJECTION functions as a traditional metonym, and we now merely observe that "to reject," "to say no to," and "to deny" are all meanings for the verb ἀρνέομαι. In other words, the co-text of Luke seeks to make clear to its hearers that "to hate oneself" means "to deny oneself" and "to take up one's cross." Though somewhat convoluted, the means are thereby given to the troubled hearer to understand "hate" to mean "reject/deny/say no to."

Luke 14:27 is then followed by two parables (vv. 28–30 and 31–32) that are linguistically connected to it by γάρ. The parables are unique to Luke and were

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possibly already joined in his special material. François Bovon suggests that within this material they had no explicit application but that Luke supplies one with the redactional addition of verse 33.[61] The verse is logically connected to its preceding parables by οὕτως οὖν and illustrates the third element in the cost of discipleship—"none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions." Verse 33 also appears to reiterate the message of the parable (14:15–24) that introduces verses 25–35. In that parable, the invited guests provide excuses that concern their possessions or marriage for being unable to attend the banquet. In light of that parable, verse 33 itself might also be read as hyperbole, not just in its use of "all" but more particularly in the interpretation of what it means to "give up/renounce" (ἀποτάσσεται).[62] The invited guests are not asked to sell or dispose of their possessions but to place the invitation before the management of their own affairs.

The teaching on the cost of discipleship is penultimately concluded with the warning in Luke 14:34–35a: "Salt is good; but if salt has lost its taste (μωρανθῇ, lit. becomes foolish), how can its saltiness be restored? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure heap; they throw it away."[63] The meaning of the salt logion as it stood in Q presented a problem; for though the adjective μωρός is attested with the meaning "insipid/flat/unsavory" when used to modify an object, no similar usage is attested for the cognate verb μωραίνω. Indeed, insofar as the verb speaks of foolishness, it can only properly be used in reference to animate beings. Now, Luke and Matthew had a choice in their reiteration of the logion; however, both choose to follow Q (ἐὰν δὲ τὸ ἅλας μωρανθῇ) over Mark (ἐὰν δὲ τὸ ἅλας ἄναλον γένηται, 9:50) and to cite the logion in a co-text other than that in which it is found in Mark. Furthermore, as one cannot assume that Luke, or his hearers, were aware of the Semitic explanation for the divergent translations in Q and Mark,[64] the choice to use μωρανθῇ is problematic. However, in providing their co-texts, Matthew and Luke have sought to give meaning to the odd usage. Both address the saying to the disciples (i.e., animate beings); in the case of Matthew, he has achieved this by the addition of an introduction—"You are the salt of the earth"—where the salt is identified as the disciples. He makes clear that salt acts as a metaphor for the disciples and thus that μωρανθῇ applies to the target domain (what one is seeking

[61] Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas*, 529–30.

[62] Elsewhere in the Lukan corpus (Luke 9:61, Acts 18:18, 21), ἀποτάσσομαι is used with reference to persons rather than property and glossed as "farewell"; Luke 9:61 offers a parallel usage in an exchange also expressing a harsh saying concerning the cost of discipleship.

[63] Salt losing its taste is heavily debated. The logion is best seen as a counterfactual conditional. See Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 83–85 and 440–97. A counterfactual, as a forced incompatibility, permits comparisons between divergent mental spaces (e.g., salt and discipleship) that can result in a global insight (the fate of an unwise disciple).

[64] The word תפל could signify both "unsavory" and "fool." Both Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967) 166–67, and Jeremias, *Parables*, 168–69 cite it and its probable Aramaic cognate as an explanation for the different translations in Matthew/Luke (Q) and Mark 9:50.

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to understand) rather than the source domain (what one uses to understand it) of the metaphor. Luke achieves the same end, though by a different means. By placing the logion after two short parables that speak of human folly, the reader is led to understand that the saying's message speaks of foolishness and its consequences for those who display it. They will be treated as salt. The use of μωρανθῇ would still jar on the ears of the hearer, and it is this that would lead them to unpack the metaphor; perhaps also, given the possible meanings of μωρός, they might sense a wordplay and infer its intended meaning.

As if to underline the teaching on discipleship, the pericope ends (14:35b) in a command to pay attention to what has been taught—"Let anyone with ears to hear listen!" Significantly, this same command is found at the end of the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:8) and before the teaching that the Son of Man is about to be handed over into the hands of men (Luke 9:44). Now, given the extensive presence of figurative language throughout the teaching (hyperbole based on the metonymic chain CROSS FOR DEATH and DEATH FOR SELF-DENIAL and SELF-DENIAL FOR HATE ONESELF across vv. 26–27, parables in vv. 28–32, and metaphor in vv. 34–35), the hearer would be disposed to revise their understanding of 14:26 and what it means to hate one's parents, wife, children, and siblings. Given what we know about the social context of the hearers and their high valuation of familial ties, a literal understanding of 14:26 would have been troubling to them, and they would have sought clarification in one way or another. And the hearer appears to have been afforded access to the intended meaning of "hate" by Luke's handling of metonymic relationships across verses 26 and 27 in particular.

C. Synoptic Co-text: Matt 10:37

Matthew places the saying within a section that concerns the granting of miraculous authority to the twelve (10:1–4) and their being sent out to proclaim to Israel the nearness of the kingdom and to perform miraculous deeds (10:5–8). They are advised on how to conduct themselves on this mission (10:9–15), warned of the persecutions they will face (10:16–23), reminded of how Jesus himself was maligned (10:24–25), and encouraged by God's care for them and the world (10:26–33). At this point, Jesus warns the twelve: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's foes will be members of one's own household" (10:34–36). The proximity of the kingdom is an event that results in animosity between familial members and that upsets the social and interpersonal order and their norms. Then follows the Matthean parallel to Luke 14:26–27, which in turn is followed by the saying: "those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it" (Matt 10:39). It would appear then that Matthew has placed the saying in a co-text that would more readily facilitate a literal reading of it, as it has introduced the concept of the family as enemy. It

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might therefore seem all the more surprising that Matthew has used "love more than" rather than "hate" and thereby largely removed the hyperbolic nature of the saying. However, it is precisely the saying's close co-textual association with the theme of familial enmity that prompts a change; it avoids the misunderstanding that enmity should be reciprocated. Thus understood, the text has taken its cue from Matt 5:43–44—"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy (μισήσεις τὸν ἐχθρόν).' But I say to you, 'Love your enemies (ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν) and pray for those who persecute you.'"[65] In other words, Matthew understood the logion to be hyperbolic and sought to avoid a literal interpretation of it within his co-text. The risk of misunderstanding for him outweighed the hyperbole's expressive sense in underlining the cost of discipleship.

Conclusion

In the above discussion we have looked at hyperbole through the lens of relevance theory and analyzed Luke 14:26 in terms of its encoded meaning, co-text, and context, in which discourse (co-text) and the "physical, social, and cultural situation"[66] (context) are distinguished. The ambiguity of encoded language is well illustrated in the cited example. Context is viewed as problematic in that we are historically removed from the text's local or immediate situation of utterance; what we know of it is determined to a very large degree from our reading of the text and what we can determine of the global context from both the documentary and archaeological records. Moreover, given that any expression can be applied in multiple situations—even ones that in the case of irony contradict what we know the speaker holds to be the case—the determination of context is circular and determined to a large degree by the assumptions about context that are brought by the reader to a text.

We have relied heavily in the above discussion on co-text. Here, we have found it useful to distinguish between degrees of proximity to the utterance or saying; the immediate text surrounding an utterance is the most proximate and perhaps most significant co-text for understanding it; the text as a whole, in our case the gospel in which it is cited, occupies an intermediate position in the quest for meaning; and the tradition more generally (e.g., Hebrew Bible and the other synoptic gospels) provides a more distant co-text. Intertextuality forms part of this latter distinction in terms of proximity. Of course, we are not fully aware of the contents of the received tradition in each instance nor are we fully aware of how salient parts of the known tradition were to the hearers of the gospel message, and both

[65] Space does not allow us to discuss another analogue to Luke 14:26, namely, Mark 10:29–30 (par. Luke 18:29–30 and Matt 19:29). We only note the hyperbolic element, if present here, has moved from the verb ("leave" instead of "hate") and placed on the numerical value of the newly acquired family. At the same time the meaning of "family" has been extended to include followers of Jesus possibly under the metaphor of GOD IS FATHER.

[66] Kövecses, *Where Metaphors Come From*, 186.

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considerations make its use risky. Some, for example, have asserted an intertextual relationship between Luke 14:26 and Deut 33:9, which in the blessing of Levi states: "who said of his father and mother, 'I regard them not (לא ראיתי – οὐχ ἑόρακα)'; he ignored (לא הכיר – οὐκ ἐπέγνω) his kin and did not acknowledge (לא ידע – [οὐκ] ἀπέγνω) his children. For they observed your word, and kept your covenant." At first sight there appears to be a shared sentiment; however, on closer inspection the use of verbs associated with knowing in Deut 33:9 makes any comparison with Luke 14:26 and Matt 10:37, which use verbs of affection, unlikely.

Claridge has noted the fondness of hyperbole for "extreme case formulations" and discusses its use of abstract lexemes and such terms as "love" and "hate" more particularly:

> *Love* in everyday spoken usage seems in fact to have weakened/bleached considerably, which may of course have arisen from overuse of originally hyperbolic employment. The result is that it may in some cases be hard to pin down any difference between *love* and *like*, . . . *Hate* is thus a better candidate for hyperbolic usage than *love*, as the contrast to the factually appropriate expression, i.e., *don't like/dislike*, is still reasonably clear in everyday spoken language.[67]

Claridge's observations relate to English and are not immediately relevant to our ancient texts, where terms for "like" and "dislike" are wanting. We have, however, argued that by semantic extension through metonymy, the terms "love" and "hate" may have given access to those concepts. Be that as it may, our discussion of Luke's use of "hate" and Matthew's use of "love (more than)" do bear out the truth of Claridge's observation; "hate" is a better candidate for hyperbolic usage than "love." For Luke to have used "love more than" rather than "hate" in a co-text that expressed the cost of discipleship would have weakened the evaluative aspect of the demand and not adequately conveyed his subjective meaning.

On the balance of probability, Luke, and presumably then his audience, would have understood the logion as hyperbolic. The reasons for this are as follows. First, in terms of context, the high societal valuation of filial duty meant that a literal understanding of the logion would have been troubling to both Luke and his audience and would have led them to seek alternate ways to understand it. Second, both proximate and distant co-texts indicate the presence of figurative language and thus prime the hearer to understand the logion as hyperbolic. Luke places the logion in a run of sayings that display strong figurative elements, whereas Matthew, by the apparent change of "hate" to "love more than" in a co-text where "hate" would naturally be understood as literal, indicates that he considered the logion to be hyperbolic. More particularly, Luke's addition of "daily" to 9:23 (par. 14:27) indicates not only the figurative nature of the expression "to take up one's cross" but also its intended meaning "to deny oneself." The addition "(to hate) oneself" to 14:26 further underlines the intended meaning of "to bear one's cross" in 14:27

[67] Claridge, *Hyperbole in English*, 36.

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and marks both expressions as hyperbole for "to deny oneself." Third, in terms of an encoded text influenced by LXX usage, PREFERENCE (a concept accessed through the use of "love more") appears to be expressed in both an extreme and absolute way as REJECTION (a concept accessed through the use of "hate"). As such, the usage both meets the scalar criterion of hyperbole and expresses evaluatively the speaker's intention to convey the serious nature of discipleship.

That Luke 14:26 is hyperbole is not a new insight; however, the above argument has shown the reasons why it should be thought to be so. For those who hold a contrary interpretation, these reasons must be engaged with.

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