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THE ARAMAIC TEXT AND LANGUAGE OF DANIEL AND EZRA IN THE LIGHT OF SOME MANUSCRIPTS FROM QUMRAN¹

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Introduction

Our sampling of varying text traditions (that is, aside from the Masoretic text) of Daniel and Ezra in their original Aramaic has been reduced to only a few sources due to the vagaries of war, the worm, and various scribal schools. These sources may reflect a mere fraction of the various, characteristically distinct texts of Daniel and Ezra which once existed. The Dead Sea Scrolls are the most important witnesses to these texts in their original language and provide the basis for this study.²

The main categories to be examined are: (1) the condition of the scrolls; (2) the text represented by the scrolls; (3) the morphology and orthography of the scrolls; (4) the *qere/keiv* agreement in the scrolls; and (5) the system of sentence division in the scrolls. The last three categories are pertinent to an examination of scribal conventions within the scrolls.

I. The Condition of the Scrolls

Eight scrolls of the book of Daniel have been identified among the Qumran fragments from caves 1 (1QDan^{a,b}), 4 (4QDan^{a,b,c,d,e}), and 6 (6QDan). Also, small ex-

¹This study derives from research I have done in connection with my Hebrew University doctoral dissertation "The Aramaic Portions of Daniel and Ezra: A Study in Textual Criticism, Aramaic Dialectology and Translation Technique," under the direction of Professor Moshe Goshen-Gottstein.

²I wish to thank Professors Frank Moore Cross and Eugene Ulrich for their generosity in allowing me to study both the actual scrolls and photographs before their publication.

cerpts from Daniel 11 and 12 were identified in 4QFlor. Of these nine Qumran manuscripts, only a fraction have been published to date: 1QDan^{a,b}, 6QDan, and 4QFlor.³ 1QDan^{a,b} and 6QDan are written in a middle to late Herodian hand and are represented by only a few lines from one or two columns, from manuscripts which would have contained well over twenty-five columns of text. In 6QDan and 4QFlor only readings from the Hebrew sections can be identified.

Of the scrolls which were found in Cave 4, two (4QDan^{c,e}) contain portions from the latter part of the Hebrew sections of Daniel only. These have both been dated to a period of some 60 to 100 years after the final composition of the book.

Of the three scrolls which contain portions from the Aramaic sections of Daniel, none is better preserved than 4QDan^a. It contains fragments from fourteen of about twenty-five columns of the original scroll. The script nearly matches one described by Prof. Cross as a Late Hasmonean book-hand dating from 100-50 BCE.⁴ The leather is thin and of a consistent quality and finished on both sides. No drawn margin or line guides are discernible.

4QDan^b contains fragments from nine of about thirty-two columns of the original scroll. The script is a nicely-formed late Herodian hand dating from about 20-50 CE. The leather is relatively thick and is finished only on one side. The text is interrupted in a few places by imperfections and holes in the leather which existed before the scroll was written. No drawn margin or line guides are discernible.

4QDan^d consists of fragments of from three to five columns. The script is Herodian and is written with an ink whose chemistry has subsequently eaten into the leather, often leaving only outlines of letters. The leather is of a brittle quality and the fragmenting tends to occur along the lines of written text.

Portions of all twelve chapters of Daniel have been identified among these nine Qumran scrolls, ranging from Dan. 1:10 (1QDan^a) to 12:10 (4QFlor). Of the 200 verses in the MT Aramaic of Daniel, 91 are represented at Qumran by two or more identifiable words. The transition from Hebrew to Aramaic at Dan. 2:4 is

³Since the presentation of this paper, 4QDan^{a,b,c} have been published, cf. Eugene Ulrich, "Daniel Manuscripts from Qumran. Part 1: A Preliminary Edition of 4QDan^a," *BASOR* 268 (1987) 17-37 and "Daniel Manuscripts from Qumran. Part 2: Preliminary Editions of 4QDan^b and 4QDan^c," *BASOR* 274 (1989) 3-26.

⁴F. M. Cross, "The Development of the Jewish Scripts," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of William Foxwell Albright* (ed. G. E. Wright; Garden City, NY 1961) 133-202.

clearly visible in 1QDan^a and the reversion to Hebrew at the beginning of chapter 8 is again clearly visible in both 4QDan^{a,b}. The apocryphal additions of the versions are not attested among these scrolls. The order of the stories and the sequence of verses agree with those of the present Masoretic text.

Of the book of Ezra-Nehemiah only one manuscript has survived (4QEzra). Of this manuscript, three columns with seventeen partial lines of text survive. The script is formal early Herodian. Two of the three fragments are from the Aramaic portions of the book ranging from Ezra 4:10 through 6:5.

II. The Text Represented by the Scrolls

The text of the scrolls is consistent with MT with surprisingly few exceptions. Of the 144 variants in the Aramaic sections most are orthographic and morphological variants reflecting the preferences of scribes or differing scribal conventions. Only a few variants actually reflect a different text (and are not linked to inner Aramaic difficulties or scribal error). The textual variants that do occur are limited to the subtraction, addition or substitution of one or two words in a line. These readings are often reflected in the Septuagint. The text does not agree with the Septuagint when it (i.e., the LXX) has free expansions or contractions of the text. There may be one possible exception to this at the end of the Hebrew chapter 1 in 4QDan^a where a letter count of the fragment reveals up to a line-and-a-half of a longer text. Some minor variants are reflected in the other versions, namely, the Peshitta, Theodotian, and the Vulgate, but these are sparing and the direct connection is often questionable.

III. The Morphology and Orthography of the Biblical and the Non-Biblical Aramaic Scrolls from Qumran

Many of the morphological and orthographic phenomena which have been noted and classified in the Qumran scrolls in Hebrew (known as "Qumran spellings")⁵ are also found in their corresponding linguistic classifications in the Aramaic scrolls from Qumran (e.g., כּל vs. כל, אנתה vs. אנתה, ך vs. כה).⁶ To these must be

⁵See comments by M. Goshen-Gottstein, "Linguistic Structure and Tradition in the Qumran Documents," *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, Vol. IV (2nd ed, H. Rabin and Y. Yadin eds.; Jerusalem 1965) 101-37.

added orthographic variations which are not found in the Hebrew scrolls but involve only those written in Aramaic scrolls.

The following statistical charts present the data for the frequency of these orthographic variations in each of several manuscripts. The categories treated are those significant for characterizing the orthographic character of each Aramaic manuscript and for which adequate amounts of data can be gathered. The manuscripts were selected on the basis of their state of preservation and the frequency of the various categories (regarding orthography) which are under investigation here.

From the following statistics of selected morphological and orthographic variants we find that the copyists of the Aramaic documents from Qumran felt stronger restrictions on tampering with certain types of morphemes than others.

Notice the group of statistics in the first category, *hithpeel/ithpeel*.⁷ There you will note that there is a decided preference for the *ithpeel* over the *hithpeel* at Qumran in contrast to the decided preference for the *hithpeel* in Masoretic Biblical Aramaic and 11QargJob (which may be Hebraisms). This preference for the *ithpeel* conforms with Early and Official Aramaic.

The consistency of this category is not followed in the next category, "*haphel/aphel*." The exclusive use of the *haphel* among the Daniel fragments is contrasted by the nearly exclusive use of the *aphel* in the Enoch scrolls, the New Jerusalem scrolls and the Genesis apocryphon. Among these morphological phenomena, we notice that the scribes consistently adhered to one form over another, depending upon which book was being copied. This is in spite of the conventions of the distinct scribal schools reflected in the other categories. Preference for the *haphel* conforms with Early and Official Aramaic.

This is nearly the same for the *status emphaticus* in the next category, with the exception of one scribe, that of 4QEn^a, dated to the early second century BCE. The Qumran scribes seem very conservative in regard to this category, using the *alef* nearly exclusively. This conforms to the usage in Early and Official Aramaic and contrasts with the contemporary Judaean tomb inscriptions which prefer the *heh*.

⁶ Of the Daniel scrolls, in the two best-preserved scrolls, the use of "Qumran spellings" varies from virtual absence of them in 4QDan^a to extensive use of them in 4QDan^b. These extremes are found in both the Aramaic and Hebrew sections of these two scrolls.

⁷ This category also includes *hithpaal/ithpaal*.

Concerning the grapheme representing the morpheme *-ā* marking feminine nouns and adjectives and suffixed as well to infinitives, there is much more vascillation among the scribes, whereas Early and Official Aramaic predictably use *heh* to represent the final *-ā*.

Concerning the perfect of *III-yodh* verbs, there seems to be a distinct preference among the majority of the scribes to use *heh* as the final grapheme. However, concerning forms of imperfect and participle of *III-yodh* verbs ending in final *ē*, there is vascillation between *ḥ*, *ḥ*, and *ḥ*, although it seems that each of the scribes has a preferred grapheme to represent the final *ē*. In this category 4QDan^a, whose scribe employs *alef* (as does 4QEn^c and 11QargJob), is at variance with the normal practice of Official Aramaic, which employs *heh*.

Concerning the *plene* vs. defective spelling of *כּוּל*, each scribe also seems to have had his own preferred usage.

Concerning the 2ms independent pronoun *אנת* and *אנתה*, it should be noted that 4QDan^a is the only scribe among Qumran scribes thus far who uses *אנת* instead of *אנתה* which was probably pronounced *anta*. The use of *אנת* conforms with the form used in Official Aramaic.

Concerning the pronominal suffix *ך* vs. *כה*, each scribe seems to have had his own preferred usage.

As we can see from this survey, there are certain conventions which nearly all the scribes agree upon for both biblical and non-biblical Aramaic documents. First of all, there are certain morphological and orthographic features which copyists apparently felt restrained from changing in the text. This seems to be the case of the *haphel* vs. the *aphel* in Qumran Enoch and Qumran Daniel. This may also be the case concerning the *hithpeel/ithpeel* and the *status emphaticus*, although in these cases there is no distinction in usage, and it may be part of a scribal convention to conform the text to a certain set of rules. *III-yodh* perfects may also fall into this category.

Concerning the other categories, the various manuscripts of each biblical or non-biblical book do not agree with each other. It would seem that since such inconsistency is reflected between different manuscripts of the same document (viz., Daniel, Enoch, Visions of Amram and the New Jerusalem) these variants are due to intentional modifications made by copyists and reflect the policies of the individual scribe. Whether these policies reflect the mere preferences of individual scribes or the established conventions of various and distinct scribal schools cannot be ascertained on the basis of pure morphology and orthography. The con-

trasted forms in each category may reflect historical spelling over against orthography which was intended to reflect the way in which the word was actually pronounced (e.g., *haphel* vs. *aphel*, אַפֶּל vs. אַחֶל, כֶּה vs. כָּה). They also may reflect hebraisms (e.g., the *hithpeel* and *hith* for the *status emphaticus*).

4QDan^a remains the most conservative among the scribes in that he varies from the practice of the Official Aramaic in one category only (*III-yodh* 8.8. Similar is 11QargJob who varies in only two categories (*hithpeel/hithpeel* and *III-yodh* 8), but vacillates to some degree in several categories).

4QDan^b is most consistent at offering "Qumran spellings" whenever it is possible. Until now the most notable Aramaic scroll for utilizing these spellings was 1QapGen which varies, however, by using כֶּה instead of כָּה in most cases.⁹ 1QapGen also utilizes the *aphel* for the causative stem and the *alef* not only for the *status emphaticus* but also for the feminine morpheme and *III-yodh* verbs in 8.¹⁰

IV. Qeri/Ketiv Agreement in the Scrolls

Of the numerous words to which the Masorettes attached *qere* readings, there are 16 which could be checked in the Aramaic portions of Daniel from Qumran. Throughout the Daniel fragments the text agrees with the *ketiv* over against the *qere* among the 16 legible examples, with but three exceptions: וַיִּי — 4QDan^a 2:43, and a textual variant reflected in the versions and of special interest, אַתָּה, which occurs twice, 4QDan^a 2:23 and 29 (K = אַתָּה).

Since so many of the *qere* readings of MT reflect Babylonian Aramaic pronunciations of the text, it is not surprising to see the normal Babylonian form אַתָּה preferred by the Masorettes to the unique form אַתָּה, which is ubiquitous in Biblical Aramaic. The fact is that until the discovery of the scrolls אַתָּה was found nowhere but in Daniel (thirteen times). אַתָּה does not occur in the MT except in Ezra 7:25; nor does אַתָּה occur at Qumran except in 4QDan^a. אַתָּה is found at least eleven times in the Aramaic scrolls and is a frequent substitute of אַתָּה in the He-

⁸The rest of the scribes vary in two or more points throughout the Daniel fragments.

⁹Cf. E. Y. Kutscher, "The Language of the 'Genesis Apocryphon', A Preliminary Study," *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, Vol. IV (2nd ed, H. Rabin and Y. Yadin eds.; Jerusalem 1965) 1-35.

¹⁰ Similar in these categories to Targum Onkelos.

brew scrolls. It is one of the most notable "Qumran phenomena." Its exclusive use in the MT of Daniel and its avoidance in 4QDan^a is therefore rather puzzling.

4QDan^a is merely being consistent by avoiding "Qumran spellings." But why do we find this Qumran form in the MT, which is for the most part devoid of such "Qumran" forms (but cf. Dan. 2:41, 42 - חַוִּיתָהּ)? The fact that this form appears exclusively rules out scribal errors and indicates the probable existence of a scribal convention.

One might ask if it could be possible that a similar scribal convention might exist among the scrolls at Qumran. That is, are there any other texts that reflect a convention which uses אַתָּה exclusively but is devoid of any other Qumran forms? Due to the meager and fragmentary nature of most of the Qumran Aramaic scrolls, one might quickly give up hope of finding a likely candidate. But there is one interesting possibility.

The Testament of Levi exists as three scrolls at Qumran. Two have been published to date, 1QTL^e and 4QTL^e. The published fragments are meager but sufficient to make a fair sampling of the scrolls' orthography and morphology. The fragments have four occurrences of אַתָּה as opposed to אַתָּה (1QTL^e 7:1 and 4QTL^e 1:1, 10, 11). On the other hand, all other diagnostic forms are non-Qumran forms, with the exception of one, e.g.:

כָּל — is written defectively twice in 1QTL^e 8:2, 37:2 and twice in 4QTL^e 1:7, 17.

קִדְמוֹי — is written twice defectively in 4QTL^e 1:15, 16 (as opposed to קִדְמוֹי 4QDan^b 6:14).

ךְ — the second person singular pronominal suffix יךְ is written instead of כָּה־ six times between the two scrolls (1QTL^e once; 4QTL^e five times) with the sole exception of לכה in 4QTL^e 1:8).

To ascertain which reading is concerned with the original text of the book of Daniel, that is, אַתָּה or אַתָּה, however, is still not within our grasp. On the one hand, the comparison with the Testament of Levi shows that it is possible that a scribal school (that could have produced such a mixture as we have in the MT) may have once existed. On the other hand, there is no way to decide whether such a school actually originated the work or in fact only transmitted the work, adapting the morphology to its own scribal conventions. Also, it does not necessarily follow that the early forms that we find in 4QDan^a such as אַתָּה, which is twice written in place of אַתָּה in the MT, prove that the orthography and morphology of that scroll represent the original. (Archaizing and historical spelling are not uncommon among various scribal traditions.)

V. Sentence Division

Ever since the first biblical scrolls from Cave 1 were published, scholars have recognized that there are longer spaces of varying lengths left in the biblical texts, which often correspond with the *petuhot* and the *setumat* as well as with the chapter divisions of the MT. Spacing to indicate the end of a line or a verse is used only sparingly in a few of these scrolls.

This is precisely the situation reflected in most of the Qumran Daniel scrolls with the exception of two. In 4QDan^{a,d} a quite remarkable feature appears for the first time in the biblical scrolls. In our longest scroll, 4QDan^a, nearly every *sof passuq* of the MT is concurred with by a larger than usual space. These spaces are about twice the size of the normal break between words. From time to time the *athnah* also has a corresponding space. There are also several cases where words joined by *maqqef* in the MT have no space intervening at all. Examples include: 4QDan^a 2:19; יהבולה 2:48; and עלמשכך 2:28, to name a few.

A rather striking feature of 4QDan^d is that every *sof passuq* and nearly every *athnah* of the MT has a corresponding space of about one-half to one and one-half centimeters. The exceptions lie in broken texts where some of the versions have punctuation different from the MT or no punctuation at all.

From a close comparison of the space breaks with the MT and versions, it can be concluded that these divisions were intentional and were carefully placed. The scribes intended that the breaks reflect the proper pauses. Whether we have here a proto-Masoretic system of accentuation/punctuation or rather an unconnected pre-Masoretic system used by a pair of scribes based upon logical breaks and word clusters within a verse is clearly debatable and may be worthy of further investigation. We can say, however, that the scribes who copied these scrolls fully intended that the breaks would instruct the reader in the proper pauses and word clusters that he should note while reading from the text.

Conclusions

1. Aside from variations in orthography and morphology, the Qumran texts are almost identical to one another and, to a slightly lesser extent, to the present MT. Many textual variants are reflected in the LXX. However, the text of Qumran Daniel in no way represents the text of the Vorlage of the LXX.

2. The Qumran Daniel and Ezra manuscripts make nearly exclusive use of *Ḥ* for the *status emphaticus*.

3. The Qumran Daniel manuscripts make exclusive use of the *haphel* causative form.

4. The *ithpeel* was the preferred form over the *hithepeel* in the manuscripts of Daniel.

5. The Qumran manuscripts of Daniel in general agree with the *ketiv* reading and not the *qere*. Agreement with the *qere* reading is exceptional.

6. For the first time we can establish that at Qumran there were scribal conventions which broke paragraphs into logical pauses (both verse and occasionally mid-verse).

