TEXT AND SCRIPT OF THE LXX VORLAGE OF JOB 40:17b

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In the context of the well-known description of Behemoth in the Book of Job, the MT has the line נדיר פותר (40:17b), commonly translated “the sinews of his thighs are knit together” (RSV). In the LXX, this line is rendered τα δε νευρα αυτοι συμπεπλεκται, “and his sinews are knit together,” which seems to have no equivalent for נדיר פותר. As Dhorme puts it in his commentary: “It is apparent that נדיר פותר is omitted in this translation,” and other commentators have made the same point. On the face of it, such an assumption is certainly not unreasonable, since here is an obscure hapax legomenon, and the translators of the LXX did on occasion, when faced with a Hebrew word which they did not understand, simply leave it out. Nor do the other points of difference between the LXX and the MT (the addition of δε and αυτοι) necessarily presuppose a different Vorlage, since these can readily be classified as “non-variants,” stylistic discrepancies in the translation which have no counterpart in the original. We must not be too quick

1Quoted according to J. Ziegler, ed., Job (Septuaginta, Vetus Testamentum Graecum, Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum, XI, 4; Göttingen 1982).


4As I hope to show elsewhere, רכש is probably an Aramaic loanword which means neither “testicle” (so the early modern translations, based on the ancient versions), nor “thigh” (so contemporary translations, based on an Arabic cognate), but rather “penis.”


6See E. Tov, The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research (Jerusalem 1981) 217-228. An earlier, konjekturfreudige age of biblical scholarship thought it necessary to emend the MT, changing the text here either to נדיר פותר (so Friedrich Delitzsch, Das Buch Hiob neu
to assume that non-correspondence between LXX and MT implies a different Hebrew text.

On the other hand, we must not be too quick either to assume that the LXX translator of Job took a cavalier attitude to the Hebrew text which lay before him. His version is not nearly as tendentious and high-handed as it has often been made out to be. Rather than assume that he simply omitted a word in his Vorlage, it is methodologically preferable, wherever possible, to explain a difference in the LXX by other means, such as the confusion of graphically similar letters. I shall argue in this article that such an explanation is in fact available in the present case.

My proposal is that the Hebrew text the LXX translator read and translated in Job 40:17b was קניון והר זוגי וрегион, “his sinews are knit together.” In what follows I shall argue that this reading is both linguistically and paleographically plausible, and that the script which it presupposes can be identified with some precision. The bulk of our discussion will deal with the text that was read in the Vorlage; a concluding section will inquire whether this is the same as the text that was written in the Vorlage.

Philological considerations

From a linguistic point of view, we can say that the proposed original reading קניון והר זוגי וрегион is not only idiomatic Hebrew but also accounts well for the LXX rendering תְּדַעֲרָא אָנוֹזְוָא συμπέπλεκται. In Biblical Hebrew the adverb והר and its synonym דְּרָא are frequently found, as here, before the word they modify, and this is particularly true of the poetry of Job. As for the equivalence with the Greek, the suffix of קניון corresponds nicely with אָנוֹזְוָא (which is therefore not to be treated here as a “non-variant”), and the force of והר is idiometrically captured by the preverb of the Greek συμπέπλεκται. It is especially this last point which needs some elaboration.


5This point is argued forcefully by H. M. Orlinsky in his “Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job,” HUCA 32 (1961) 250 et passim. See also Homer Heaton, Jr., A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job (Washington 1982) 3-4.

6HALAT s. v.

7In Job, והר is placed first in one of three occurrences (24:17); דְּרָא is placed first in eight of thirteen occurrences (3:18; 10:8; 16:10; 17:16; 19:12; 21:26; 24:4; 31:38).
Emanuel Tov, in an instructive article entitled “Compound Words in the LXX Representing Two or More Hebrew Words,”\(^\text{10}\) has analyzed the general phenomenon under which our proposal falls. It is a phenomenon which we can expect to find in the LXX of Job, since “CW’s [compound words] which represent more than one Hebrew word are most frequent in the freely rendered books of Job, Proverbs and Sirach.”\(^\text{11}\) Of the eleven types which Tov distinguishes, the most relevant for our present discussion is the ninth: “verb + negation = verb,” exemplified by Jos 5:6, where אֶלָּא is rendered by the compound verb ἀσεβέο. Strictly speaking, this ninth type ought to be treated as a special case of the broader category “verb + adverb = verb,” since this would also include cases like the Theodotionic version of Dan 5:6, where the Aramaic דבדבает is rendered by the compound verb συνεκροτοῦντο, “(his knees) knocked together.” These examples illustrate that the preverb of a Greek compound verb in the LXX may well represent an independent adverbial expression in the original.\(^\text{12}\)

It can be said in general, from the viewpoint of idiomatic Greek, that it often makes good sense to translate a Hebrew verb construed with יהוה (or דב) by the appropriate Greek compound verb with the preverb συν-. The meaning of this preverb is often best expressed by the separate adverb “together” in English,\(^\text{13}\) and corresponds nicely to יהוה/יהוה in Hebrew. The point can be illustrated by Hebrew translations of the New Testament. In Eph 2:21, for example, the Greek συναρμολογημένη (“joined together”) is rendered יִהְיֶה the הָרְבָּה in the translation into ancient Hebrew prepared by Franz Delitzsch,\(^\text{14}\) and מַהְרָב יִהְיֶה in the Modern Hebrew version published by the United Bible Societies.\(^\text{15}\) Similarly, Greek συμβιβασθέντες (“knit together”) in Col 2:2 is given the translation ונכשָר יִהְיֶה by Delitzsch, and ונכשָר יִהְיֶה in the UBS version. This second example is particularly instructive.

\(^\text{10}\) *Biblica* 58 (1977) 189-212.

\(^\text{11}\) Tov, “Compound Words,” 197.


\(^\text{15}\) ספרי הבניאי והיווה. תרגום תדיש (Jerusalem 1983).
in the present context, since it has striking similarities with our verse in Job. Whereas in Col 2:2 the RSV rendering “are knit together” corresponds to a σωμ-compound in the Greek and a verb plus רכינ/רדין in the Hebrew, the same English translation in Job 40:17 (RSV: “are knit together”) again corresponds to a σωμ-compound in the Greek and (on our proposal) a verb plus רכינ in the Hebrew.

If, therefore, the Greek preverb can indeed serve as an idiomatic equivalent of the Hebrew adverb, we must find some explanation for the remarkable fact that the LXX nowhere else, apart from the single case we are proposing, in fact reflects this equivalence. A brief excursus on the standard ways of translating רכינ/רדין in the LXX can serve to clarify why a σωμ-compound is avoided elsewhere, and why it was not avoided in Job 40:17.

The LXX renderings of רכינ/רדין show two quite different patterns, one for Job and one for the remaining books. Of the 83 cases where the LXX outside of Job contains an equivalent of רכינ, all are separate renderings of the word, usually ἐν (38 times) or ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ and its variations (also 38 times). This means that for רכינ 93% of its renderings outside of Job are accounted for by these two options. The comparable statistic for רכינ is 86%. In the book of Job, however, the pattern is quite different. The MT corresponding to the shortened form of Job translated in the LXX contains two instances of רכינ, and eight of רכינ, but these are all rendered by ὁμοθυμαδον. Taken together, the two fixed patterns in translating רכינ constitute 91% of all cases in the LXX, and go a long way toward explaining the absence of σωμ-compounds to translate these adverbs.

16Outside of Job, רכינ occurs 92 times in the MT, but finds no LXX equivalent in nine places (Exod 36:29; Isa 10:8; 22:3; 40:5; 41:1; 41:19; 43:17; 45:16; 65:7).
17The variations are ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ (three times), and κατὰ τῷ αὐτῷ (five times).
18Outside of Job, רכינ occurs 32 times in the MT, four of which are not translated in the LXX (2 Sam 14:16; Isa 22:3; 43:26; Hos 11:7). Of the remaining 28 instances, 9 are rendered by ἐνα, and 15 by ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ and its variations.
19Job 2:11 and 9:32.
20Job 3:18; 6:2; 16:10; 19:12; 21:26; 31:38; 40:13. The רכינ of the MT in Job 10:8 and 38:7 is not reflected in the LXX.
21The remarkable absence of ὁμοθυμάδον as translation of רכינ in the LXX must be seen in the same light.
The first pattern is a clear case of what has been called “stereotyping” in LXX studies. This is the use of one or two fixed Greek equivalents throughout the LXX (often based on precedents set in the Pentateuch) to translate a given Hebrew word in almost all its contexts, often resulting in a wooden or misleading Greek rendering. In the case of אַֽעְָמָּא and אֶֽפָּֽיָּאָה as fixed equivalents of יְהֹוָה/יִהְוֶה, the stereotyping principle is carried through quite ruthlessly, with virtually no regard for the requirements of accurate, literary and idiomatic Greek. In most contexts, an accurate Greek would have ruled out אַֽעְָמָּא, literary Greek would have avoided אֶֽפָּֽיָּאָה and idiomatic Greek would have used the preverb συν- to reflect יְהֹוָה/יִהְוֶה.

As an illustration of this last point, we cite three places where the stereotyped rendering of the LXX stands in stark contrast to the idiomatic use of a συν-compound in the standard Modern Greek (Katharevousa) Bible version of Bambas.

Jer 41:1 MT: יֵאָכֵּלָא נַחֲלִים יְהוָה
LXX: καὶ ἐφοραγόν ἐκεῖ ἄρτον ὄμα
Bambas: καὶ συνεφοραγόν ἐκεῖ ἄρτον
RSV: they ate bread together there

Ps 55:15 MT: אֵשׁ יְהוָה נְתוֹנִי מָצָא (54:14)
LXX: ὦς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό μοι ἐγγύκακας ἔδέσμητα (54:15)
Bambas: οίτινες συνομιλοῦμεν μετὰ γλυκύτητος (55:14)
RSV: we used to hold sweet concourse together

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22 Tov, Text-Critical Use, 54-57.
23 Tov, Text-Critical Use, 54, 56, 133.
24 Greek ὄμα regularly means “together” in a temporal sense: “at the same time” (LSJ s.v., A,1), whereas יְהֹוָה/יִהְוֶה (like Greek ὄμοι) generally has a local sense: “in the same place.” It is significant that Aquila and Symmachus often correct the ὄμα of the LXX to ὄμοι (Aquila for example in Isa 11:7; 60:13; Symmachus in Isa 52:9; 60:13; Jer 6:11).
25 The phrase ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό meaning “together” does not occur in Greek literary texts, though it is found six times in the New Testament (probably under the influence of the LXX). See BAGD s.v. αὐτός, 4.b. As in the case of ὄμα (see previous note) Aquila and Symmachus frequently replace the colloquial phrase with its literary equivalent ὄμοι (Aquila for example in Deut 22:10; Ps 48:5 [LXX 47:5]; Ps 55:15 [LXX 54:15]; Symmachus in Ps 37:38 [LXX 36:38]; Ps 48:5 [LXX 47:5]; Ps 122:3 [LXX 121:3]).
26 This is the version published by the British and Foreign Bible Society: Τὰ Ἱερὰ Γράμματα Μεταφρασθέντα Ἐκ Τῶν Θείων Ἀρχετόπων (Athens 1885). It was completed in 1840 by N. Bambas and C. Nikolaides, and revised several times since. See TRE 6.398.
Isa 43:9 MT: נַהֲגָה שָׁם וְיִהְוָה<br>
LXX: πάντα τὰ ἔθνη συνήχθησαν ἡμᾶς<br>
Bambas: ἀς συναθροισθῶσι πάντα τὰ ἔθνη<br>
RSV: let all the nations gather together

It is clear that in each case the stereotypical pattern which was followed by the non-Joban translators of the LXX ruled out the more natural and idiomatic Greek wording using a συν-compound.

The pattern in LXX Job represents a conspicuous break with the stereotypical tradition of rendering רָעַת/דָּתָת elsewhere in the LXX, perhaps occasioned by the deficiencies of ἡμᾶς and ἐστὶ τῷ αὐτῷ which we have noted. Yet it is doubtful whether this second pattern is an improvement, because it only replaces one kind of stereotyping with another, and also because the fixed equivalent that is chosen in this case also violates the requirements of standard literary Greek. In fact, it is so unusual that the pattern here actually provides an explanation why a συν-compound was probably not avoided in Job 40:17.

ὁμοθυμαδὸν is a literary word which properly means, “with one accord,”27 literally “like-mindedly.” In Hellenistic Greek it seems to have acquired the more general sense “together,” although its original sense continues to be the primary one.28 Significantly, the evidence for the meaning “together” consists almost exclusively of its use in LXX Job.29 It is difficult to see why the LXX translator of Job avoided the standard Greek word for “together,” ὁμοθυμαδόν, and chose instead a word which in other extant Greek literature almost invariably means something quite different. A possible reason for this curious decision is that in the LXX Pentateuch there is no precedent for ὁμοθυμαδόν as equivalent of רָעַת/דָּתָת, whereas ὁμοθυμαδόν as a rendering of רָעַת does occur in one place, namely Exod 19:18, where the Hebrew adverb can reasonably be taken to mean “with one accord.” Whatever the reason, the translator of Job must have been aware that ὁμοθυμαδόν was a highly unusual way of expressing

27 LSJ s.v.

28 The meaning “with one accord” is the exclusive or dominant sense also in Hellenistic Greek texts. It is the only meaning given in LSJ, and the primary one listed in G. W. H. Lampe, Patristic Greek Lexicon.

the simple meaning “together,” and that it carried with it strong overtones of “like-mindedness.” To use ομοθυμαδόν to mean “together” was perhaps linguistically tolerable in case where the togetherness applied to conscious agents who could be imagined to be “like-minded” as well. This is the case in most of the contexts in LXX Job where ομοθυμαδόν is used, since these usually refer to persons (so in 2:11; 3:18; 9:32; 16:10; 19:12; 21:26; 34:15; 40:13) or personified entities (so in 31:38). But ομοθυμαδόν must have sounded unusually forced when applied to such impersonal abstractions as the woes of a man’s life (so in 6:2) or the events of earthly existence (so in 38:33). In any case, it is understandable that the translator should have balked at applying ομοθυμαδόν, with its anthropomorphic suggestion of like-mindedness, to the crassly physical “sinews” of Behemoth. Faced with the reading ויהי in this context, he may well have made an exception to his overall translation pattern (analogous to the exceptions in the first pattern), and chosen for once to render the adverb into accurate, literary and idiomatic Greek by means of the preverb συμπέλλεται. From a linguistic point of view, such a rendering would be above reproach.

Paleographical considerations

Having completed the philological part of our discussion, we turn now to the paleographical aspects involved in our proposal. I am suggesting that the original text שומע ויהי was corrupted to ויהי, and that therefore the single letter peh of the original text was confused with the two letters waw and yod. Now the confusion of graphically similar characters is a well-documented phenomenon in textual studies, but as far as I know it has never been suggested that a peh could be readily mistaken for a waw-yod, either in the Paleo-Hebrew script of pre-exilic times, or in the Jewish

30 It is not surprising that Symmachus, with his concern for correct Greek usage, replaced ομοθυμαδόν with ὁμα in Job 2:11 and 19:12. Although this substitution is not attested elsewhere, Symmachus probably carried it through in all of LXX Job.

31 Here ομοθυμαδόν does not correspond to ויהי or ויהי.

32 Exceptions to the pattern outside of Job amount to 10%; the exception to the pattern in Job which we are proposing amounts to 9% (one out of eleven).

33 I will argue elsewhere (see note 4) that ויהי is integral to the intricate poetic pattern of Job 40:16-18, and is therefore to be considered original.
or square script of post-exilic times. Nevertheless, I think it can be shown that there was a phase in the development of the writing used by the Jews when such a confusion could easily occur, and that therefore the LXX Vorlage of Job was likely written in a script which represented that phase.

Fortunately it is not necessary to do pioneer work in this area. A number of studies have sought to determine, on the basis of frequent letter-confusions underlying the LXX translation, what kind of script was used in the Vorlage of the various books of the LXX. Especially worthy of note are the studies by J. Fischer on the Pentateuch, Amos and Isaiah, and by L. C. Allen on the books of Chronicles. Fischer concluded that the LXX Vorlage of the books which he studied was written in a late Aramaic script which already tended toward the forms of the later square hand. Allen, on the other hand, inferred that the script of the Vorlage of Chronicles was a fully-developed square hand which could be dated to the second century.


35J. Fischer, Das Alphabet der LXX-Vorlange im Pentateuch (Münster 1924); idem, Zur Septuaginta-Vorlage im Pentateuch (BZAW 42; Giessen 1926); idem, “In welcher Schrift lag das Buch Amos den LXX vor?” TQ 106 (1925) 334ff.; idem, In welcher Schrift lag das Buch Isaias den LXX vor? (BZAW 56; Giessen 1930).


37See Fischer, In welcher Schrift lag das Buch Isaias den LXX vor?, 89.

38See Allen, Greek Chronicles II, 164.
Col. I — Elephantine Papyri; Col. II — Edfu Ostraca; Col. III — Edfu Papyri; Col. IV — 4Q Samuel B.
In the case of the book of Job, the pioneer work has also been done, although little of it has been published. Harry M. Orlinsky completed his dissertation on the LXX of Job in 1935, and came to the conclusion that the script of its Vorlage must have been an Aramaic hand antedating the square character. We find references to Orlinsky’s conclusions in a famous paleographical essay by W. F. Albright, and later as an aside in a 1939 article by Orlinsky himself on another topic, but the full argumentation was apparently never published. The view expressed by Orlinsky in 1939 is as follows:

From our study of the character of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the book of Job, we believe that we have succeeded in determining, purely by the inductive method, the form of the alphabet of the Hebrew manuscript used by the LXX translator of Job. It is practically identical with the sort of script that we would expect a priori, namely, the Aramaic Cursive of about the 3rd-2nd century B.C.E.

Orlinsky based his conclusion on the fact that letters which are graphically similar in the square script appear never to be confused in LXX Job, whereas there are two instances of a confusion of ‘ayin and dalet, which are quite dissimilar in this script.

Leaving aside for the moment the question of date, we turn to the shape of the letters waw, yod and peh in the Aramaic cursive out of which the later Jewish or “square” script developed. This development is conveniently illustrated by the script charts in Figure 1, representing the evolution of late Aramaic cursive writing from the fifth-century script of the Elephantine papyri (Col. I) to the early third-century

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41When Orlinsky began to publish a revised version of his dissertation in instalments in HUCA (1957-1965) it looked as though his paleographical study would finally appear, but unfortunately the series stopped just before section C of Chapter V, in which a discussion of the Vorlage script was to have appeared. However, we know from a number of anticipatory comments in the foregoing instalments that Orlinsky still held to his earlier view on this point (see Orlinsky, “Studies,” HUCA 29 [1958] 262; 35 [1964] 73, 75-77; and 36 [1965] 39, 43-44).


43Orlinsky, “Kings-Isaiah Recensions,” 38. On the ‘ayin/dalet confusion, see also Orlinsky’s discussion in HUCA 35 (1964) 73 and 76.
hand of the Edfu Ostraca and Papyri (Cols. II and III) and the late third-century script of 4QSam, one of the earliest of the Qumran documents (Col. IV).

Now an examination of the peh in these charts shows that its downstroke or tail often resembles the waw, and its head looks like certain forms of the yod. For example, the peh's of Col. I (both the medial and the final forms, which are not yet distinguished at this stage) have a tail like the first example of the waw, and a head like the last example of the yod. If the downstroke of the peh were somehow broken near its head, the resulting two discrete forms would approximate contemporaneous shapes of waw and yod, with the former appearing to precede the latter.

Letters with broken lines are of course very common in ancient manuscripts. They can be caused by any number of things: a tear in the parchment or papyrus, a worm hole, a fading of the ink, something in the writing surface which would not take ink, and so on. If the ב in the sequence רָמֶה תַּן of Job 40:17b had been damaged in some such way, it could easily have given rise to the reading רָמֶה תַּן. Consequently, if Orlinsky is right in positing the Aramaic cursive as the script of the LXX Vorlage of Job, it is paleographically quite plausible to assume that τὰ δὲ νεῦρα αὐτοῦ συμπέλεκται reflects the reading רָמֶה תַּן. Our overall thesis can be said to have been vindicated on both philological and paleographical grounds.

If this conclusion is admitted, we can pursue our paleographical analysis a bit further and inquire whether it is possible to delimit more precisely the time period in which the confusion of peh with waw-yod is likely to have occurred. The shape of the letters of the Aramaic/Jewish alphabet evolved rapidly, and the recent dramatic advances in late Aramaic and early Jewish paleography have made it possible to date the phases of this evolution with considerable accuracy. Especially the work of N. Avigad, F. M. Cross, Jr. and J. Naveh should be mentioned in this connection. Taking their conclusions as point of departure, it is possible to set a terminus post

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44I am indebted to the late Professor N. Avigad for permission to reproduce this chart from his article “The Palaeography of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Documents,” Scripta Hierosolymitana, IV: Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Jerusalem 1958) 60.

45We find somewhat analogous cases in the confusion of nun-waw with final mem (see Raphael Weiss, “On Ligatures in the Hebrew Bible [ת = מ],” JBL 82 [1963] 188-194) and waw-nun with let (see Tov, “Interchanges of Consonants,” 258). In both these cases, two “thin” letters are confused with a single “broad” letter, as in my proposal. Professor Talmon, to whom I owe these references, points out that a similar interchange between the “thin” waw-yod and the “broad” final mem appears to underlie CD XIII, 8-9 as compared to the parallel text in 4QD.
quem and a terminus ante quem for the graphic similarity of peh and waw-yod which we have pointed out. The terminus ante quem can be said to coincide with the beginning of the clear distinction between “medial” (i.e. non-final) and final forms of the letter peh. This distinction came about by the development of a new form of peh in medial position, characterized by a leftward hook at the bottom of its tail, with the result that the tail no longer resembles waw. Since the peh of דנה is in non-final position, the letter-confusion which we have postulated must have taken place before this distinctive shape of medial peh (as of medial kaph, nun and tsade) became standard. This development seems to have occurred in the third century BCE, the latest document without medial forms being dated to the mid-third century. All subsequent Hebrew documents, beginning with the Samuel fragment of the late third century (4QSam) consistently have the medial forms. Consequently, our terminus ante quem would seem to be about 225 BCE.

A preliminary terminus post quem can be determined on the basis of the evolution of yod and waw. There is quite a variety of yod shapes current in the late Aramaic cursive, but there is only one which looks like the head of a peh. This is the two-stroke yod which is shaped like a peaked circumflex or a small inverted “v.” Like the head of the peh (and like the modern circumflex) it occurs in peaked and rounded forms. This shape of the yod, which Albright calls “the caret form,” begins to appear in the fifth century BCE and becomes quite popular in the third century BCE.


47See Cross, “Jewish Scripts,” esp. 157 (no medial forms) and 166 (date).

48Avigad, “Palaeography,” 64, 73. Note that 4QEnAstro, which is dated by Milik to the late third or early second century BCE, has exclusively medial forms. See J. T. Milik, The Books of Enoch. Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4 (Oxford 1976) 273.


53Naveh, Aramaic Script, does not mention this form of the yod at all in his descriptions of this letter in the fifth century (p. 27) and fourth-third centuries (p. 47), though the “lambda-shaped yod” (said to be common “at the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the third century,” p. 47) is similar. Naveh’s extensive script charts illustrating these centuries
and second centuries, before disappearing in favor of the Herodian \textit{yod}, which is virtually indistinguishable from the \textit{waw}.\textsuperscript{54} It is difficult to pinpoint precisely the date of its first use as a distinct form, since it can occur incidentally as a variant of the earlier two-stroke \textit{yod}, which is made like a lower-case Greek \textit{lambda}. To be safe, we can say that the inverted-"v" \textit{yod} begins to appear after the early fifth century.

The development of \textit{waw} leads us to the same conclusion. The confusion of \textit{peh} with \textit{waw-yod} presupposes a \textit{waw} which has lost its earlier "concave head" or "flag" projecting leftward at an angle from its top. In the words of Naveh:

> The concave head disappears as early as the beginning of the fifth century B.C.E., giving place to the flag form, with a right-angled shoulder. In the second quarter of the century, the shoulder becomes rounded; this form then remains constant.\textsuperscript{55}

The rounded form was made in a single stroke which often becomes a simple vertical line. In the light of this, the paleographical evidence seems to point to a \textit{terminus post quem} of about 475 B.C.E.

However, there is another paleographical consideration which allows us to lower this date considerably. It is not only the \textit{shape} of the individual letters which is typologically significant, but also their relative \textit{size}. In order for the tail of the \textit{peh} to look like the \textit{waw}, it must be similar both in form and in length. Now the \textit{peh}, with its long tail, was one of the letters which, in the standard Aramaic cursive of the fifth century, differed markedly in size from other letters, including \textit{waw}.\textsuperscript{56} This began to change in the mid-fourth century, as Cross points out:

> The extreme difference in the length of various letters below the ceiling line, characteristic of the fifth century, persists throughout the first half of the fourth century.\textsuperscript{57}

Since a marked difference in length between \textit{peh} and \textit{waw} would make their confusion improbable, it is reasonable to lower our \textit{terminus post quem}, in accordance with Cross' statement, to the mid-fourth century.

(see his Figures 4-9) show only one or two \textit{yod}'s shaped like an inverted "v," see Fig. 5, script no. 3 (404 BCE), and Fig. 9, script no. 3 (late fourth century).

\textsuperscript{54}Avigad, "Palaeography," 60; Cross, "Jewish Scripts," 143; J. Naveh, \textit{The Development of the Aramaic Script} (Jerusalem 1970) 47.

\textsuperscript{55}Naveh, \textit{Aramaic Script}, 27.

\textsuperscript{56}Cross, "Oldest Manuscripts," 150 (see his Figure 1, script no. 1).

\textsuperscript{57}Cross, "Jewish Scripts," 141.
The conclusion of our excursion into paleographical dating is therefore that the misreading of דִּירְיָה הָיָרָה in Job 40:17 as פֶּה דִּירְיָה in all likelihood took place between 350 and 225 BCE. This fits nicely with the approximate date which may be assigned to the LXX translation of Job, namely 150 BCE. The Vorlage of this translation must therefore have been a Hebrew manuscript which was from 75 to 200 years old at the time.

We find a welcome confirmation of our paleographical conclusions in the oldest extant biblical manuscript, 4QExod, which bears a striking resemblance to the postulated Vorlage of Job. It is dated by Cross to the mid-third century BCE. Its script agrees with that postulated for the Job Vorlage on all the points we have mentioned: the absence of medial forms, the two-stroke yod in the form of an inverted “v,” the single-stroke waw, and the similarity in length of waw and the tail of peh. Moreover, of the two forms of ’ayin which it appears to have, one is easily confused with the dalet of the same script. As we have seen, Orlinsky inferred the same feature for the Vorlage of Job. In short, it would be consistent with all the evidence if the Vorlage of Job had been written in a script identical with that of 4QExod.

The possibility of a “pseudo-variant”

Finally, we need to address the question whether the retroverted variant דִּירְיָה הָיָרָה was written as well as read in the Vorlage of LXX Job. We have been assuming that the broken peh which gave rise to this variant was found in the Vorlage itself, although it is theoretically possible that it occurred in a previous manuscript of which the Vorlage was a direct or indirect copy. In other words, the misreading of the peh could conceivably go back to an earlier scribe rather than the LXX translator of Job. However, this is at best a very remote possibility. Since there is independent


59See Cross, “Jewish Scripts,” 137, where Line 3 of his Figure 1 gives the script of 4QExod.f.

60Cross, “Jewish Scripts,” 137, 166.

61See Cross, “Jewish Scripts,” 156, where the second form of the ’ayin is accepted hesitantly.

62Orlinsky, “Kings-Isaiah Recensions,” 38. The graphic similarity (and consequent confusion) of ’ayin and dalet is also attested in the recently published manuscript 4QDan (dated by Cross to the late second century); see E. Ulrich, “Daniel Manuscripts from Qumran. Part 2: Preliminary Editions of 4QDan and 4QDan,” BASOR 274 (1989) 18.
evidence that the Vorlage of Job was itself written in the required Aramaic cursive, it is simplest to assume that the confusion of peh with waw-yod which this script makes possible is based on the Vorlage itself.

It is necessary to make this point explicitly, since it has a significant text-critical corollary. If our retroverted variant is based on a misreading of the Vorlage, then it was never actually written as part of the Hebrew text of Job. Instead, it is what Tov calls a “pseudo-variant,” a reading which existed only in the mind of the translator as he “maneuvered” to understand the text before him. As we noted at the beginning of this essay, מָחָר in Job 40:17 is an obscure hapax legomenon, which the LXX translator probably did not understand. Given the broken peh in his Vorlage, it was possible for him to construe the characters he was reading in such a way that they spelled a clear and straightforward sentence which made sense in the context. The familiar מָחָר was read instead of the unfamiliar פָּדָר. As Tov has pointed out, such an interpretive effort to make sense of a difficult word is a common cause of pseudo-variants. For Job 40:17 this means that the text of the Vorlage was in all likelihood the original יִנְיִי הָדוֹר מָחָר, and that it was only construed as יִנְיִי הָדוֹר פָּדָר by the LXX translator. In other words, the written text of the Vorlage at this point was identical with the MT. In fact, it lends support to the Ketib reading מָחָר over the Qere reading פָּדָר.

To sum up, we have argued that the LXX wording τὰ δὲ νεῦρα αὐτοῦ συμπέπλεκται in Job 40:17 is reasonably taken to presuppose the original Hebrew text יִנְיִי הָדוֹר פָּדָר. The συν- of the Greek verb here idiomatically renders the Hebrew adverb פָּדָר, thus breaking (for an identifiable reason) with the stereotyped renderings used elsewhere in the LXX. The proposed Hebrew reading is explained by a confusion of peh in the Vorlage with waw-yod, reflecting a stage of the Aramaic cursive script (similar to that of 4QExod) which may be dated between 350 and 225 B.C.E. The words יִנְיִי הָדוֹר actually constitute a so-called “pseudo-variant,” the translator’s construal of the difficult reading מָחָר in his Vorlage (=MT, Ketib).

64Tov, Text-Critical Use, 228-231.
65Tov, Text-Critical Use, 229-235.
66The adverb is almost always spelled פָּדָר, not הָדוֹר, in the MT. On the agreement of LXX Job with Qere or Ketib, see Orlinsky, “Studies,” HUCA 36 (1965) 37-47.