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THE TARGUM OF JOB FROM QUMRAN CAVE ELEVEN

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The international congress of Old Testament scholars is hereby presented with a brief preliminary report, based on an initial study, of the Targum of Job which was discovered in 1956, together with other important manuscripts, in Cave XI, filled with large stones, a few kilometers north of Khirbet Qumran. The discovery was made by Bedouin. The finds were acquired for a very considerable sum by the Palestine Archaeological Museum in the Jordanian section of Jerusalem. The planned purchase of the documents by foreign countries was prevented by the Jordanian Government edict of 8-5-'61, whereby all finds from the Dead Sea were declared the property of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The Trustees of the Museum, in order to be reimbursed for the capital which they had expended in order to ensure the best possible preservation of the manuscripts, could only offer to foreign institutions the exclusive rights of study and publication in return for the payment of the purchase price. After lengthy negotiations, the rights to study and publication of the Job Targum were acquired on 23-12-'61 by the Royal Netherlands Academy for Science in Amsterdam, after the Netherlands Institute for Pure Science had underwritten a hundred per cent subsidy of the necessary moneys. At the suggestion of its Qumran Commission, Professor Dr. J. van der Ploeg, O.P., and myself were invited to unroll and study the document. After a close collaboration of one and a half months, Professor van der Ploeg was able to lay the preliminary results of the work on the Targum before the Royal Academy on 14th May,
1962. The report has now been published in French. The following exposition, the result of our joint work, corresponds on the whole to the information given by Professor van der Ploeg in Amsterdam. That I now give it here and in my own way corresponds to the wishes of my senior colleague, that our joint work should receive expression in the publication.

We reached the Holy City on 16-3-'62 and began our work the following day in the heavily guarded Scrollery. The manuscript as we found it, consisted of 26 fragments and a small roll. To these could be added a partly petrified small fragment, so that we had altogether, apart from the small roll, 27 pieces, all of ovoid form and, apart from three fragments, averaging 4 to 6 cm wide and 6 cm high. The material of the roll is leather, from \( \frac{1}{2} \) to 1 mm thick and dark brown. The MS has been damaged severely in the lower half through hydrolysis and oxidation, whereas in almost all the fragments, including the large piece 109 cm in length, only one line is wholly or partly missing from the upper half, for the most part.

The largest piece, 109 cm long, contains more than half of the original Targum text of Job 37:10-42:11, while the 27 other fragments contain parts of the text of Job 17:14-36:33. Altogether, some 15 per cent. of the original MS has been preserved, which gives us a fairly good insight into the problems posed by the Targum. Calculations can further demonstrate that the roll originally contained the whole text of Job in Targum form and comprised about 66 or 67 columns averaging 10 cm in width. The length of the MS was originally therefore about 7 m, while the height, including the upper and lower margins, must have been 12 to 13 cm.

The form of the letters is not the same throughout: sometimes they are larger and better formed than is customary in the MS. But this fact does not suggest a second or third scribe because the irregularities in the script only appear occasionally and elsewhere the same hand is discernible from chapters 17 to 42. Because the middle of Job falls in ch.22, it can therefore be concluded that the whole Targum was written on one roll by one person.

The best preserved piece of 109 cm long was originally placed inside the roll and the other 27 fragments from ch.36 backwards to ch.17 form the rest of the parts of the MS that were wound around this inside piece. The opening
columns have been completely lost. The pieces preserved therefore form a series of progressively, better preserved fragments. Corresponding to the loss of the lower half of the MS, there are approximately equal gaps between the preserved pieces. It is striking therefore that four fragments, which should have been present in these circumstances (around ch. 18:15, 20:20, end of 22 and 23) are not present and consequently must have been lost after the finding of the MS or else are still in the hands of the Bedouin.

Apart from carbon dating, which can scarcely be considered for this document, palaeographical criteria are the only available means of dating the MS. The outstanding work of Albright, Avigad, Birnbaum and Cross (to name only these) has made it possible to date a Hebrew or Aramaic MS of this period with reasonable accuracy on purely palaeographical grounds. We would use this method to assign the manuscript to the first half of the first Christian century. The text may, of course, originate in an earlier period. We will see that the terminus ad quem can be determined by a Jewish tradition to be quoted.

The script of the document is on the whole easy to read. Waw and Yod are for the most part distinguished, except for some marked ligatures. Beth and Kaph are often similar. The MS is lined, as is for example, the Habbakuk commentary from Cave I, but the distance between the lines is not always the same.

The MS seems to us to be of the greatest importance in three respects:

a) Firstly, with regard to its philological significance. The language of the Targum shows in many respects a close relationship with Biblical Aramaic, and in many cases is closer to the Aramaic portions of Daniel than the Genesis Apocryphon (GA) found in Cave I. In Daniel, in nota relationis is usual, while in the Targum of Job it is never, but always. On the other hand GA has the later instead of in six out of about sixty cases. In GA instead of is always found as the prefix of the causative conjugation in the Perfect, Imperative and Infinitive. In the Job Targum it is always, as mostly in Biblical Aramaic, while even in the reflexive-passive conjugations, in accordance with Biblical Aramaic, the prefix predominates. The
particle ַָּּ, ‘if’ appears in GA twice as ֹ and twice as ֶ (as in Middle Aramaic). In the Job Targum, as in Biblical Aramaic, only the form ָ is found. ַָּ, ‘here’, that is met only in Official Aramaic and GA ָ, appears once in the Targum ֶ. While GA has ֹ כ as well as ֶ כ, the Targum has only ֶ כ. GA has ֶ instead of the historically older ַָּ. The latter form is in the Targum ֶ. On the other hand, ַָּ is found once in our MS as pronomen demonstrativum instead of the older ָ. In the verb, the 3rd pers. perf. plu. always has the ending ַָּ, never ֶ (as in Palestinian Targum and Midrash ֶ). Status absolutus and status emphaticus are used promiscue, apparently without difference in meaning. Assimilation is occasionally found, mostly, however, there are dissimilated forms, like ַָּ, ֶ, ָ, etc. To denote the direct object ַָּ is sporadically used ֶ, both with nouns and pronouns, while ָ is apparently not used in the Job Targum.

Although it is admittedly difficult to determine the date of origin of our document on the basis of these linguistic criteria, as local and generic differences must be reckoned with, the grammatical characteristics of the Job Targum indicate the origin of the work in the first century B.C., especially if we assign the Genesis Apocryphon, as E. Y. Kutscher would do, to the first century before our era. As far as we can now see and as the above-mentioned examples indicate, our Targum stands nearer to the Official Aramaic of the book of Daniel than does the Genesis Apocryphon.

In contrast to the book of Daniel, the Targum has relatively few Persian loan-words. Such are: אֹּּ, ‘word, thing; and ָ right’. Not previously exemplified in Aramaic is ַָּ, an equivalent of Heb. ָ, ‘desert, steppe’ as the dwelling-place of the wild-ass (Job 39:6). The word is found in Syriac as ַָּ, while ַָּ is still the usual word for ‘desert’ in Modern Syriac. We also found the previously unknown verb ֶ, corresponding to the Assyrian hasanu (cover). The meaning of ֶ is still uncertain. The Hebrew original has ָ, ‘misery’ in this spot. The similarly unknown ֶ is certainly to be connected with Arab. ָ, ‘penetrate with a spear’ and accordingly translated ‘spear’.

Orthographically, there are relatively few matres
lectionis. But the peculiar form יבשו, ‘they return’, in-
stead of יבשו is found, similar to יבשו in the
Habakkuk commentary from Qumran Cave I (Col. II, 6).
The status emphaticus is indicated by י and י pro-
miscue. In the case of the י spelling, confusion with
the 3rd pers. masc. possessive suffix י...., and י י, is quite possible. When this occurs, the original and the
context decide the matter.

Whether we have in our document an exemplar of
the often debated native speech of Jesus, is not so easily
decided. Many years ago Gustav Dalman put forward
the thesis, that we have in the Targums of Onkelos and
Jonathan the traditions of a Targum that had arisen in
Judaea and the primary source for our knowledge of the
language of Jesus36. Paul Kahle37 and also Franz Rosen-
thal38 have opposed this view emphatically and believe
that these Targums cannot be used as for the Palestinian
dialect form. On the other hand, E. Y. Kutscher39 has
recently put forward the view, that Dalman and Theodor
Nöldeke were basically correct in asserting a Palestinian
origin for the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan. In these
circumstances, I cannot at present venture a conclusion
about the linguistic position of the Job Targum. It is still
quite possible, that we are fairly close to the native
language of Jesus in our Targum and even more in the
Genesis Apocryphon. However that may be, the document
is of extraordinary value for the study of Aramaic, because
together with GA it fills in the almost total vacuum in
Aramaic remains for the period surrounding the beginning
of our era, which is extremely fortunate.

b) It is certain that we have in our roll the oldest Targum
manuscript that has been preserved. I naturally, do not
intend here to go into the whole problem of the history
of Targums40, but can at least mention that many scholars
were not accustomed to date any Targum in written form
before the second century of our era. Thus, George Foot
Moore in his well-known book "Judaism"41, states that
"the Targums of the Pentateuch and the Prophets are of
Palestinian origin and probably date from the second
century A.D. They show in many ways affinity to the
exegesis of the Tannaim of the school of Aqiba". Further:
"the Targums on the Hagiographa (are) all of too late a
date to serve us as sources for the Judaism of the first
centuries". On the other hand, Otto Eissfeldt, for in-
stance, believes that there certainly were written Targums
in the time of Jesus\textsuperscript{42}. This is shown by a tradition which is exceptionally interesting in the present connection, preserved in Bab. Talmud Sabbath Fol. 115a as follows:\textsuperscript{43}

Rabbi Joses related: Once, my father Halaphta came to Rabbi Gamliél Berabbi in Tiberias and found him sitting at the table of Johanan the Exile, reading out of a targumic book of Job which he held in his hand. Then he said to him: “I remember how your grandfather R. Gamliél used to stand on a step of the Temple mountain, and when a targumic book of Job was brought to him, he said to the architect: Hide it in a layer of the building. And he also ordered him to do it, and he hid it”.

Whether Gamaliel I, the famous teacher of the apostle Paul\textsuperscript{44}, really had an exemplar of our Targum in his hands is admittedly not certain, because there may have been several Targums of Job at that period, yet it is the most probable view. This would give a happy confirmation of the \textit{terminus ad quem} for the text in the first half of the first century of our era that has already been supported on palaeographical grounds.

We do not know exactly why the Job Targum was prohibited in the circles of Gamaliel I. For it cannot be proved that he had forbidden the use of this work because it originated from the Essene community at Qumran. As far as we can see, there is no express reference to either the customs or the special teachings of this community. At the most, the commentary-type translation of Job 35:10 might point in this direction, where the canonical text’s “Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night” is paraphrased as follows:

“Where is God, who has made and given us (……….) for \textit{our plantation} in the night”\textsuperscript{45}.

The concept of "plantation" is frequent in Jubilees\textsuperscript{46}, for instance, and may have been a current word in apocalyptic circles of the period, so in my judgement does not give grounds for assigning the Job Targum with confidence to the Essene community, even if it had a place in their library. I do not at present venture to decide whether the Targum had a function in the services of the Qumran community or was also used non-liturgically. The Targum by and large follows its Hebrew original fairly exactly, so that at times it appears to be a pure translation. At other points, however, there are fairly lengthy
excursi⁴⁷ or even abbreviations⁴⁸ as compared with the Hebrew text. There is also at least once a totally different reading⁴⁹. In contrast to its canonical model, the Aramaic text is easily understood. As well as the tradition, preserved in Bab. Talmud Baba bathra Fol. 14b, that Job was composed by Moses, the linguistic difficulties of the Hebrew book must have led to its early translation in targumic form⁵⁰.

Despite this, however, the Targum has practically nothing to do with the original of the LXX. As is well-known, this Greek translation of Job contains as an epilogue, inter alia, the words: ὁτος ἐρμηνεύετοι ἐκ τῆς Συριακῆς Βιβλίου. We had at first hoped that our Targum might represent the original of the LXX. But this is not the case, although it is possible that in some places a tradition represented in the LXX has been deposited in our Targum. On this matter only a closer study of the text can afford a solution. Our work has just as little to do with the Job Targum which first gained currency in the Middle Ages and was published by De Lagarde⁵¹.

c) The translator has not only often tried to make the text of his original more comprehensible and on occasions more elegant, but he also shows a rationalising tendency vis-a-vis the mythological terminology of the Hebrew text. In this the demythologising activity of the author is clearly visible. A striking example of this is Job 38:7, where the canonical text reads:

When the morning stars sang together
And all the sons of God shouted for joy

The Targum paraphrases:

And all the angels of God shouted for joy.
When the morning stars shone.

Also the names Leviathan and Behemoth are not found in the Targum. Instead of these is found, as far as I can see always ר”ת.
2. There were found in addition: a scroll of Psalms, which, besides more than 30 known Psalms from the canonical book, contains 7 songs not previously known in Hebrew and a piece of prose with a description of the work of David as a poet. Two of these songs seem to represent the original of LXX Ps.151, while two others were already extant in a Syrian translation (cf. ZAW 48 (1930), p.1-23). Also a number of small fragments of Ezekiel; portions of a roll of Leviticus in archaic Hebrew script; fragments of Deuteronomy; a description of the New Jerusalem etc.

3. Two American institutions had previously acquired the Psalms scroll and the fragments of Ezekiel in this way.

4. The purchase price amounted to Jord. £10,000.

5. J. van der Ploeg, Le targum de Job de la grotte 11 de Qumran (11Q tg Job), Première communication, Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen afd. Letterkunde (Nieuwe Reeks, deel 25, No.9) Amsterdam 1962.

6. From a personal communication from Dr. H. J. Plenderleith.


8. The columns must have contained about 16 lines.


11. If we are in fact dealing with a roll out of the Qumran library—and there is nothing to prevent this assumption—68 A.D. may be seen as the terminus ad quem for the manuscript, as in that year the Essene community had to leave their dwelling on account of the war with the Romans.


14. ד is found only once in a variant of ד וּרֵבָּה (Dan. 3:15) and also in the connection הָרְדוּ אֵזְרָא Ezra 4.9 (for אֵזְרָא רוֹי). The latter occurrence is a gloss.

15. Cf. E. Y. Kutscher op. cit. p.6 (GA XX 27; XXI 29; XXII 14, 21, 22 (twice).


17. The four exceptions are in Dan. 3:1, 4:11; and 5:12, 15.

18. According to W. Baumgartner, The Aramaic of the Book of Daniel (ZAW 45 (1927), p. 108 = Zum Alten Testament und seiner Umwelt, Leiden 1959, p. 95) יִרְּבָּה is found in Dan. 17 times, in Ezra 4 times. Against this are 6 cases of יִרְּבָּה in Dan. and 1 in Ezra. In the Elephantine writings, the form יִרְּבָּה, predominating elsewhere, is also found (cf. P. Leander, Laut- und Formenlehre des aegyptisch-Aramaischen, Göteborg 1928, p.48f.).

19. Not counting the Saphel form יִרְּבָּה (col. 14, 6: Job XXIX 12) I have found so far four exceptions:
20. GA II 5; XX, 19 and XXII, 21, 22.
22. Col. 30, 8.
24. Col. 21, 6.
27. Col. 5, 5.

28. Then ending ūn comes from the Imperfect and has entered the Perfect thence.
29. Eg. שִׁבָּחַת כְּעָנָה (col. 14, 6: Job XXIX 12); "לֶהֶם אֵאֹר יִזְהַר (Col. 4, 6, Job XXI 6).
32. Demonstrated by van der Ploeg.
33. It is true that שֶׁבֶר is found as "break" in the Aramaic inscription of Sfîrê 1A 38 (A. Dupont-Sommer-J. Starcky, Les inscriptions araméennes de Sfîrê in: Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l’Académie des Inscriptions et belles Lettres XV, Paris 1958 (p. 197-351), and one could consider the meaning 'shattering, misery,' for והבאה on the basis of this. But there is a special problem concerning the relationship of the Sfîrê-Stele with later Aramaic literary monuments. Eg. A33 'צבר, instead of A33 A38 instead of עֲבֵי לֶהֶם, instead of אִזְבָּא instead of A33 A33 instead of אִזְבָּא instead of לֶהֶם and 1B 8 instead of אִזְבָּא (on the text, cf. now also J. J. Koopmans, Aramäische Christomathie, Leiden 1962, p.7 ff). Because in the later language 'break' is always the derivation of והבאה 'shattering' from 'break' is not likely.
34. Job XXX 16.
35. Col. 32, 3.
39. op. cit. p. 10.
40. Literature on this subject will be found in O. Eissfeldt,


44. Acts XXII, 3.

45. Aram. דַּעַל כְּלָיַת, 'plantation' as a description of the community is often found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the reference might therefore be to the Essene community. But the concept is too common to lead to this conclusion.

46. XVI 26, XXI 24. 'Plantation' is used in this sense also in the O. T. (Isa. LX 21; LXI 3).

47. In Job XXXI 29 and XXXIII 24.

48. Job XXXIX 24 (except for one word) is missing completely.

49. Instead of XLII 3, XL 5 is paraphrased.

50. That the tradition of Bab. Baba bathra 14b was also known in Qumran circles would follow from the fact that at Qumran fragments in archaic Hebrew script were found of the Pentateuch and Job only.

51. P. de Lagarde, Hagiographa chaldaica, Lipsiae 1873.