

## THE BOOK OF DANIEL AND MATTERS OF LANGUAGE: EVIDENCES RELATING TO NAMES, WORDS, AND THE ARAMAIC LANGUAGE

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An increasing number of recent studies, including a full-fledged commentary with an extensive introduction by a British scholar,<sup>1</sup> evaluate historical, chronological, and linguistic matters in view of new discoveries and advanced studies, concluding that an early date (pre-Maccabean) for the whole book is mandatory.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the critical consensus for a second-century (Maccabean) date for the final recension<sup>3</sup> is maintained by other scholars with more or less traditional arguments.<sup>4</sup> This situation

<sup>1</sup>Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel* (London, 1978).

<sup>2</sup>E.g., B. K. Waltke, "The Date of the Book of Daniel," *BSac* 134 (1976): 319-329; G. F. Wenham, "Daniel: The Basic Issues," *Themelios* 2/2 (1976): 49-52; R. I. Vasholz, "Qumran and the Dating of Daniel," *JETS* 21/4 (1978): 315-321; G. L. Archer, "Modern Rationalism and the Book of Daniel," *BSac* 136 (1979): 129-147. See also the OT introductions by R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1969), pp. 1110-1133; H. D. Hummel, *The Word Becoming Flesh: An Introduction to the Origin, Purpose and Meaning of the Old Testament* (St. Louis, 1979), pp. 560-573; E. Yamauchi, "The Archaeological Background of Daniel," *BSac* 137 (1980): 3-16.

<sup>3</sup>A number of scholars argue for a pre-second-century origin of certain parts of the book of Daniel. E.g., P. R. Davies, "Daniel Chapter Two," *JTS* 27 (1976): 392-401, suggests a sixth-century origin for Dan 2 (p. 400); J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel* (Missoula, 1977), p. 19, suggests that Dan 1-6 are pre-Maccabean. A. R. Millard, "Daniel 1-6 and History," *EvQ* 49 (1977): 67-73, argues that Daniel retains a high proportion of correct detail and Dan 1-6 is of great value for its close correspondence to early records. More recently, P. R. Davies, "Eschatology in the Book of Daniel," *JSOT* 17 (1980): 33-53, argues for a Maccabean redaction of Dan 1-6 which was "earlier developed in the Diaspora" (p. 40). A. Lacocque, "The Liturgical Prayer in Daniel 9," *HUCA* 47 (1976): 119-142, makes a case for the prayer at the core of Dan 9 as being composed between 587 and 538 B.C. (p. 141).

<sup>4</sup>R. Hammer, *The Book of Daniel* (London/New York, 1976); L. F. Hartman and A. A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, AB 23 (Garden City, N.Y., 1978); A. Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel* (Atlanta, 1979).

calls for a new look at the various major arguments brought about by new discoveries and new investigations into old questions. In a previous issue in this journal I treated major historical matters concerning persons (Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius the Mede) and chronology (Dan 1:1; 7:1; 8:1; 9:1).<sup>5</sup> The present article concentrates on issues of a linguistic nature pertaining to (1) foreign names and words (Babylonian, Persian, and Greek) and (2) the type of the Aramaic in the book of Daniel. These matters serve as indicators for a date of the book of Daniel.

### 1. *Evidences Relating to Names and Words*

A number of significant historical and linguistic aspects throw new light on various disputed names and words in the book of Daniel.

#### *Babylonian Names*

The term "Chaldean" (Dan 2:2; 4:7; 5:7-11) has in its context been troublesome to various scholars. According to one theory, the equation of "Chaldean" with magicians, enchanters, and soothsayers (i.e., as a professional term, in addition to its ethnic meaning in Dan 3:8; 9:1) is an "undoubted anachronism"<sup>6</sup> for the time of Nebuchadnezzar, i.e., the sixth century B.C. It is argued in this case that "Chaldean" as a professional term was used in the Persian<sup>7</sup> and later periods, but not before.

Archaeological evidence indicates that the term "Chaldean" was used in an ethnic sense in Assyrian records of the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.,<sup>8</sup> but it is not found in either a professional or ethnic sense in Babylonian records of the sixth century B.C. as they are presently known or published. Although the Danielic usage is presently still unsupported in Babylonian records, while the ethnic sense is known from earlier Assyrian records and the

<sup>5</sup>G. F. Hasel, "The Book of Daniel and History: Evidences Relating to Persons and Chronology," *AUSS* 19 (1981): 37-49.

<sup>6</sup>N. Porteous, *Daniel: A Commentary* (London, 1965), pp. 25-26.

<sup>7</sup>Herodotus, *Histories* i. 181-183.

<sup>8</sup>Yamauchi, pp. 5-6; Millard, pp. 69-71; Baldwin, p. 29.

professional sense from later Persian times, "it is unwarranted to argue from silence that the word is anachronistic."<sup>9</sup>

*Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*

The three friends of Daniel were renamed by the Babylonian superior upon arrival at Babylon. Philologists in the past have been unable to explain these names adequately. It has been assumed or suggested time and again that these names were garbled or poorly transmitted forms of original Babylonian names containing names of pagan gods. Recently a German Assyriologist has shown that these names can be explained satisfactorily from Babylonian onomastics without supposing a poor transmission or conscious alteration. P.-R. Berger shows that the name Shadrach (Dan 1:6, 7, 11, 19), Hebrew *šadraq*, corresponds to the Assyrian *šādūrāku* and Babylonian *šūdūrāku*, meaning "I am put into much fear."<sup>10</sup> This is a type of shortened name in which the name of deity is omitted, something which happens frequently in Akkadian names.

The name of his friend Meshach, Hebrew *mēšaḳ*, corresponds to the Akkadian name *mēšāku*, meaning "I am of little account."<sup>11</sup> The name of the third companion is Abednego, Hebrew *ʿabednego*, and is of West Semitic origin. "Such West Semitic names were not unknown in Akkadian," writes Berger.<sup>12</sup> Its meaning is "Servant of the shining one"<sup>13</sup> and may possibly involve a word-play on an Akkadian name that includes the name of the Babylonian god Nābū.<sup>14</sup> In any case, the name itself does not contain the name of the deity Nābū or Nebo, as suggested by some.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Baldwin, p. 29.

<sup>10</sup>P.-R. Berger, "Der Kyros-Zylinder mit dem Zusatzfragment BIN II Nr. 32 und die akkadischen Personennamen im Danielbuch," *ZA* 64 (1975): 224, who renders the name in German as "ich bin sehr in Furcht versetzt."

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 225: "ich bin gering geachtet" of Berger's German translation.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 226.

<sup>14</sup>Millard, p. 72.

<sup>15</sup>See E. J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1949), p. 43.

These names as well as other Akkadian names in the book of Daniel correspond so closely to what is known from Babylonian onomastics that Berger suggests he would not be surprised if the names of Daniel and his companions would some day be discovered in Babylonian texts.<sup>16</sup> These Akkadian names fit perfectly into the time of the sixth century and pose no difficulty for a pre-Maccabean date of the the book of Daniel.

### *Persian Words*

There are some nineteen Persian loan words in the Aramaic part of Daniel. On statistical grounds, H. H. Rowley argued that this is an indication that the Biblical Aramaic of Daniel is much closer to the Aramaic of the Targums of the second and first centuries B.C. than to the Aramaic papyri of the fifth century B.C.<sup>17</sup> A careful investigation of the Persian loan words in Daniel shows that a statistical argumentation is without support. Thanks to the work of K. A. Kitchen, it is now known that Persian loan words in Daniel are consistent with an earlier rather than a later date for the composition of the book. Scholars have now become aware that the term "satrap," which was once thought to have been Greek in origin, was actually derived from the Old Persian form *kshathrapān*, which also occurred in cuneiform inscriptions as *shatarpānu*, giving rise to the Greek term "satrap."<sup>18</sup> That Persian words should be used of Babylonian institutions prior to the conquests of Cyrus need not be as surprising as has been supposed, since the work was written in the Persian rather than the Neo-Babylonian period. In the interests of objectivity it should be noted in passing that the Persian terms found in Daniel are specifically Old Persian words, that is to say, occurring within the history of the language to about 300 B.C. but not later.<sup>19</sup> These facts rule out a date for the origin of the Persian words after 300 B.C. The Persian words point to an early date for the book of Daniel rather than a late one.

<sup>16</sup>Berger, p. 234.

<sup>17</sup>H. H. Rowley, *The Aramaic of the Old Testament* (London, 1929), p. 139.

<sup>18</sup>K. A. Kitchen, "The Aramaic of Daniel," *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, ed. D. J. Wiseman, et al. (London, 1965), p. 36.

<sup>19</sup>Harrison, p. 1125.

### *Greek Words*

At the turn of the century, S. R. Driver claimed that "the [three] Greek words *demand*, . . . a date [for Daniel] after the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great (B.C. 332)." <sup>20</sup> The Greek terms under discussion are those of musical instruments such as "harp," "psaltery," and "sack-but" (Dan 3:5; cf. vss. 7, 10, 15).

The weakness of Driver's argument was pointed out by J. A. Montgomery, who wrote: "The rebuttal of this evidence for a low date lies in stressing the potentialities of Greek influence in the Orient from the sixth century and onward." <sup>21</sup> The famous orientalist W. F. Albright pointed out several decades ago that Greek culture had penetrated the ancient Near East long before the Neo-Babylonian period. <sup>22</sup> More recently E. M. Yamauchi's detailed study has illustrated with overwhelming evidence that this kind of influence of Greece on Babylon did indeed exist. <sup>23</sup>

The evidence for the influence of Greek culture on Babylon has not altered greatly the weight of the linguistic arguments in the debate concerning the date of the Aramaic section of the book of Daniel (Dan 2:4b-7:28). The recent Anchor Bible commentary on Daniel reiterates the position of standard critical orthodoxy: "The Greek names for the musical instruments in 3:5 probably do not antedate the reign of Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.)." <sup>24</sup> While P. W. Coxon notes that the Greek loan words "seem to provide the strongest evidence [for critical scholarship] in favor of the second century B.C.," <sup>25</sup> he demonstrates that the spelling of *qayt<sup>r</sup>ōs* ("lyre") was adopted into Aramaic in the pre-Hellenistic period. <sup>26</sup>

<sup>20</sup>S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (1897; reprint, New York, 1956), p. 508.

<sup>21</sup>J. A. Montgomery, *The Book of Daniel*, ICC [23], p. 22.

<sup>22</sup>W. F. Albright, *From Stone Age to Christianity*, 2d ed. (New York, 1957), p. 337.

<sup>23</sup>E. Yamauchi, *Greece and Babylon* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1967), p. 94.

<sup>24</sup>Hartman and Di Lella, p. 13.

<sup>25</sup>P. W. Coxon, "Greek Loan-Words and Alleged Greek Loan Translations in the Book of Daniel," *Glasgow University Oriental Society Transactions* 25 (1976): 24.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 31.

The second instrument *p<sup>e</sup>santērîn* in Dan 3:5 was, according to A. Sendry, a term for musical instruments originally imported from the east into Greece, improved by the Greeks, and in turn re-exported to the east.<sup>27</sup>

The third term, *sumpōn'ya*, is used in the Greek language as *sumphōnia*. The Greek term has an early meaning of a "sounding together"<sup>28</sup> or a "unison of sound," "concord," "harmonious union of many voices or sounds," or the like. Later it may have come to mean also a musical instrument.<sup>29</sup> The careful analysis of historical, linguistic, and cultural evidences related to this term has led Coxon to conclude that the use of this term, as far as the classical evidence is concerned and as it affects Dan 3, "must be pronounced neutral."<sup>30</sup>

This means that "the Greek words for musical instruments in the Aramaic are therefore no obstacle for a pre-Hellenistic date of Daniel's composition"<sup>31</sup> and "that a sixth-century date for the orchestra cannot be categorically denied."<sup>32</sup>

## 2. Evidences Relating to the Aramaic Language

The book of Daniel shares with the book of Ezra the unique phenomenon of being written in two different Semitic languages. The OT is, of course, written as a whole in Hebrew, the language of the ancient Israelites, with the exception of the longer sections of Ezra 4:8-6:18 and 7:12-26 and Dan 2:4b-7:28, which are written in Aramaic.

Aramaic was the language of the ancient Aramaeans, first mentioned in cuneiform texts from the twelfth century B.C. In the

<sup>27</sup>A. Sendry, *Music in Ancient Israel* (New York, 1969), p. 297; cf. Coxon, "Greek Loan-Words," pp. 31-32.

<sup>28</sup>Yamauchi, "Archaeological Background of Daniel," p. 12.

<sup>29</sup>Coxon, pp. 32-36.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>31</sup>Yamauchi, "Archaeological Background of Daniel," p. 13.

<sup>32</sup>T. C. Mitchell and R. Joyce, "The Musical Instruments in Nebuchadnezzar's Orchestra," *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, ed. D. J. Wiseman, et al. (London, 1965), p. 27. These authors reached this conclusion independently from the work of other researchers.

course of time, Aramaic superseded the various languages of conquered lands. From the eighth century on, Aramaic became the international language, the *lingua franca*, of the Near East, and the Israelites appear to have learned the Aramaic language during the exile. Historically, Aramaic is divided into several major groups: (1) "Ancient Aramaic" (*Altaramäisch*),<sup>33</sup> employed to 700 B.C.; (2) "Official Aramaic" (*Reichsaramäisch*), used "from 700 to 300 B.C.E.";<sup>34</sup> (3) "Middle Aramaic," used from "300 B.C.E. to the early centuries C.E. [Common Era]";<sup>35</sup> and (4) "Late Aramaic," employed thereafter.

### *The Old Debate Regarding Language*

The questions usually posed concerning the Aramaic in Daniel are these: How is the language of the book of Daniel to be classified? What does this classification indicate regarding the date of the book? Does the language represent "Official Aramaic," i.e., an early type of Aramaic (sixth/fifth century B.C.) or a later Aramaic (second century B.C.)?

S. R. Driver seems to have opened the debate in the year 1897 by concluding his discussion of the date and nature of the Aramaic of Daniel<sup>36</sup> by declaring that the Aramaic "*permits*" a date "*after the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great (B.C. 332).*"<sup>37</sup> He was followed by C. C. Torrey, who dated the Aramaic part of Daniel to the third/second century B.C.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>33</sup>See R. Degen, *Altaramäische Grammatik* (Wiesbaden, 1969), p. 103. S. Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik* (Leipzig, 1957), pp. 36-39, prefers to designate "Ancient Aramaic" as "Früharamäisch" (Early Aramaic) and extends its time to the middle of the seventh century B.C.

<sup>34</sup>So E. Y. Kutscher, "Aramaic," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1971), 2: 260. A description of its nature is provided by S. A. Kaufman, *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic*, Assyriological Studies, 19 (Chicago, 1974), pp. 155-160.

<sup>35</sup>Kutscher, p. 260.

<sup>36</sup>Driver, pp. 502-504.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 508 (italics his).

<sup>38</sup>C. C. Torrey, "Notes on the Aramaic Part of Daniel," *Transactions of The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* 15 (1909): 239-282; *idem*, "Stray Notes on the Aramaic of Daniel and Ezra," *JAOS* 43 (1923): 229-238.

Counter arguments against a late date of the Aramaic of Daniel came from conservative scholars of great repute such as R. D. Wilson, W. St. Clair Tisdall, and Charles Boutflower.<sup>39</sup> The result of these studies, defending the antiquity of the Aramaic of Daniel, was a countercharge on the part of scholars who dated the book of Daniel late.<sup>40</sup> Particularly important in this category is the classical position stated by H. H. Rowley.<sup>41</sup> However, as a result of the startling discovery of the Elephantine Papyri from Upper Egypt, which were written in Aramaic and dated from as early as the fifth century B.C., F. Rosenthal, following in the wake of the synthesis of H. H. Schaeder<sup>42</sup> and an important essay by J. Linder,<sup>43</sup> concluded in 1939 that the "old 'linguistic evidence' [for a late date of Daniel] has to be laid aside"<sup>44</sup> after four decades of research.

#### *New Evidence and New Solutions*

In 1965 Kitchen took up again the problem of the Aramaic in Daniel, in response to the unanswered claims of Rowley, who had written over three decades earlier. In the meantime, new Aramaic texts had been discovered<sup>45</sup> and the older ones

<sup>39</sup>R. D. Wilson, "The Aramaic of Daniel," *Biblical and Theological Studies* (Princeton, N.J., 1912), pp. 261-306; W. St. Clair Tisdall, "The Book of Daniel, Some Linguistic Evidence Regarding Its Date," *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute . . . of Great Britain* 23 (1921): 206-245; Charles Boutflower, *In and Around the Book of Daniel* (London, 1923), pp. 226, 267.

<sup>40</sup>G. R. Driver, "The Aramaic of the Book of Daniel," *JBL* 45 (1926): 110-119, 323-325; W. Baumgartner, "Das Aramäische im Buche Daniel," *ZAW* 45 (1927): 81-133; Montgomery, pp. 15-20; R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Oxford, 1929), pp. LXXVI-CVII.

<sup>41</sup>See Rowley's work cited in n. 17, above.

<sup>42</sup>H. H. Schaeder, *Iranische Beiträge I* (Halle/Saale, 1930), pp. 199-296.

<sup>43</sup>J. Linder, "Das Aramäische im Buche Daniel," *ZKT* 59 (1935): 503-545, argues on the basis of material provided by Schaeder. Linder concludes that the third-to-second-century date of Daniel can no longer be held. Thus there are no linguistic grounds against an early date of Daniel.

<sup>44</sup>F. Rosenthal, *Die aramäistische Forschung* (1939; reprint, Leiden, 1964), pp. 60-71, especially p. 70.

<sup>45</sup>A convenient summary of the known (by 1970) Aramaic texts down to the third century B.C. is provided by J. Naveh, *The Development of the Aramaic Script*,

had been studied more carefully. Kitchen examined the vocabulary, orthography, phonetics, and general morphology and syntax of the Aramaic of Daniel, and he reached the following conclusion: "The Aramaic of Daniel (and of Ezra) is simply a part of Imperial [Official] Aramaic—in itself, practically undatable with any conviction within c. 600 to 330 B.C."<sup>46</sup> This being so, there are no grounds on the basis of the Aramaic that force a date for the book of Daniel to the Maccabean period. As far as the Aramaic is concerned, a sixth/fifth-century date is entirely possible.<sup>47</sup>

H. H. Rowley contested the findings of Kitchen.<sup>48</sup> However, the criticisms of Rowley were scrutinized by E. Y. Kutscher in his authoritative survey of research of early Aramaic and were roundly refuted.<sup>49</sup> Kutscher had already shown that on the basis of word order the Aramaic of Daniel points to an Eastern origin, not a Western one that would be required if a Maccabean date in the second century B.C. were to be maintained.<sup>50</sup> Kitchen's conclusions are accepted, as well, by other leading scholars.<sup>51</sup>

The view that the Aramaic of Daniel belongs to "Official [Imperial] Aramaic" is held not only by Kitchen and Kutscher but also by a number of other scholars in the field of Aramaic studies, even though they may not hold to an early date for the book of Daniel.<sup>52</sup>

Proceedings of the Israeli Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 5 (Jerusalem, 1970).

<sup>46</sup>Kitchen, pp. 31-79, especially p. 75.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>48</sup>H. H. Rowley, Review of D. J. Wiseman, et al., *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, JSS 11 (1966): 112-116.

<sup>49</sup>E. Y. Kutscher, "Aramaic," *Current Trends in Linguistics* 6, ed. T. A. Seboek (The Hague, 1970), pp. 400-403.

<sup>50</sup>E. Y. Kutscher, "HaAramait HaMigrat-Aramit Mizrahit hi o Maaravit?" *First World Congress of Jewish Studies* I (Jerusalem, 1952), pp. 123-127.

<sup>51</sup>M. Sokoloff, *The Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI* (Ramat Gan, 1974), p. 9, n. 1; Wenham, p. 50; Millard, pp. 67-68; Baldwin, p. 34.

<sup>52</sup>J. J. Koopmans, *Aramäische Chrestomatie I* (Leiden, 1962), p. 154; F. Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, 2d ed. (Wiesbaden, 1963), p. 6, states: "The Aramaic of the Bible as written has preserved the Official Aramaic character." Cf. R. J. Williams, "Energic Verbal Forms in Hebrew," *Studies in the Ancient World*, eds. J. W. Wevers and D. B. Redford (Toronto, 1972), p. 78: "The Aramaic of the

The appearance of major documents in Aramaic from Qumran has also put new light on the language of Daniel as being of an early date. In the year 1956 the Aramaic *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen) was published.<sup>53</sup> On paleographical and linguistic grounds, it belongs to the first century B.C.<sup>54</sup> P. Winter has noted that the Aramaic of Daniel and Ezra is Official [Imperial] Aramaic, but that that of the *Genesis Apocryphon* is later.<sup>55</sup> This conclusion is confirmed by Kutscher<sup>56</sup> and particularly by Gleason L. Archer.<sup>57</sup> The latter has concluded on the basis of a careful study of the Aramaic language in Daniel and in the *Genesis Apocryphon* "that the Aramaic of Daniel comes from a considerably earlier period than the second century B.C."<sup>58</sup> More recently, he has written that the cumulative result of the linguistic evidence is "that the Aramaic of the [Genesis] Apocryphon is centuries later than that of Daniel and Ezra. Otherwise there is no such thing as linguistic evidence."<sup>59</sup> This conclusion has significant implications regarding the alleged Maccabean date for the book of Daniel; and it is

OT is in all essentials identical with Imperial Aramaic." See also J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon: A Commentary*, 2d ed. (Rome, 1971), p. 20, nn. 56, 60. Fitzmyer, however, suggests that Official Aramaic continued to the second century, B.C.

<sup>53</sup>N. Avigad and Y. Yadin, eds., *A Genesis Apocryphon: A Scroll from the Wilderness of Judaea* (Jerusalem, 1956).

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 21. Also E. Y. Kutscher, "Dating the Language of the Genesis Apocryphon," *JBL* 76 (1957): 288-292; B. Jongeling, et al., *Aramaic Texts from Qumran I*, pp. 5-6, 78-79; E. Y. Kutscher, "The Language of the 'Genesis Apocryphon,'" *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Scr. Hier. 4; 2d ed. (Jerusalem, 1965), pp. 1-35.

<sup>55</sup>P. Winter, "Das aramäische Genesis-Apokryphon," *TLZ* 4 (1957): 258-262.

<sup>56</sup>Kutscher, "Language of the 'Genesis Apocryphon,'" pp. 1-35.

<sup>57</sup>G. L. Archer, Jr., "The Aramaic of the 'Genesis Apocryphon' Compared with the Aramaic of Daniel," *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*, ed. J. B. Payne (Waco, Texas, 1970), pp. 160-169.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>59</sup>G. L. Archer, "Aramaic Language," *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, ed. M. C. Tenney (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1975), 1: 255.

becoming increasingly difficult, in view of the Aramaic documents among the Dead Sea Scrolls, to support or adhere to a second-century-B.C. date for the book of Daniel.

The most recent assault against the Maccabean date of the book of Daniel has been produced by the recent publication of the Job Targum (11QtgJob) from Cave 11 of Qumran.<sup>60</sup> This Aramaic document fills the gap of several centuries between the Aramaic of the books of Daniel and Ezra and later Aramaic. Scholars of various schools of thought agree that the Aramaic language of the Job Targum is younger than that of the book of Daniel and older than that of the *Genesis Apocryphon*.<sup>61</sup> The editors date the Job Targum in the second half of the second century B.C.<sup>62</sup>

The dating of the Aramaic of the Job Targum as being later than the Aramaic of the book of Daniel is important. The impact is reflected in the attempt to redate the whole development of post-biblical Aramaic. Stephen A. Kaufman of Hebrew Union College has concluded that "the language of 11QtgJob [Job Targum] differs significantly from that of the Aramaic of Daniel. . . ."<sup>63</sup> This being so, there must be some time between the Aramaic of Daniel and that of the Job Targum. Since Kaufman asserts that the book of Daniel "cannot have reached its final form until the middle of that [second] century,"<sup>64</sup> he is led to redate the Job Targum to the first century B.C. and the *Genesis Apocryphon* to the first century A.D.<sup>65</sup> This redating is suggested on the basis of fixing the date of Daniel in the second century B.C. However, Kitchen has pointed out correctly that the treatment and dating of the Aramaic of Daniel is apt to be colored by certain presuppositions.<sup>66</sup> Thus, one

<sup>60</sup>J. P. M. van der Ploeg and A. S. van der Woude, eds., *Le Targum de Job de la grotte XI de Qumran* (Leiden, 1971).

<sup>61</sup>E.g., T. Muraoka, "The Aramaic of the Old Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI," *JJS* 25 (1974): 442; S. A. Kaufman, "The Job Targum from Qumran," *JAOS* 93 (1973): 327; Jongeling, p. 5; and Vasholz, pp. 318-320.

<sup>62</sup>Van der Ploeg and van der Woude, p. 4.

<sup>63</sup>Kaufman, p. 327.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 317.

<sup>66</sup>Kitchen, p. 32.

can hardly be convinced that the problematical second-century date of Daniel is the kind of sure anchor needed for sequence dating in the development of post-biblical Aramaic.

The dating of the Job Targum as suggested on comparative evidence, and without the presupposition of a second-century date for the book of Daniel, now needs attention. On the basis of careful linguistic comparisons of the Aramaic of Daniel, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, and the Targums, it has been suggested recently by several experts in Aramaic studies that the Job Targum does indeed date from the second half of the second century B.C.<sup>67</sup> Others even argue that the Job Targum may go back to "the second half of the third century B.C. or the first half of the second century B.C."<sup>68</sup> If some significant amount of time is needed between the Job Targum and the widely acknowledged earlier Aramaic of the book of Daniel, then the Aramaic of the book of Daniel would point to at least an earlier date for the book than a certain branch of scholarship has been willing heretofore to admit. Thus the question of the Aramaic of Daniel as regards the date of Daniel is no longer in a stalemate situation. The Aramaic documents from Qumran<sup>69</sup> push the date of the composition into a period earlier than the Maccabean date allows.

The foregoing bird's-eye view of the debate about the Aramaic of the book of Daniel indicates that the present availability of Aramaic documents from various areas and differing periods of time has made suspect the major contentions in Rowley's study, *The Aramaic of the Old Testament*, published in 1929. His conclusion that "Biblical Aramaic stands somewhere between the Aramaic of the papyri and that of the Nabataean and Palmyrene inscriptions,"<sup>70</sup> i.e., in the second century B.C., is not only seriously

<sup>67</sup>Jongeling, et al., p. 6; Sokoloff, p. 25.

<sup>68</sup>Muraoka, p. 442; Vasholz, p. 319.

<sup>69</sup>It may be expected that the recent publications of Aramaic fragments of the books of Enoch will throw further light upon the development of post-biblical Aramaic, see J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4* (Oxford, 1976); J. A. Fitzmyer, "Implications of the New Enoch Literature from Qumran," *TS* 83 (1977): 332-345.

<sup>70</sup>Rowley, p. 11.

challenged on the basis of the Aramaic texts and materials from Qumran, but can no longer be maintained in view of the new evidence. Moreover, R. I. Vasholz's doctoral dissertation specifically compares the linguistic phenomena of the Job Targum with the Aramaic language of Daniel,<sup>71</sup> and Vasholz unambiguously concludes "that the evidence now available from Qumran indicates a pre-second-century date for the Aramaic of Daniel."<sup>72</sup>

More recently, Rowley's claims on the syntax of the Aramaic of Daniel have come under scrutiny in view of his deficient methodology and the vastly increased corpus of Aramaic documents now available for comparative analysis. In 1965, T. Muraoka published an essay which investigates a number of syntactical aspects involving the usage of periphrasis and the construct state in genitive expressions.<sup>73</sup> He concluded, among other things, that precedents for the periphrastic construction are inherent in the syntax of Official Aramaic and that its choice and application in the Aramaic of Daniel are fitting to the style of the writer and are not arbitrary.<sup>74</sup>

The matter of "the syntax of the Aramaic of Daniel" is also the subject of a recent investigation by Coxon.<sup>75</sup> He demonstrates that Rowley has gone wrong in seeing decisive differences between the syntax of the Aramaic of the book of Daniel and that of the earlier papyri of the fifth century B.C.

Coxon arrives at far-reaching conclusions: (1) The use of the imperfect of *hwh* with a participle shows that the Aramaic of Daniel is in agreement with the early Aramaic papyri.<sup>76</sup> (2) The genitive relationship in its various forms demonstrates that "we

<sup>71</sup>R. I. Vasholz, "A Philological Comparison of the Qumran Job Targum and Its Implications for the Dating of Daniel" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, 1976).

<sup>72</sup>Vasholz, "Qumran and the Dating of Daniel," p. 320.

<sup>73</sup>T. Muraoka, "Notes on the Syntax of Biblical Aramaic," *JSS* 11 (1966): 151-167.

<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 152-155.

<sup>75</sup>P. W. Coxon, "The Syntax of the Aramaic of *Daniel*: A Dialectical Study," *HUCA* 48 (1977): 107-122.

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 109.

are confronted by the syntax of Official Aramaic"<sup>77</sup> and not with that of later documents. (3) The usage of the preposition *l* cannot be employed as evidence for a date of the Aramaic of Daniel, because it is present in certain and absent in other early Aramaic papyri and present in some and absent in other Qumran materials.<sup>78</sup> (4) Various types of word orders—such as, the title “king” following the proper name, and the demonstrative pronoun following the substantive—are shown to be a part of the syntax of Official Aramaic.<sup>79</sup> (5) In the Aramaic in Daniel, verbs which express the idea of possibility, desire, command, purpose, etc., are constructed with *l* and the infinitive; and this phenomenon is found largely also in Official Aramaic.<sup>80</sup> (6) The “object-verb-subject” word order of verbal sentences in the Aramaic of Daniel and the sequence of “verb-object” in clauses without direct object reveals the freedom of word order in Official Aramaic<sup>81</sup> (it suggests also possible Akkadian influence<sup>82</sup>). (7) Study of consonantal mutations indicates that “the factors involved in historical spelling, in phonetic development and representation . . . opens up the possibility that the orthography of Biblical Aramaic belongs to an earlier period [than the second century B.C.] and stems from the idiosyncracies of Jewish scribal tradition.”<sup>83</sup>

### *The Current Reassessment*

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that the classical problems of the syntax and spelling of the Aramaic of Daniel used

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., pp. 112-114.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., pp. 115-116.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., pp. 116-118.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., pp. 118-119.

<sup>82</sup>See n. 34, above, where Kaufman's study, apparently not known to Coxon, is cited. E. Y. Kutscher, “Aramaic,” *Current Trends in Linguistics* 6 (1970): 400 (see also the citation in n. 50, above), has suggested that the word-order of Biblical Aramaic is of the Eastern type. This conclusion is supported by Coxon, who concludes that such a fundamental change in sentence structure “would certainly point to a date before the second century B.C.” (see “Syntax,” pp. 121-122; and “A Philological Note on Dan 5:3f.,” *ZAW* 89 [1977]: 275-276).

<sup>83</sup>Coxon, “The Problem of Consonantal Mutations in Biblical Aramaic,” *ZDMG* 129 (1979): 22.

in the past by certain scholars as support for an alleged late date and a Western provenance appear now in an entirely new light. The new evidence and reassessment point to a pre-second-century-B.C. date and to an Eastern (Babylonian) origin. On the basis of presently available evidence, the Aramaic of Daniel belongs to Official Aramaic and can have been written as early as the latter part of the sixth century B.C.; linguistic evidence is clearly against a date in the second century B.C. Even if the exact date of Daniel cannot be decided on linguistic grounds alone, there is abundant and compelling linguistic evidence against a second-century Palestinian origin.