

## II. MODUS OPERANDI

From early age I have been familiar with the Bible. Hardly a day passes by but I quote it or read it. Indeed, it is part of my make up and the very texture of my thinking. My learned and wise father, Isaac Benjamin Enoch Loheda, taught us—my younger brother Solomon, my two elder sisters, and myself—the whole Old Testament when we were children. My brother Solomon and I learned the New Testament by heart from a Hebrew translation in my father's private bookcase.

For years the distant Biblical past was vividly present in my mind; I actually lived in it; within sight of the Pyramids. So much so that, together with a passion for the Bible, I developed a natural animosity towards the Greeks and the Romans, on account of their cruelty to my persecuted ancestors, within our beloved land and outside it, the consequences of which are felt to this day. Strangely enough, that aversion did not extend to the Egyptians who were our hosts, as their ancestors had been the hosts of our forefathers during three periods of their history (Dr. ey. 8).

My feelings were so strong that it did not even occur to me to learn Greek, although I knew that it played an important role in our civilization, and that it had influenced deeply post-biblical Hebrew. Nor could I bring myself to pick up more than the minimum of Latin necessary for my legal education and practice. They are forcibly expressed in the following passage:

Ce qui le révèle comme inévitables dans ces passages bibliques, ces vestiges morts d'un temps glorieux, c'est que deux des trois colonnes portent [of the Capharnaum synagogue] sur les profanations par des tenteurs, l'un grec, d'une synagogue Capharnaüm, l'autre latin, tout à côté, incide dans le corps des auteurs. [Du grec et du latin rien de plus inutile!] (Le Palais du Roi, p. 55, Tangier, 1908.)

I will repeat the inscriptions referred to, and consider them now—as I did when I first saw them over fifty years ago—to be sheer vandalism. But not because they are in Greek and Latin; I would not react differently if by some misfortune the third column were similarly outraged in Hebrew. However, my feel-

ings towards the Greeks and the Romans have altered radically since. I realize now that our differences were fratricidal—as fratricidal as the siege of Troy—because I am convinced that the Jews are of Hellenic descent. This is how the revolutionary change has come about.

In the early thirties, after the publication of *Life and Life around it: Hebrew Thought*, I began to be interested in biology as a hobby. In the course of my desultory study of the subject, I came across a few Greek words which bore a striking resemblance to Biblical Hebrew, and I jumped to the conclusion that the Greeks had borrowed them from us. So I toyed with the idea that one day I might make a systematic comparison between the two languages. In those days I was still under the spell of traditional scholarship and, like everybody else, implicitly believed that Semitic languages were Semitic and Aryan languages were Aryan, and that never the twain could mix. Yet I thought it would be interesting to compile and explain an exhaustive list of similar words, if only to show how little or how much Hebrew had influenced Greek before the advent of Alexander, seeing that the influence the other way about was considerable in the wake of his conquests. Little did I know what the actual results of my research would show.

I was so ignorant of Greek then that I only knew the first few letters of its alphabet, which I had picked up incidentally in the course of my elementary mathematics and geometry. I remember asking my friend, Mr. Gerald Emanuel, in a City tea-shop to write the full alphabet for me at the bottom of a partly used sheet of paper. This was in 1932–3.

The years rolled by during which the project remained in abeyance. But when I had published *New Biology and Hebrew* (1951), I was able to devote my leisure hours almost entirely to the random links which I suspected existed between biblical Hebrew and Greek. After acquiring a smattering of grammar, I plunged straight into the Septuagint, relying exclusively on my memory of the original for the meaning of the numerous passages I selected to read. Then I read Homer in conjunction with the Bible: about one page of Greek and its translation, line by line and sentence by sentence, and a chapter from the Old Testament—starting with Genesis and the first book of the *Iliad*, and finishing up with the last book of the *Odyssey* and the Second Book

of Chresiades. Day by day the lists of similar words lengthened until they topped six hundred, including words relating to various aspects and activities of life, which could not be accounted for by the ubiquitous and abiding flavor of borrowing. Besides, history affords no evidence of the existence of circumstances which might have favoured borrowing of such high quality and on such a large scale.

I became convinced that the link of borrowing had been crossed, and that I stood on the borders of a genetic relationship. But the gate to the family homestead was shut before me, and I ~~was~~<sup>was</sup> attempting to force ~~just~~<sup>just</sup> a climb over it. It had to be opened freely and easily (22.727) and the key to its grammar. So far, however, the only grammatical features I knew Greek had in common with Hebrew were the dual number and the definite article, which somebody attributed to both the adjective and the noun it qualified. I stopped reading and started thinking and reviewing the results of my crude research. I used the material at hand: analysing it, classifying it, noting the various exchanges between the Greek and the Hebrew texts, comparing them with biblical variations and the diachronic interchanges among the Greek levers, selecting special homologies for comparison.

This is how my theory began to evolve; the thesis, I found that—as regards their constituents—the and DE differed from each other in their terminal letters only. Similarly, vowel and/or vowel and DE. Therefore (in accordance with DE) we

I tentatively formulated the rule—which might or might not be justified by further experience—that *(a)* is a Hebrew nominal in Graeco-Hellenic Bibliology. In fact, this is confirmed by the

homologous with the p. 200 (50) and 200-200 p. 200, 200-200  
200, and many others. In another minimal layer, isolated  
200, 200, 200.

Take another example: *Age* has more than one meaning in both Arabic and Hebrew—some of them being ٣٢٢.

(77) *and*, *but*—in which the diphthong is respectively replaced by *æ*, *ʌ*, *ɛ*, *ɔ*, and *ʊ*. Again, among the homologues of *ain* are found *ɛɪ*, wherein the diphthong is replaced by *ɛ* and *ɪ*. Accordingly, I provisionally concluded that a diphthong may

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exchange with a general. This will naturally be confirmed by those of the five homologies in the next example.

Thirdly, certain Greek letters diachronically exchange one with the other—*e.g.* *α* with *ε*; *α*, *ε* with *η*—a phenomenon reflected in the following Cross-Homologous homologies (see *Yale University Papers*, June 1926, *Archæol. Africæ*, 1926, *opibis* 1926).

Lastly, mark the strange metamorphoses in the Hebrew words, whereby the suffix in Greek corresponds partly in Hebrew, *e.g.* *τριηγίδης* *αληγός* (1926), *αληγόν* (1926) respectively from *אֶלְגָה* and *אֶלְגָהָן* (1926).

Early in my research I looked for test-witnesses to check the accuracy of homologies and to assess their significance. As the number of tests discovered increased, so did the efficacy of their application and my confidence in my theory. From the beginning I leaned heavily on Arabic; occasionally the Sephardic came in useful. Two examples will suffice here.

According to my phonetical rules (1926) *al-* is a soft homologue of *el-*. This is corroborated grammatically by the fact that the compound *al-**ηγός* is homologous with the compounds *el-**ηγός*, *el-**ηγόν* and *el-**ηγόν*. Yet what confirms these homologies beyond a peradventure, and at the same time lends strong support to my theory, is that *el-**ηγός* means *dig* as well as *dig up*, and that *al-* bears the former meaning. The significance of this qualified homology lies in its semantic variation, coupled with phonetic similarity. But for their correlation to Greek (as also said), there would be no reasonable explanation why these two words (*τριηγίδης* and *αληγός*)—closely homophonous that they might well be taken for homonyms—should bear such different meanings, especially as they belong to one class. Let us go back for confirmation and support to *rabbinical* homologies (see *Archæol. Africæ*, 1926). One of them—*אֶלְגָהָן* (1926)—is dealt with elsewhere in detail; another is *אֶלְגָהָן* (1926).

Again, according to my rules of phonetics, *אֶלְגָהָן* as well as its variants (*אֶלְגָהָן*)—homologous with *el-**ηγός*, the genitive of *ηγός*, whence *אֶלְגָהָן* is the homologue of *el-**ηγός*. Now the Sephardic renders *אֶלְגָהָן* in Ga. 8 by *ηγός*. This is justified by the usage of reduplication, as part of the general concept. But it looks as if the translators read the word in Genesis (1926) and

not (T123)—Adikensari fashion—as reduplicating (T121). Because the same reading is not maintained in a similar case—that is, Ps. 16. p—where T123 is unexceptionally rendered by *adikensari*, although (T123) here reduplicates (T121). Elsewhere (T123) is rendered by *teka* (instead of *adikensari*), where—it is submitted—the context demands *teka*. However, it is highly significant that, through my theory, it is possible to connect the Sephardim by the Sephardim, and to understand the Bible by the Bible.

Indeed, there are quite a few words in the Bible that are written and pronounced in more than one way, and we know of one occasion where a mere slipping over many lives (Jud. 12, 4). But the significance of these differences and of the differences in the names of several peoples and places has eluded the exegesis (Gen 14, 1, 3, 21, 5; Dt 2, 11, 10, 3, 9, 4, 48).

Hunting for hornedgees was, is, and will ever remain a most exhilarating exercise. It has all the excitement of the chase—and its hazards. It is never dull or fruitless; for even if one goes

all the trail, one is more likely than not to gain some incidental or adventitious benefit. Indeed, often enough you look for China and discover America; philologist may elude you, but you come upon oxygen; you are prospecting for diamonds and uncover a nugget. Occasionally, the process is precipitate, one genuine homologue leading to another with the succession of a chain reaction. Let me give an example which I vividly recall.

In my desultory reading of the Septuagint at random, I came across the phrase δέρπη ταπείνη for תְּפִתְחָה (Zech 13, 4). It occurred to me—not for the first time or the last—that here was a word, δέρπη, which approximated the Hebrew פִתְחָה so closely that the similarity must have struck the translators as odd. In fact, I had then and there time and again since wondered whether the authors of the Septuagint had sensed or known that a relationship of sorts existed between the two languages. However, as usual, I placed myself in their position and reached for *It's usefulness*, to find out the range of synonyms from which the translators had picked out this particular word. Which led me to δέρπη. In a flash the passage in Esther 1,6—תְּפִתְחָה תְּמִימָה וְבָגָדָה—sprang to mind. Without much delay, I formed the homologies: פִתְחָה πίλιτος, פִתְחָה πύρινος, תְּמִימָה δέρπη, בָגָדָה γάρμα. Accordingly, some floors were paved with polished stone, others were inlaid or covered with rugs. This is far from the gaudy and frantic emeralds and pearls of the Septuagint—even as far as factual reality can ever be from wild fiction—although the actual floor-coverings must have been as precious as any ever produced in Persia, to match the coaches of gold and silver provided for the royal guests.

However, three out of the four homologies soon led to three other genuine homologues, and δέρπη in our context proved to be a variant of δέρψη. Thus: δέρψη/γάρμα automatically suggested πάρπη, תְּפִתְחָה. In gr. 4; the quasi-homophonous neighbour of πάρπη yielded the homology παρπή/פִתְחָה Gn 41, 42; and when I looked up δέρψη in the Dictionary, I saw the phrase δέρψη μαργαρη which I preferred to δέρπη ταπείνη for תְּפִתְחָה תְּמִימָה Lev 13, 7. So once more I connected the Septuagint by the Septuagint!

Another example springs to mind. Once I discovered that δέρψη, the homologue of φίρμα, must have meant 'harp' in BCh

15. ss and 27, I automatically and spontaneously leapt to the conclusion that the verbs **תָּדַבֵּר** (Ib. 15. 22) and **תְּבִיאֵר** (Ib. 15. 27) were homologues of φέλλειν. How could I react otherwise? All the ten verbs of the passage concerned (19-28) deal exclusively with music, and nothing could be simpler or more natural than to conjure up strumming. Turning to the N.E.B., it is understandable that the translators should have found the phrase **תְּבִיאֵר** 'obscure'. In fact, I offered to put my discoveries at their disposal, but the offer was not accepted.

To resume the narrative, the grammatical issue still eluded me. Gradually, I collected valuable data; for instance: that the dative case exists in Hebrew; that the masculine plural is the same in Hebrew and in Greek—save that in Hebrew it has a terminal **ו**, and the last syllable is pronounced as the diphthong **eu** as is pronounced in modern Greek; that, generally, a Greek compound verb is a homologue to a Hebrew compound verb; that, generally, a verb ending in **-ειν** is equivalent to a compound verb in Greco-Hebrew homology, i.e. that the suffix **-ειν** is equivalent to a prefixed preposition; that sometimes a verb in the Middle Voice is a homologue of a verb in the construction **תְּבִיאֵר**; and so on.

Suddenly, I realized that the MV existed in Hebrew. It struck me that, to indicate the reflexive character of the MV, its terminations in the singular (-ψει, -εσαι, -τεσαι) should read dialectically: -ψει, -εσαι, -τεψ (for αἰρεψ), in conformity with the peculiar Hebrew phenomenon of occasionally adding to the verb the personal pronoun in the dative case. It then occurred to me that the terminal **-ειν** might be a variant of **-ψει**, as is **לֹא** in II S. 18. 19 a variant of **לֹא** (cf. Ib. 18. 3). Another sudden realization was that the **תְּבִיאֵר** in Hebrew is equivalent to the Aorist and the Imperfect in Greek, with the omission of the syllabic segment—as often happens in Homer.

But the real breakthrough came when I discovered that many of the verbs beginning with **ל** are homologous to verbs in **ψει** or in the MV. This was followed by two interconnected discoveries: that the formation of the Future and the Construct is but an example of the suffix/prefix phenomenon which I discovered earlier; and that the Aorist exists in Hebrew—the **תְּבִיאֵר** 'l being the counterpart of the augment—since the structure of the

last syllable in the Aorist is similar to that in the Future, e.g. θέω, θέω; ΠΟΔΩΝ(μετα-)θέω, ΠΟΔΩΝ(μετα-)θέω.

In the meantime the homologies multiplied past counting, with parallel Arabic involvement; so that I now estimate that nine out of ten different words in the Bible have demonstrably sound Greek homologues. What consolidates the cumulative evidence afforded by their large numbers, is the quality of the homologies. Besides reinforcing each other, they exhibit many puncta and indicate that the Greeks and the Hebrews had in common some customs and some religious beliefs, while the Hebrew language emerges from these homologies much richer and even more beautiful than it is at present acknowledged to be. Yet the benefits of these homologies are by no means one-sided; for certain important advantages accrue to the language and history of Helia. Actually, the whole complex is consistent; and only consistent with two propositions, that is: that biblical Hebrew is Greek, and that the Hebrews were Arabic Greeks. In fact, the outcome of my laborious, extensive, and elaborate research may be summed up in a brief sentence: Hebrew is Greek with a mask on.