THE DATE OF THE PROSE-TALE OF JOB
LINGUISTICALLY RECONSIDERED

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I

On several occasions we have attempted to demonstrate the significance of a certain type of linguistic analysis, for discussing biblical texts whose date of composition is questionable. The main advantage of this analysis lies in the fact, that, being an autonomous and independent criterion, one may use it without subscribing to any particular theory prevailing in biblical Higher Criticism. Most of the complicated and unresolved problems of Higher Criticism—literary, historical and theological—simply have no bearing upon its procedures.

This analysis seeks to identify linguistic elements, the very existence and the unusual concentration of which may reveal the late origin of chronologically problematic texts. It is the distinct corpus of unquestionably late compositions written in post-exilic times—as manifested by the historical episodes and persons mentioned therein—which provides us with reliable data for determining just exactly what late Biblical Hebrew (= LBH) is. Examples are the book of Esther (which tells about "the days of Ahasuerus" [Esth 1]), Chronicles (which mentions Zerubbabel [1 Ch. III 19]) or Ezra (the hero of which lived "in the reign of Artaxerxes King of Persia" [VII 1]). The late linguistic elements in such compositions are unmistakably discernible. Most significant among these are the Persianisms, which constitute, so to speak, an "Archimedean point" for confirming the whole system. This is so, since the close contact between Hebrew and Persian—through the mediation of Imperial Aramaic—is not recognizable, in the literary sources at our disposal, prior to the Persian conquest in the sixth century B.C.E.

Furthermore, it has been already pointed out that the late features, characteristic of post-exilic writings, are by no means restricted to prose works. Non-classical expressions and idioms, which are best explained as imprints of post-classical Hebrew, may be found in the elevated style of the late prophecy as well. The same holds true of compositions which fall under the category of poetic literature. Thus, both in Psalms included in the canonical Psalter and in non-canonical Psalms discovered at Qumran, distinct elements of “Late Hebrew” are clearly traceable.

Here we shall apply the above mentioned analysis to the language of the Prose Tale of Job (chapters I–II; XLII 7–17), which is said to preserve epi hialems. We believe that there is some exaggeration in the statement saying that “the prose tale in the prologue and epilogue is written in exquisite biblical Hebrew, on a par with the classic narratives in Genesis and Samuel” or that “the author of the Prose Tale — A.H.] uses perfect classical Hebrew with practically no trace of a later style.” It would appear that in spite of his efforts to write pure classical Hebrew and to mark his story with “Patriarchal colouring,” the author of the Prose Tale could not avoid certain phrases which are unmistakably characteristic of post-exilic Hebrew, thus betraying his actual late date.

1 *Ibid., p. 56.*
4 *N.M. SARRA “Epic Substratum i: the Prose of Job,” JBL LXVI, 1957, pp. 13–25. Cf. also L. CASSUTO, Kneislet VII, 1944, p. 142 [in Hebrew]. For the reasons why the method cannot decisively be utilized for the poetic discourses of Job, see our remarks in *JER XVIII, 1968, p. 216. An interesting parallel in another Wisdom composition, where a clear distinction between the language of the narrative framework and the gnostic portion must be drawn, is supplied by the Aramaic *Worls of Abigal:* here as well the kind of language in which the proverbs are formulated is distinctly different from that used in the framework story (Cf. E. KUTSCHER, JBL LXVI, 1957, p. 338; I. GREIFSTEIN, Leshanona XXXII, 1967–8, pp. 384–5 [in Hebrew]).
5 *R. GORDIS, The Book of God and Man, Chicago-London 1965 [1961], pp. 165; 164 (Gordis allows, however, for one exception — 227; *Ibid., p. 345, n. 12.*
6 Mention should be made here of K. KUTSCHER’S study Das sogenannte Volksbuch von Hio. Leipizig 1900, pp. 12–29, where, while discussing the chronological problems of Job’s Prose Narrative, he analyses its peculiar expressions. Unfortunately, however, some good observations were indiscriminately mixed up with dubious material and, as a result, completely neglected by subsequent scholars. It seems that

II

Job I 5, 7, 8, 9, 12; II 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7: וְהִשַּׁמֵּשְׁנָךְ 8

The biblical concept of *Satanic figures,* which exist in the universe, goes back to ancient times. The word הֶשַּׁמֵּשְׁנָךְ is found already in Numbers (XXII 22, 32), 1 Sam. (XXIX 4), 2 Sam. (XIX 3) and 1 Kings (V 18; XI 14, 23, 25). However, הֶשַּׁמֵּשְׁנָךְ — whatever its etymology — still carries in these passages the general meaning of “stumble.” The clear emergence of a definite image of “The Satan,” as was pointed out by many scholars, is late. It is not until Zechariah (III 1, 2) and 1 Chr. (XXI 1) that The Satan as such is first mentioned in the Bible (with or without the definite article).

Furthermore, the appearance of “The Satan” in Chronicles illustrates very clearly the decisive transition which took place in biblical thought — as well as in Biblical Hebrew (BH) — in the post-exilic period. For the early parallel of 1 Ch. XXI 1, in 2 Sam. XXIV 1, is quite unaware of “The Satan”: 10

2 Sam. XXIV 1 — יָתֵקַר אֵלֵי דָּוִד וְתָהֵל לָהֶם אֶלֶּה אֲחָיָהוֹת 1 Ch. XXI 1 — יָתֵקַר אֵלֵי דָּוִד וְתָהֵל לָהֶם אֲחָיָהוֹת

That the phenomenon under discussion is indeed late, is particularly obvious in the light of the post-biblical sources. Both Rabbinic and Apocryphal literature, when referring to various biblical episodes, tend — like Chronicles — to insert: “The Satan” into the context. Yet, in the biblical models The Satan is missing

Kutscher’s failure is due mainly to his lack of disciplined standards in determining what “late” linguistic elements actually are. Nevertheless, our criticism of the Old School method — in this case as well as in others — hardly justifies a complete discarding of the issues they dealt with. In the light of the new data available — and the refined methods developed — we are at present in a much better position to examine thoroughly the whole issue of LBH. Cf. A. HURVITZ, Ben Lashon Leshon (The Transition Period in Biblical Hebrew: a Study in Post-Exilic Hebrew and its Implications for the Dating of Psalms), Jerusalem 1972.

In order not to enter into detailed reconstructions, which inevitably involve non-linguistic considerations, the following discussion is limited to a presentation of the essential semantic development of הֶשַּׁמֵּשְׁנָךְ in its general outline only.

*Cf., for instance, S.R. DEVER — G.R. GAY, The Book of Job (= ICC), 1921, pp. 10–11. Ps. 138 5 is of no help for a chronological study, since its date is unknown.

10 Cf., for instance, driver, op. cit (Sefas, n.1), p. 434.
altogether. On the other hand, even in such a passage as 1 Kings XXII 21, where the heavenly court is gathered and a seder is called upon for stumbling Ahab, that seder is still named שָלָךְ. The term שָלָךְ (šalch) obviously has not been coined yet in BH.

It is also significant to note, in this context, that the occurrence of Angels with proper names in the Bible (בראשית, ינויים וגדת, ב' הנביאים, כתובים) is exclusively limited to the late book of Daniel. Though much is said about Angels in early biblical literature, those heavenly beings do not have yet proper names and definite jobs which are so characteristic of the angelological phraseology in the later times.

In sum: the discussion of heavenly affairs and assemblies of celestial beings is by no means restricted to the late literature. However, the emergence of the figure of The Satan in the Bible — which is linguistically associated with a semantic development הביטות " lxל = "Sumble" > הביטות = "The Satan" — is an exclusive feature of post-exilic literature. It would thus appear, that הביטות of Job’s Prose Tale — whatever its exact position in this development — is a part of LBH.

Job II 13:

In LBH, "to receive, take" is widely used in post-exilic Hebrew, in Tannaitic and Talmudic literature alike. It is also very common in the Aramaic sources: earlier and later, western and eastern. In BH, however, the usage of הביטות is clearly charateristic of the post-exilic writings: out of 9 occurrences outside Job, 8 are found in Esther, Ezra and Chronicles — all of which are known to have been written in the Persian period at the earliest. Once (XIX 20) הביטות also appears in the chronologically disjunctible book of Proverbs — which, therefore, cannot bear upon our discussion — but rever does it occur in any of the biblical compositions which were without doubt written in pre-exilic times.

Furthermore, in not a few cases it is possible to illustrate how other roots, which clearly belong to the stock of classical BH, are functioning in pre-exilic literature — before the penetration of the late הביטות — in the same meaning. This is explicit particularly when we come to confront certain BH idioms with those of MH or Targ. Aram. Cf., for instance,

Deut. XVI 19 —
Onkelos —
B. Ket. 105a —
Gen. XXIII 13 —
M. Sheq. V 4 —
Lev. XIV 15 —
Tos. Zab. I 11 —
Ps. V 10 —
Targ. —
Jewish liturgy —
Within BH see:

Esr. VIII 30 —
Neh. XXXI 54 —
II Ch. XXIX 21 —
Ex. XXIV 6 —

See the rich variety of examples quoted in L. BEN-EDUH "The Thesaurus XI, S.V.

Cf. the etymological reference in KOECHER-BAUMGARTNER’s Lexicon, p. 1117 S.V.
I. It seems, therefore, that the usage of תֵּפָּלָל in BH is indeed

Many instances for the equation תֵּפָּלָל = תָּבֹא are found in JSB and elsewhere. It should be emphasized that only after תֵּפָּלָל found its way into literary/written Hebrew, a clear differentiation in use was developed between תֵּפָּלָל on the one hand, and תָּבֹא on the other. This was not the case with classical/pre-exilic Hebrew; since in that period various connotations of the yet-not-known תֵּפָּלָל are being expressed, as mentioned above, by תָּבֹא. For a parallel development compare תָּבֹא: in MH, which employs both terms, there is a clear distinction between תָּבֹא (meaning "enter") and תֵּפָּלָל (meaning "enter") between תֵּפָּלָל. However, in BH — which is unaware of the post-biblical ימי תֵּפָּלָל — the meaning "enter" may be conveyed by תָּבֹא (Jos. VI 1; cf. EY KUTSCHER, Words and Their History, Jerusalem 1961, p. 76 in Hebrew).

Though W. E. ALBRECHT believes he has discovered the root in a Canaanite Gloss in the Tel-el-Amarna Letters... the exclusively late usage of the verb makes it a late word in Hebrew. — GORSIN, op. cit. (Supra, n. 9), p. 345, n. 32 (Italics are mine — A.H.). Against the uncritical identification — prevailing in certain circles — of Hebrew-Ugaritic = Amarna Closes — Phenician, see A.R. RANSTAD'S most important remarks in Lenssen, XX, 1966-67, p. 245, (in Hebrew). This point was emphasized, as a matter of fact, by ALBRECHT: as well. Cf. his "A Re-interpretation of an Amarna Letter", JC II, 1948, p. 240, footnote: "research or each dialect must take constant stock of pertinent phenomena in all the other dialects, without reeling interpretations "aided for one dialect into another unless these interpretations fit the facts of the case in question". (due weight is given to late... Consequently its employment in Job II 10 should be considered late.

Job XLII 8:

In standard BH the meaning of "to intercede, to pray for [the sake of] somebody" is expressed by means of תֵּפָּלָל תָּבֹא (about fifteen times). Cf. for instance, Gen. XX 7, 11; Deut. XII 36, 2; Num. XVII 5... but never does one find, in the earlier sections of the Bible, the combination תֵּפָּלָל תָּבֹא with the meaning "intercede".28 Ḥוּדָה תֵּפָּלָל = "intercede" occurs in the Bible — outside Job — only in Nehemiah and Chronicles:

Neco I 6 — וַיְהַעֲלֵם-elected... יָשִּׁיסוּת
2 Ch XXXI 18 — Tb יָשִּׁיסוּת מְלֹא

This is, further, used for "intercede" in post-biblical literature. Cf.

M. Ber. V 5
M. Bat. Bo' (Ex. XII 2)

It seems, therefore, that the appearance of תֵּפָּלָל תָּבֹא "intercede" in Job XLII 8 reflects late Hebrew phraseology.25

25 This linguistic point in K.A. KITCHEN, Ancient Orient and Old Testament, London 1966, p. 145. However, as far as the book of Proverbs is concerned, K. is undoubtedly right in insisting that the occurrence there of תֵּפָּלָל cannot be taken as evidence for the lateness of the book. Cf. our remarks in IE 18, 1968, p. 196

28 בד. p. 867 s.v.

29. Sam. I 20: כָּל יְמֵי תֵּפָּלָל means, of course, "to pray to God" and not "to intercede for God". Ps. XXXII 6: כִּלְיָם יְמֵי תֵּפָּלָל again do not belong here, since they involve "something" and not "somebody".

30 Note that the preposition ה is also used in the Aramaic equivalent which renders, in the Targumim, the biblical Tb תֵּפָּלָל. Cf. for instance, Gen. XX 7; Tob. Onk. 10: Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּלָל Tb תֵּפָּল.
We have, therefore, to define הָאִים and הָאִים as "late" and to regard the occurrence of הָאִים in Job XLII 16 as an imprint of LBH.

Job 16: II 1:

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of Job thus is not just a stylistic variant of accepted pre-exilic phraseology (where either בנה לוע or וַיֹּאָס are used). Instead it is an idiom whose late character is attested by 2 Ch. XI 13 and Zech VI.54

Job I 8: יְהַֽעֲרָב — יְהַֽעֲרָב

יְהַֽעֲרָב — "while", followed by a present participle, is exceedingly rare in BH; it is found once in Neh. VII 3 — (יְהַֽעֲרָב יְהַֽעֲרָב) and another time in Job I 8 — (יְהַֽעֲרָב יְהַֽעֲרָב) in classical BH it is יְהַֽעֲרָב — (yeharageh) — which serves in such contexts. However, יְהַֽעֲרָב is a standard Aramaic expression which renders, in the Aramaic translations, the Heb. יְהַֽעֲרָב + pres. part. (or adj.), thus illustrating the correspondence between the Aram. יְהַֽעֲרָב construction on the one hand, and the BH יְהַֽעֲרָב construction on the other. Compare:

1 Kings I 42 — יַעֲרָב מָרָב יְהַֽעֲרָב
Aram. Tag. — יַעֲרָב מָרָב יְהַֽעֲרָב
Syr. — יַעֲרָב מָרָב יְהַֽעֲרָב

Gen. XXV 6 — יַעֲרָב לְרָכָב יַעֲרָב
Onk. — יַעֲרָב לְרָכָב יַעֲרָב
Syr. — יַעֲרָב לְרָכָב יַעֲרָב

2 Sam. XI 22 — יַעֲרָב מְרָב יַעֲרָב
Aram. Tag. — יַעֲרָב מְרָב יַעֲרָב

The Aramaic construction, substituting יַעֲרָב for יְהַֽעֲרָב, is attested in MH as well. Like Targumic Aramaic, which employs יַעֲרָב = "while" with pres. part. (or adj.), MH resorts to... יְהַֽעֲרָב.

In judicial contexts, יְהַֽעֲרָב (Ps. LXXII I) and יְהַֽעֲרָב (1 Kings XXII 19) may denote — besides "stand" — "participate as a member" in the court. This is suggested in particular by the Accadian parallel mentioned, cf. E. Kutscher, "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah", JNES XII, 1953, 50. 274—5. n. 3.

The late Prof. Kutscher called my attention to MH יְהַֽעֲרָב (Cf. L. Schmitt, Thesaurus . . . XII, p. 508), which may elucidate the preference for יְהַֽעֲרָב in LRB.

BDB, s.v. מַעֲרָב, I 20, p. 725.

This normal expression is used twice in Job I 16, 17. For the same construction with the same root — (נֶבֶךְ) — Cf. Gen. XXIX 19; 1 Kings II 22; 2 Kings VI 33. All of these are rendered, in the Aram. Targumim and the Syriac, by יַעֲרָב. יַעֲרָב (הָֽרֶב) יַעֲרָב (יַעֲרָב).

[Note in "Jewish aramaic" as well... יְהַֽעֲרָב is preferred in post-biblical literature; this time replacing another old biblical idiom — יַעֲרָב.

We may, therefore, conclude:

1. The active and widespread employment of parallel forms in Aramaic and MH, using the same יְהַֽעֲרָב construction, make it unnecessary and unjustifiable to "correct" the punctuation of Job I 18 יְהַֽעֲרָב into יַעֲרָב, as suggested repeatedly by many commentators.

2. Note that in "Jewish aramaic" as well... יְהַֽעֲרָב covers both BH יְהַֽעֲרָב and יַעֲרָב... יַעֲרָב means "während... bis... ehe"; cf. G. Dalman, Aramäisch-neuägyptisches Handwörterbuch, Frankfurt a. M., 1959, p. 356. See also:

Is. LXX 14
Num. XI 33

Cf., for instance, H. S. Geertz, "Verwechslung der Partikeln יַעֲרָב mit יַעֲרָב... und...
its existence in MH and Neh., and its total absence from standard BH, where classical ידוע is used instead, further indicates the ateness of the phenomenon under investigation. Consequently the penetration of the non-classical ידוע + pres. part , into the pre-exilic Tale of Job, is to be considered an imprint of post-classical Hebrew.

Job I 1:

The opening formula ... either commencing a new book or a new scene — serves in pre-exilic narratives as a classical introduction for presenting the person (עַשָי) around whom the story is going to be centered. Cf.

Jud. XIII 1 — יָדֹע אִיש אֵלֶם מְעַרְעָה ... וּמְעַרְעָה יָדֹע אִיש מְעַרְעָה
Jud. XVII 1 — יָדֹע אִיש מְעַרְעָה יָדֹע אִיש מְעַרְעָה
r Sam I 1 — יָדֹע אִיש מְעַרְעָה יָדֹע אִיש מְעַרְעָה
r Sam IX 1 — יָדֹע אִיש מְעַרְעָה יָדֹע אִיש מְעַרְעָה

In contradiction to the above, a quite different formula is employed in Esther II 5, where (a) the order of the words is reversed; (b) the Waw consecutive form is discarded and replaced by the regular past form שָרַך:

Est. II 5 — גָּרַך שָרַך יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָדְתְךָ שָרַך יִשְׂרָאֵל

It was correctly noted, that the preference for this new expression in Esther is but one of a whole series of linguistic neologisms, "indicating the forthcoming Mishnaic Hebrew". As is well known, the complicated system of the consecutive tenses has been completely discarded in NH. This revolutionary development affected the whole grammatical and syntactical structure of the Hebrew language, and its traces are to be found in LBH and Qumran Hebrw as well. Thus, the emergence of the new openness in Est II 5, which appears the prevalent opening ... ידוע ... ידוע etc. recorded in the Palestinian Talmud, is a by-product of that comprehensive process. The lack of mastery of LBH writers in the use of the out-dated ידוע is further manifest by a great many of temporal sentences, which in post-exilic literature significantly omit the prefixed ידוע prevalent in classical BH. Thus, for instance,

2 Kings XXII 3 — יְדֹעַ לְעַרְעָה הַנְּכֵלָה ... לְעַרְעָה

against

2 Ch. XXXIV 8 — יָדֹעַ לְעַרְעָה הַנְּכֵלָה ... לְעַרְעָה

The opening formula is found in the Bible, beside Esther, only at the beginning of Job:

Job I 1 — יִשְׂרָאֵל שָרַך שָרַך

Here the lack of ידוע has often been interpreted as being due to the tendency of ידוע to denote continuity of happenings (cf. Josh 1 1; Jud 1 1; r Sam 1 1; 2 Sam 1 1) rather than completely new events. Since Job is not linked in contents to any of the preceding compositions, it was claimed that this is the reason why the author avoided ידוע. The commentators further maintained that the Nathan Story in 2 Sam. XIII 1 proves the sequence of Job ידוע שָרַך to be classical. However, these explanations miss the basic points of the issue: (I) it is not an isolated ידוע/שָרַך and its position in the sentence that needs clarification, but rather a certain fixed and stereotyped formula which consists of three elements: ידוע + שָרַך + ... וְשָרַך ... וְשָרַך.

The discourse of biblical ידוע also underlies the other types of opening, current in the "ospeira and bab. Talmud (ravviv, op. cit. [Supra, n. 17], pp. 710-711). Cf. "B. BAR DRIVER, op. cit. (Supra, n. 1), pp. 58 (n. 37), 506 (n. 12); idem, Notes et... the Books of Samuel (Oxford: Oxford 1913[1960], p. 18. Cf. also KROPPAT, op. cit. (Supra, n. 42), pp. 22-23.

Cl. for instance, DRIVER-GRAY, op. cit. (Supra, n. 9), Part II, p. 1.
finds support in the “Patriarchal coloring” which characterizes the prose framework of Job. This is noticeable, **inter alia**, in idioms and phraseology encountered elsewhere, in biblical literature, only in connection with personalities mentioned in the Pentateuch. 59 Sarna’s conclusion, that an “epic substratum” is preserved in the Prose Tale of Job, also relies on the occurrence of idioms which are ascribed to a language of remote antiquity. 60

However, all this does not imply that the prose narrative, in its extant version, is necessarily old. 62 As was emphasized long ago, “it is a mistake to infer the age of the writer from the circumstances of the hero of the book.” We have to consider the possibility, that it may be only the writer who “intends us to think of Job as living” in the patriarchal age. 63 That is to say, we may actually be dealing with not an archaic but rather with an archaizing language. Another possible explanation of the existence of old linguistic elements could be, of course, that (some of) the material in the Prose Tale is indeed old, its final form being shaped, however, n a late period. 64 Be that as it may, we ought not to be misled by these seeming archaisms. This is true

59 Sarna, op. cit. (Supra, n. 5). The interpretation which links Job with the Prophets of the Pentateuch was already adopted—and further developed—in Rabbinic Literature. In the early Bible Translations and in the Apocryphal Literature, in Nah. Baba Bathra 12:1, we find the view that “Moses wrote his own book and the portion of Balaam [Num. XXII-XXIV] and Job” (though other Rabbis assume that “Job was among those who returned from the [Babylonian] Exile” or “in the time of Ahasuerus [Ibid., 15:2; 3:1]”). In a certain tradition of the peshitta the book of Job immediately follows the Pentateuch, the addition attributed to the Septuagint of Job identifies 11:1 with 11:1 King of Edom, mentioned in Gen. XXXVI 33, and so does the apocryphal composition “The Testament of Job.” This composition even claims that Job was married to Dina, Jacob’s daughter (as do the Aramaic Tarog to Job II 9 and other Rabbinic sources). 65

60 This is also Sarna’s own view (orally).

62 S.B. Eiger—G.R. Gray, op. cit. (Supra, n. 9) p. LXVI. See also Oordis, op. cit. (Supra, n. 6), p. 164.

64 For our discussion it is irrelevant to decide whether the author “ein schriftlich niedergelegtes Volkswunder vorgefunden hat” or “er eine mendisch überlieferete, wohl schon in ziemlich feste Form gebrachte Volkszählung übernommen oder verwertete”; Whether “er die Erzählung urgearbeitet, revidiert oder frei gestaltet hat” or “sie ihm nur als ausseres Anknüpfungpunkt für sein Gedicht gedient oder ihn dazu inspiriert hat”, whether or not “die Rahmentzähling nicht vom Dichter selbst mit seiner eigenen Werk verbanden, sondern erst später zu diesem hinzugefügt worden sein” (these being the alternative explanations usually suggested while analysing the book of Job: v. Romer, “Zur Vorgeschichte und Komposition des Buches Hiob” VT VI, 1946 pp. 250–1; Cf. also E.H. Rosovsky, “The Book of Job and its Meaning,” BJRE XLI, 1958-9 p. 177).
particularly at present, when the current tendency to push back the date of biblical compositions is rather exaggerated, resulting occasionally in uncritical consequences.

The conclusion seems therefore inevitable, that we are unable to infer from old idioms and phrases, embedded in a given text, definite conclusions as to the date of its author. However, the situation is different when we treat late linguistic elements. Such elements do betray their actual background; and if they are not few or sporadic — in which case their occurrence may be regarded as purely incidental — they effectively date a given text. It is, therefore, the existence of possible late elements which has to be considered in the first place, while discussing the age of the prose narrative of the biblical book of Job as we have it.

Above, it has been our purpose to show that the examples discussed are not merely deviations from the accepted standards of classical B.I. Neither are they problematic Aramaisms, whose date is often undetermined. These deviations from standard BH are duplicated in late Hebrew phrasaeology, both in biblical and non-biblical sources. Their wide usage in the late sources — as well as their complete absence, in similar contexts, from early biblical writings — is undeniable. Owing to the existence of a considerable number of such elements in the Prose Tale, there seems to be no justification either for ignoring them altogether or for claiming that their concentration in Job I–II; XLI 7–17 is a mere matter of chance. As far as can be judged from the linguistic data at our disposal, these non-classical idioms ought to be explained as post-classical — namely, as imprints of late He-

brew — thus making the final shaping of the extant Prose Tale incompatible with a date prior to the Exile.

This suggestion is, of course, not new. In fact, the book of Job as a whole “is by most held to be post-exilic.” However, as far as Job’s Prose Tale is concerned, it is not in spite of but rather because of its language; that we consider it to be an exilic/post-exilic product.

APPENDIX

Some other peculiar expressions employed in the Prose Tale, though being definitely non-classical, were not included in the main discussion above since they do not seem to exist in post-exilic Hebrew. Two of these will be mentioned here:

I. A common mourning practice in antiquity was the placing of dust (ותל) upon the head. This practice is described in detail in Josh VII 6, Ez. XXVII 30, Lam. II 10 and Job II 12. However, it is only in Job that the root פְּרָשׁ = “throw” is employed in such a context: “the rite of putting dust on the head is nowhere else expressed by this vb.; the usual phrase is פְּרָשׁ הַר (DRIVER-GRAY, op. cit. [supra, p. 9], Part II, p. 15). In two Sam XIII 19 (TES) it is employed. Cf. also Ugaritic (html) , Text 67VI, 24–16 (Ch. GorEon, UT, p. 181). To this excellent observation it may be added, that in the Aramaic translations the parallel Aramaic (and Syriac) expression is מְסַכֵּר (Aram. מְסַכֵּר = Heb. כּוֹר). Cf. the Syriac to Josh. VII 6, Ez. XXVII 30 and Lam. II 10 mentioned above as well as to Neh. IX 1 (though, curiously enough, not in the case of Job II 12). Compare also the Hebrew text of 2 Sam. XV 29 אָסָר בָּשָׁל נְפָּר, where the verb “put” is only implied, with the syriac and Targ. Jon., where it is explicitly expressed by means of מְסַכֵּר נְפָּר (Cf. also Targ. Jon. to 1 Sam IV 12, 2 Sam I 2 and Syriac to 2 Sam XIII 19). We suggest, therefore, to regard the non-classical מְסַכֵּר פְּרָשׁ as a further ‘calque’ (Cf. supra, n. 24), resulting from the Aramaic expression מְסַכֵּר. Whether or not the writer of Job’s Prose Tale was influenced by Ex. IX 8; 10 — which supplies the only biblical parallel for מְסַכֵּר פְּרָשׁ used i: Job II 12 (DRIVER-GRAY, ibid.) — the basic argument is not affected. In creating the unique expression מְסַכֵּר פְּרָשׁ, the author of the

26 Ch. GorEon, op. cit. (Supra, n. 6), p. 163.
Prose Tale did two things: 1) he sharply deviated from the phraseology prevalent in BH (with which, allegedly, he was thoroughly familiar and which, certainly, he was eager to follow); 2) he strikingly approached the phraseology prevalent in Aramaic.

II. In Job XLII 8 the punishment imposed by God on Job’s friends is strangely referred to in terms of יושב ינשָׁה נלָחָל — an idiom common in classica. BH, but invariably with a strong negative connotation (“a thing disgraceful according to Israel’s standard” — BDB, p. 611. This is, probably, why the Septuagint takes יושב נלָחָל in Job as יושב נלָחָל). The best explanation to reckon with the anomalies meaning implied by Job XLII 8 seems to be supplied by Aram. כִּלֵּךְ כִּלְּךָ — which indeed renders in the Aram. Targumim BH כִּלֵּךְ כִּלְּךָ — means both “disgrace” (＝BH כִּלֵּךְ כִּלְּךָ) and “shame” (＝BH כִּלְּךְ כִּלְּךָ). Thus Job XLII 8 לְיַעַשְׁנָה נלָחָל יָנָּה, being influenced by Aram. כִּלֵּךְ כִּלְּךָ (cf. supra, n. 24), means “to do shame to” (cf. Gen. XXVI 20... לְיַעַשְׁנָה נלָחָל יָנָּה = “to do hurt to”).

If we are right in our interpretation of יושב נלָחָל יָנָּה, then the author of the Prose Tale may be denounced for his loss of “Sprachgefühl” for genuine classical BH — which is rather surprising for a pre-Exilic writer. However, in order to advance the argument that these Aramaicized are in fact post-classical — not just non-classical — elements in BH, it would be desirable to follow one of two procedures:

1) To adduce parallels for the Aramaism under investigation from late Hebrew sources (which we were unable to reveal);

2) To evaluate these Aramaisms only after the lateness of the Prose Tale has been established on other than יושב נלָחָל יָנָּה grounds other than יושב נלָחָל יָנָּה and יושָׁה נלָחָל יָנָּה (for instance, relying on the analysis carried out above, on pages 19-30). Only after it has been agreed that the Prose Tale is written in LBH, may, perhaps, these two Aramaisms be regarded as late. (“The Chronological Significance of Aramaisms in Biblical Hebrew,” IEJ 18, 1968, pp. 234-403).

For more than a hundred years the Excerpts from Theodotus (especially 42-65) and Irenaeus’ Treatise have served as primary sources of Valentinian eschatology. Since Dibelius’ article appeared in 1908, discussion of Valentinian eschatology has followed his premise that these two sources contain essentially the same teaching, and may be derived from a common source. Dibelius makes this claim on the basis of observable parallels of terminological and structure between the two passages.

Yet Dibelius (and those who have accepted his premise) has failed to observe that in his major description of Valentinian eschatology — AH 1.7.1 — Irenaeus not only selectively omits essential points of Valentinian doctrine that are included in Theodotus’ account (and even in other passages of his own treatise) but he also revises crucial terms and concepts so that — in effect — he changes the whole theological conception. Critical examination of AH 1.7.1 in comparison with both the Excerpts and other passages of Irenaeus’ account (including those directly preceding and following 1.7.1) indicate that Irenaeus offers in this passage a high, polemical version of Valentinian eschatology. Specifically, comparative analysis with other sources indicates that in 1.7.1:

1. Irenaeus describes the relation of the elect to the rest of mankind...