

over the triumph behind—the triumph that came out of the tragedy. If men cease not day nor night to praise, it is from the vision of yesterday, the vision of the crown through the cross: “worthy is the Lamb that was slain.” Some such vision awaits our retrospect too. It is through the cross of struggle that the world has reached the present goal, its upward goal. It is through the midst of the forces making for stagnation or for retardation that this wondrous piece of mechanism has cleared its way, steering ever toward the stars. In the light of such a fact, the mode of its origin seems a small thing. Call it creation, call it evolution, call it emanation, call it what you will, the fact remains inviolate and inviolable, that it moves along a path of purpose, and selects a course demanding intelligent choice. With such a retrospect as that, we may well be in the spirit of the Lord’s day.

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THE LINGUISTIC HISTORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AND MAURICE VERNES’ DATING OF THE DOCUMENTS.

It has long been recognised that the linguistic characteristics of literary documents provide a valid criterion when the origin of a particular literature is under discussion. The saying “*ἡ λαλιά σου δῆλόν σε ποιεῖ*” (Matt. 26. 73) applies also to books. And the fact has been grasped and applied by the historians of profane literature. For example, Th. Vogel,¹ in reference to a dialogue ascribed to Tacitus, has proved by linguistic arguments, “*Universum colorem sermonis adeo esse Quintilianeum, ut non modo aequalem ejus sed amicum discipulumve scriptorem fuisse*

¹ Th. Vogel, *De Dialogi qui Taciti nomine fertur sermone Judicium*. Lipsiae, 1881.

statuendum sit." Further, Dittenberger¹ wrote: "Where there is a question as to the genuineness or non-genuineness of any work, there can be no more trustworthy ground of investigation than an accurate and searching observation of linguistic usage. This is recognised on all hands, at least in principle, although in practice this is unfortunately not the method always followed." Dittenberger's principle and result have quite lately been examined and established by Joh. von Arnim.² He has given an exhaustive examination to the "formulae affirmationis" which are employed in Plato's writings: in the first place to the "adverbia quae vim augendi habent" (πάνυ, μάλα, σφόδρα, παντάπασιν, καὶ, πάντως, παντελῶς, ὑπερφυῶς, and κομιδῆ), and subsequently to form other "genera affirmationum." In the course of this examination he has discovered such important distinctions between the different works of Plato that he is able, by the aid of these distinctions, to arrange them in a chronological series.

It must be observed, however, that in the application of literary arguments derived from linguistic features it is, above all, necessary to distinguish carefully between the two following groups of linguistic phenomena. We must separate such linguistic differences as can be described as *coeval* because they appear in authors of the same linguistic stage, from those which are to be called *successive* because they present themselves in consecutive periods of the language in question.

For example, the differences which Dittenberger and Von Arnim have observed in Plato's writings are *coeval*, and differences of the same kind can be established in the Old Testament. Observe the linguistic peculiarities of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, which I pointed out in my previous

¹ Dittenberger (Professor in Halle), "Sprachliche Kriterien für die Chronologie der Platonischen Dialoge" (in *Hermes*, 1881, pp. 321-345).

² V. Arnim, *De Platonis Dialogis quaestiones chronologicae*, 1896.

article (EXPOSITOR, 1896, p. 90 f.). But still more noteworthy in this respect are the two pairs of actual contemporaries—Jeremiah and Zephaniah, Haggai and Zechariah. The latter pair, for instance, agree together in the frequent use of the Infinitive Absolute in place of the Finite Verb; cf. Haggai 1. 6 (four times), 9; Zechariah 3. 4; 6. 10; 7. 3, 5. But the one, in order to move his hearers to earnest zeal, employs the simple expression, “Be strong” (Hag. 2. 4, three times); the other says, “Let your hands be strong” (Zech. 8. 9, 13); cf. Haggai 1. 5, 7; 2. 15, 18, with Zechariah 1. 4.

Still more important, however, are the *successive* differences in diction. The fact that these differences appear in the style of the Old Testament did not wholly escape the scholars of earlier centuries. Buxtorf¹ himself, for instance, remarked on וַיִּשְׁׁ (Eccles. 5. 14; 9. 12; 10. 3; 12. 7), “Apud Rabbinos frequentissimus est; at in Bibliis non nisi in Ecclesiaste reperitur.” This was an indication that the form of Hebrew which appears in Koheleth marks a stage of transition from the old Hebrew to the new. Similarly, in our own time, Kauler² has concluded, “At the very first glance into the Hebrew text of the Book of Ecclesiastes the conviction forces itself upon every competent student that the Hebrew here bears the marks of a much later linguistic period than the Solomonic, and even than the classical period of Jewish literature as a whole.”

But the *successive* differences which are found *within* the Old Testament literature were accurately recognised for the first time in our own century. In particular Gesenius³

¹ Buxtorf, *Thesaurus Grammaticus*, 1651, p. 533.

² Franz Kauler (Professor of Catholic Theology in Bonn), *Einführung in die Heilige Schrift*, 1892, ii. 393.

³ Gesenius, *Geschichte der Hebräischen Sprache und Schrift*, 1815, p. 20 ff.: “With the exile there begins a new epoch of speech and literature, which is distinguished especially by approximation to the East-Aramaic dialect, to which the Jews had become accustomed in the land of the Exile.

already distinguished "two eras" in the diction of the Old Testament. Since then, however, these *successive* differences in Old Testament Hebrew have been established with far greater care. An important achievement was the observation of the respective frequency with which the two expressions for "I" (אני and אנכי) are used in the different writings of the Old Testament. Especially important also was the investigation of the different combinations of numerals and their manifold collocations with their substantives. I quote a single instance. שלש stands before its substantive in Genesis 11. 13, 15; Exodus 23. 14, 17; 27. 1; 34. 23 f.; 38. 1; Leviticus 19. 23; Numbers 22. 28, 32 f.; 24. 10; Deuteronomy 4. 41; 14. 28; 16. 16; 19. 2, 7, 9; Judges 9. 22; 16. 15; 1 Samuel 20. 31; 2 Samuel 13. 38; 21. 1; 1 Kings 2. 39; 7. 4 f.; 9. 25; 10. 22; 15. 2; 17. 21; 22. 1; 2 Kings 13. 18 f., 25; 17. 5; 18. 10; 24. 1; 25. 17; Isaiah 16. 14; 20. 3; Jeremiah 36. 23; Ezekiel 40. 48; 41. 22; Amos 4. 8; Job 1. 2; 42. 13; 1 Chronicles 21. 12; 2 Chronicles 8. 13; 9. 21; 12. 2; 31. 16; but שלש follows its substantive, Joshua 21. 22; Daniel 1. 5; 1 Chronicles 25. 5; 2 Chronicles vi. 13; 11. 17 (twice). Exactly similar is the successive change of usage in regard to the other numbers, as I shall show in my *Syntax* by the collection of all the relative passages.

There is therefore an historical progress of Old Testament diction to be recognised, and the natural character of this process is moreover guaranteed by the fact that it is found to be in most remarkable parallelism with the course of development of other languages, both old and new. This also has been proved in my *Lehrgebäude* by a comprehensive comparison of Semitic and other languages.

Of this knowledge of the historical development of Old Testament diction I propose in this article to make only a single application. For I will only raise and answer the question, What have the successive differences in Old

Testament diction to say to the hypotheses which have been set up, especially by Maurice Vernes, in regard to the age of the Old Testament writings?

Maurice Vernes has assumed the following data for the several parts of the Old Testament:¹ "The Proto-Hexateuch was composed between 400 (or 450) and 300; the historical books between 350 and 250; the prophetic books between 300 and 200; the traditional Hexateuch was completed about 200." Moreover, concerning the work which is comprised in Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, he says,² "The book might be dated about 150."

In order to arrive at a judgment upon these assertions, I will glance first at the linguistic peculiarity of the prophetic writings. We must recall, in the first place, the order which is taken up by the prophetic books in regard to the use of יָנִן and יָנִי , which was set forth in my former article (p. 97). But I will mention a further example. I refer to the successive change which appears in the Old Testament writings in regard to the position of numerals and their substantives (see above). In the collection of all cases I have observed the following. In the speeches of Amos, in which numerals occur rather frequently, the numeral *never* stands after its substantive; cf. Amos 1. 3; 2. 6 (ten times); 3. 12; 4. 4, 7*b*; 5. 25; 6. 9. But as in the Books of Kings this position of the numeral after the substantive occurs frequently (1 Kings 17. 27, 41, 43; 8. 63, etc.); so it occurs frequently also in Ezekiel (*e.g.*, 40. 22, 26, 31; 43. 15; 48. 31 ff.); seven times in Daniel, and about twenty-six times in Chronicles.

¹ Maurice Vernes (of Paris), *Essais Bibliques*, 1891, p. ix.

² M. Vernes, *Précis d'histoire juive* (1889), p. 802. His positions are important, inasmuch as many scholars in different countries are inclined to fix the date of great parts of the Old Testament at a similarly late point. If, therefore, it is proved that the assertions of Vernes lack historical foundation, the extreme critical positions of other scholars will be condemned at the same time.

Take now the linguistic colouring of the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, where I direct attention particularly to the phonetic differences which come to light upon a comparison of these three parts of the Old Testament. For it is just the phonetic peculiarities which are the most involuntary, and most independent of reflection on the part of the author. Now we find *יִשַׁי* (*Jisaj*, the name of David's father) in 1 Samuel 16., etc., and also in 1 Chronicles 2. 12, etc., but the pronunciation *'Išaj*, *יִשַׁיִן*, only in the Chronicles (I. 2. 13). The latter is the secondary form of the word; cf. e.g. *יִבְלֵ* (Jer. 17. 8) with *יִבְלֵיִן* (Dan. 8. 2f., 6); just as alongside the old Hebrew *יָקָר* we have the new Hebrew *יָקָרִין*, and as the old Semitic *w* and *j* are softened in Assyrian to spiritus lenis, e.g. *יִם*, Assyrian *îmu*.¹ Further, for the older *'êkh* (still found in 1 Kings 12. 6; 2 Chron. 10. 6; 2 Kings 17. 28) the pronunciation *hêkh* arose (Dan. 10. 17; 1 Chron. 13. 12), which appears also in Palestinian Aramaic.² Further, *Damméseq* is the tradition form elsewhere in the Old Testament, and also in 1 Kings 11. 24, etc., but *Darméseq* is found in 1 Chronicles 18. 5f.;³ 2 Chronicles 16. 2, 24. 23, 28. 5, 23. In later Hebrew the very same pronunciation of Damascus established itself, as it meets us in the Syrian *Darmesûq* and in the Talmudic *Durmesqîth* (a woman of Damascus). The same liquid sound of *r* shows itself in these name-forms, which appears, for instance, in *m^kkurbâl* ("girded"), 1 Chronicles 15. 17, as compensation for the doubling of the middle radical.⁴ A further step is seen in the softening of Tigrat (2 Kings 15. 29; 16. 7, 10), which corresponds with Assyrian *Tukulti*, to

¹ Friedrich Delitzsch, *Assyrische Grammatik*, p. 41; *Assyrisches Wörterbuch*, 1896, col. 306b.

² *יִיָּךְ* in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (Dalmen, *Gram. des Jüd.-Aram.*, 1894, pp. 38, 69), and *יָרָא* or *יָרָא* (!) in Christian Palestinian Aramaic (Schwally, *Idioticon des Christlich-Paläst.*, 1893, s.v.).

³ Both these passages are wanting in Mendelheim's Concordance (1896), col. 1394d, 1395a.

⁴ Compare many other illustrations in my *Lehrgebäude*, ii. 472f.

Till^egat (1 Chron. 5. 6, 26; 2 Chron. 28. 20). In the same passages, in place of Pil' eser (2 Kings 15. 29, etc.), in which are reflected the Assyrian words *Apil-Ešarra*, we find the pronunciation *Piln' eser* or *Pilneser*, that is to say, the softening consonant *n*.

We observe, also, a great number of alterations, if we take the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, which run parallel in their subject matter, and compare their Hebrew in regard to other grammatical points, and also in regard to their lexical material. Here observe the excellent collection of the lexical peculiarities of the Chronicles, which has been printed by Professor Driver in his *Old Testament Literature*, chap. xii. I will refer only to a single case, which should invite special interest, but has not been noticed by Dr. Driver. There are in the Old Testament two synonyms for "going into exile" and "exiles." Of these two, *galûth* is used only in Amos 1. 6, 9; Obadiah 20*b*; Isaiah 20. 4; Jeremiah 24. 5; 28. 4; 29. 22; 40. 1; 52. 31; Ezekiel 1. 2; 33. 21; 40. 1; Isaiah 45. 13, and 2 Kings 25. 27. This word is found, however, in no post-exilic book, but there it is always the other synonym that appears, viz., *gôlâ*, Zechariah 6. 10; Esther 2. 6; Ezra 1. 11, etc. (eleven times); Nehemiah 7. 6, and 1 Chronicles 5. 22.

In the field of syntax I may give the following text. I have undertaken an examination of the use of Lamed as an exponent of the accusative in accordance with the same principles in all the writings of the Old Testament. I have found the Lamed in the Books of Samuel and Kings, which are specially to be noted as parallel writings to the Chronicles in the following passages: in לְכַלְכֶּם, 1 Samuel 22. 7*bβ*, where the Targum, and especially the Peshitto, might very well have written *l*, seeing that in Aramaic also the accusative is introduced by ל, ך. When, however, there is really an imitation of the לְכַלְכֶּם of verse 7*a*, the LXX. has

rightly rendered *καὶ πάντας*; further, in 2 Samuel 3. 30; 6. 16; 8. 5; 2 Kings 8. 6; 19. 21: but in Chronicles, 1 Chronicles 5. 26aβ; 15. 29; 16. 4, 37a (18. 5; 22. 17, 19a in connection with the Infinitive); 25. 1a (26. 27b with Infinitive); 29. 20b, 22b; 2 Chronicles 2. 12 (5. 11b with Infinitive); 6. 42 (10. 6); 15. 13; 17. 3b, 4a, 7; 19. 2; 20. 3; 23. 1; 24. 12b; 25. 10a (26. 10a), 14b; 28. 15aβ (28. 16; 31. 21; 32. 17; 34. 3).

Now it can be readily understood that a great development of the Hebrew tongue took place between 560, the probable date of the composition of the Books of Kings, and 300, when the Books of Chronicles most probably were formed.¹ For in this period, *circa* 560–*circa* 300, there fell that terrible catastrophe through which the tree of which Isaiah had spoken (6. 13) had been uprooted from its ancient place, and transplanted into a foreign kingdom.

But it would be in the highest degree improbable that the Hebrew language should have started from the phase in which we find it in the speeches of Amos, and traversed all the numerous stages of development which we can observe down to the Books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel within the period from 300 to 200.

Nay, this improbability rises to a *non plus ultra*, if the following fact is borne in mind. Alongside of the series which is formed by the historical books of the Old Testament there runs parallel, according to linguistic criteria, the series which is formed by the writings of the prophets from Amos to Malachi. The proof lies in what I have already stated in my former paper (p. 97) concerning the use of אֲנִי and אֲנִי, and in what I have remarked above concerning the relation of numerals and their substantives.

According to the theory of Vernes, the prophetic books

¹ Compare my *Einleitung in das A.T.*, pp. 268f., 273f.

which bear the names of Amos, etc., down to Malachi must have been written in the consecutive decennia of the century, between 300 and 200.

One of the Jewish "doctors,"¹ about the year 300, must have undertaken to compose speeches of a very early prophet, and have dubbed them with the name of Amos. Then about 290 another "doctor" must have undertaken the first prediction upon another prophet of later date (Hosea). Once more, about 280, and again about 270, the prophets Isaiah and Micah must have been called upon to speak. Soon after that the hour struck for the birth of the writings of Nahum. Further, about the year 240, a "doctor" happened upon the idea of letting Jeremiah speak in the diction of 240. About 230 the writings of Ezekiel would be produced, and their linguistic colouring would be restored corresponding to the plan of development which had been reached by Hebrew in *that* decennium. And so on. It never struck one of these famous Jewish "doctors" as early as the year 290 to introduce Haggai into the literature. Neither could they have constructed the speeches of Hosea in the diction of 230. Verily there must have been system indeed in this fictitious composition.

There would be an improbability just as great in the theory that between *circa* 250, when, according to Vernes, the Books of Kings were written, and *circa* 150, when Vernes finds the date of Chronicles, the Jewish people passed through all the manifold changes of diction which come to light upon a comparison of Kings and Chronicles. Specially great suspicion must be raised by the circumstance that these manifold changes became so completely prevalent within the assigned period, that they established

¹ Vernes, *Essais Bibliques*, p. viii. : "Les deux premières divisions du canon hébraïque sont l'œuvre des *docteurs* qui écrivaient environ de 400 à 200 avant notre ère."

themselves even in the reproduction of written sources. (Compare the parallel passages.)

There appears, however, here also a linguistic phenomenon which serves to brand as an absolute impossibility the improbability just referred to.

The form *Nebû-kadr-eššar*, corresponding with the Assyrian *Nabû-kudurri-ušur*, is found in the Old Testament only in Jeremiah 21. 2, 7, etc., down to 52. 30 (twenty-nine times), and in Ezekiel 26. 7; 29. 18f.; 30. 10. But the pronunciation *Nebû-kadr-eššar*, which arose through a softening dissimilation of the two *r*'s,¹ is read in Jeremiah 27. 6, 8, 20; 28. 3, 11, 14; 29. 1, 3; that is to say, only in the section cc. 27-29, which accordingly acquires a separate position in the Book of Jeremiah; and further in 2 Kings 24. 1; 25. 22; Ezra 1, 7ff.; Nehemiah 7. 6; 1 Chronicles 5. 41; 2 Chronicles 36. 6-13; Esther 2. 6; and Daniel 1. 1ff. That is to say, that form of the name which harmonizes with the Assyrian *original* is found in the contemporaries of the king. That thereafter a softened pronunciation arose, is easily understood. But it would not be so intelligible if in prophetic and historical books, *all* of which had been written long after the time of *Nabû-kudurri-ušur*, some employed the original, and some the secondary, form of the name.

The successive differences in Old Testament Hebrew approve themselves therefore as an objective argument for the essential rightness of the traditional dates of the prophetic and historical books. It suffices in itself to allow the conclusion that the actual history of the Old Testament language protests against the hypothesis concerning the Pentateuch which have been set up by Maurice Vernes. But I propose to return to this question in another article.

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