

cannot be held continuously without changing quality and this explains the dissimilations and degeminations like Σαμβαθαιος etc. Besides, U. Schattner-Rieser (*L'araméen des manuscrits de la Mer Morte I. Grammaire*, Prahins 2004, pp. 48–49) has collected eleven Greek transcriptions showing that pretonic short vowels were still maintained in the 1st–2nd centuries A.D. The objection of T. Muraoka, contending that Greek phonotactics does not allow a word-initial ζβ and similar clusters (p. 31 and n. 213, p. 69, n. 290), is specious, for a prosthetic vowel could appear in such cases or an etymologically voiced consonant could change into a voiceless one, giving a form similar to σβέννῦμι, “to put out, to extinguish”. Since this never happens, while transcriptions like Βοικ- or Βοιχ- for /Bārk-/ never appear, Schattner-Rieser’s argument is perfectly valid. In any case, it is obvious that the vocalization of Biblical Aramaic reflects a later stage of Aramaic phonology. Some vocalizations proposed by the Author should therefore be corrected in order to bring them in agreement with the Greek transcriptions.

Very interesting for phonology are the spellings *hwrrt* for Urartu (1Q20, col. 10:12; 12:8; 17:9; cf. 1QIs^a 37:38) and *hdql'* (1Q20, col. 17:8; *pace* Muraoka) for Idiglat (Tigris) in Genesis Apocryphon, for they were apparently aimed at indicating an actual pronunciation of the toponyms. Such facts are not examined in the grammar, although they show that *aleph*, *hē*, and *heth* were not carrying the same phonetic value when the text was written.

A reference grammar of Standard Literary Aramaic, dealing with texts from the Hellenistic and early Roman periods, is a desideratum, but studies referring to particular sources, like those by S.E. Fassberg, R. Kutty, and A. Tal, or dealing with special questions are so far a prerequisite. The same can be said about Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Roman and Byzantine periods. The grammar under review can provisionally fill in these scholarly blanks and will certainly be used with great profit by specialists.

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Renaud J. Kutty, *Studies in the Syntax of Targum Jonathan to Samuel* (Ancient Near Eastern Studies. Supplement 30), Peeters, Leuven-Paris-Walpole MA, 2010. XIV + 285 pp.

The book under review is a slightly revised version of Renaud J. Kutty’s doctoral dissertation defended in January 2008 at Leiden University. To understand its purpose and its importance one should first situate it in the general frame of targumic studies and show the place of Targum Jonathan to the Prophets in the quite large field of targumic literature in the first millennium A.D.¹

¹ A large bibliography can be found in C. Tassin, *Targum*, in *Dictionnaire de la Bible. Supplément XIII*, Paris 2005, pp. 1*–343*.

Aramaic was the language of the majority of Jews before the end of the Persian period (539–333 B.C.) and the need of translating the Hebrew Bible into Aramaic was increasing steadily as the time was going by. First oral explanation was given for some parts of the Bible, following rules written partially down in the Mishnah, *Megillah* IV, 4-10, but going back at least to the end of the first century A.D., since Eliezer ben Hyrcanus is mentioned in this context. Beside the public oral explanation in the synagogue, still practiced by Yemenite Jews in the 20th century, translations were made and committed to writing for private reading and study, the oldest example of which is Targum Job from Qumran², the original of which may go back to the 3rd century B.C.

The synagogue played a role here, at least from the first century B.C. on, as shown by the Greek inscription found in 1913 by Raymond Weill in the excavation of the Ophel³. The inscription records the building of a synagogal compound in the first century, certainly before A.D. 70:

“Theodotos, son of Vettesos, priest and *archisynagôgos*, son of *archisynagôgos*, and grandson of *archisynagôgos*, built this synagogue for reading the Law and teaching the commandments, also the hospice, chambers and water installations for the service of visiting guests from abroad. This synagogue was founded by his ancestors and the elders and Simonides”.

The “teaching of the commandments” following the “reading of the Torah” seems to imply a liturgical practice of commented translations of the Bible into Greek or Aramaic. In fact, the Targums disclose a wish to understand the Bible rather than the bare need of a translation. No further trace is left of Theodotos’ synagogue, but one should also mention the synagogue of Gamla⁴, erected between 23 B.C. and 41 A.D., and the provisional synagogues at Herodium and at Masada, employed as such during the First Revolt.

The Aramaic translation of the Pentateuch and of the Prophets was in all likelihood committed to writing as early as the first century or the early second century A.D. It is known as Targum Onqelos to the Pentateuch and Targum Jonathan to the Prophets. These translations soon reached Babylonia, probably in the aftermath of the Second Revolt (132–135 A.D.). Babylonian Jews were speaking a different, East-Aramaic dialect, and these early Aramaic translations of the Bible became there the official Targum of the Babylonian schools. This saved them from destruction, but local copyists sometimes

² 11Q10 ; 4Q99-101 and 157 ; 2Q15.

³ For these excavations, see R. Weill, *La Cité de David. Compte rendu des fouilles exécutées à Jérusalem sur le site de la ville primitive. Campagne de 1913–1914*, Paris 1920, in particular p. 186 and pl. XXV. Cf. also L.-H. Vincent, *Découverte de la “Synagogue des affranchis” à Jérusalem*, “Revue Biblique” 30 (1921), pp. 247–277; idem, *La Cité de David d’après les fouilles de 1913–1914*, “Revue Biblique” 30 (1921), pp. 410–433, 541–569; F. Hüttenmeister and G. Reeg, *Die antiken Synagogen in Israel* (BTAVO B 12/1-2), Wiesbaden 1977, pp. 192–195; J. Naveh, ‘*Al p^esêpās w^e’eben*, Tel Aviv 1978, pp. 1–2.

⁴ D. Syon and Z. Yavor, *Gamla’ – Yāšān w^e-hādāš*, “Qadmoniot” 34 (2001), pp. 2–33, with former literature.

adapted their language to the East-Aramaic dialect of Babylonia, “to make it conform with the vernacular of the Babylonian Jews”⁵, and later provided the text with supralinear Babylonian vocalization. About the 4th–5th centuries A.D., other Aramaic versions of the Pentateuch were committed to writing in Palestine, resulting in a Samaritan Targum and in a Jewish Palestinian Targum, represented by the so-called Pseudo-Jonathan Targum or Targum Yerushalmi I, the Fragmentary Targum or Targum Yerushalmi II with several variants, and the Targum *Neofiti I*, which preserves a complete version of the Palestinian Targum. Targums to the Writings or Hagiographa, including the Books of Chronicles, were written down somewhat later. In contrast to the Pentateuch, represented in Aramaic by several Palestinian Targum traditions, no complete Palestinian Targum to the Prophets has survived. Variant traditions and the marginal glosses of *Codex Reuchlinianus 3* in the Badische Landesbibliothek (Karlsruhe), written in 1105/6, may refer to partial translations or to heterogeneous corrections and additions to Targum Jonathan.

The date and origin of Targum Onqelos and of Targum Jonathan were somewhat uncertain for a long period, because of their Babylonian vocalization and of their mixture of Eastern and Western Aramaic linguistic traits. The first requirement was a reliable text, not corrupted by later copyists. This was provided in the years 1959–1962 by the edition of Ms. Or. 2363 for Targum Onqelos, of Ms. Or. 2210 for the Former Prophets, and of Ms. Or. 2211 for the Latter Prophets, all from the British Library (formerly in the British Museum). The editor, Alexander Sperber (1897–1970), added a double critical apparatus, quoting vocalic and consonantal variants⁶. His edition is based on Yemenite manuscripts with supralinear post-Babylonian vocalization, a scribal tradition fostered in the Yemen⁷. A. Sperber chose manuscripts representative of the transition from the genuine Babylonian to the Yemenite vocalization, which is its younger offspring, or at least texts representative of the Yemenite vocalization in its older form (for the Prophets). In fact, Targum texts with genuine Babylonian vocalization are mainly preserved in fragmentary form and come mostly from the Cairo Genizah. In Sperber’s opinion, they could not provide a basis for a critical edition of the entire Targum Onqelos and the entire Targum Jonathan to the Prophets. Criticisms have been made of Sperber’s edition because of this neglect of genuinely Babylonian manuscripts, of the small number of Tiberian textual witnesses used, and of typographic errors.

However, although the Yemenite manuscripts should be distinguished from the Babylonian ones because of their system of vocalization, these manuscripts show a virtually identical consonantal text. Besides, even if the Babylonian punctuation is the earlier one, it does not belong to the original text of the Targum that did not have vowel

⁵ W. Bacher, *Targum*, in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* XII, New York–London 1906, p. 61.

⁶ A. Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic* I–III, Leiden 1959–1962.

⁷ For the Yemenite tradition of Babylonian Aramaic, cf. S. Morag, *Notes on the Vowel System of Babylonian Aramaic as Preserved in the Yemenite Tradition*, in: “Phonetica” 7 (1962), pp. 217–239; idem, *Babylonian Aramaic in the Yemenite Tradition: the Hollow Verb*, in: *Sefer Hanok Yalon*, Jerusalem 1963, pp. 182–220 (in Hebrew); idem, *Oral Tradition and Dialects*, in: *Proceedings of the International Conference on Semitic Studies*, Jerusalem 1969, pp. 180–189.

signs initially. As for the manuscripts with Tiberian vocalization, it is widely known that they contain many additions not shared by the Babylonian-Yemenite texts and rightly regarded as later expansions of the original translation. Moreover, their punctuation varies considerably and is not very reliable. Now, most typographic errors in Sperber's edition appear in the vocalization and in the Apparatus, while the occasional consonantal errors are easily recognizable⁸. Therefore, Sperber's "Bible in Aramaic" is rightly regarded as "the standard text edition", although another one is available nowadays thanks to E. Martínez Borobio's publication of genuine Babylonian texts of the Former Prophets⁹ and to Joseph Ribera Florit's edition of the Latter Prophets¹⁰. One should notice however that the lack of Babylonian texts obliged Martínez Borobio to reproduce the available fragments side by side and to use other manuscripts to fill the gaps (Eb 66, Eb 76, Ms. Or. 1471).

A. Sperber started collecting material for this work in his native town of Chernovtsy (Ukraine) as early as 1923. He begun preparing the publication in 1925 at the request of the *Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Berlin, and in 1926–1927 he published some preliminary results of his examination of Targum Jonathan to the Former Prophets¹¹, followed in 1934–1935 by an introductory chapter dealing with the variant readings of Targum Onqelos¹². The final results of his research appeared in 1959–1973¹³.

The language of the Targum of the Former Prophets was submitted to a detailed analysis by Abraham Tal¹⁴, who based his research on A. Sperber's edition. His grammatical treatment is focussed on phonological, orthographical, morphological, and lexical matters. The latter investigation area provides important data for the dating of the Targum, which contains a number of Mishnaic Hebrew loanwords belonging to the common daily vocabulary. This shows that it was written at the time when Mishnaic

⁸ R.P. Gordon, *Sperber's Edition of the Targum to the Prophets: A Critique*, "The Jewish Quarterly Review" 64 (1973–74), pp. 314–321. See also idem, *Foreword* to the reprinted edition of A. Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic I*, Leiden 1992.

⁹ E. Martínez Borobio, *Targum Jonatán de los Profetas primeros en tradición babilónica I. Josué-Jueces; II. I-II Samuel; III. I-II Reyes* (Textos y Estudios "Cardenal Cisneros"), Madrid 1987–1998.

¹⁰ J. Ribera Florit, *Biblia babilónica, Profetas posteriores (Targum)*, Salamanca 1977; idem, *El targum de Isaías: la versión aramea del profeta Isaías. Versión crítica*, Valencia 1988; idem, *Targum Jonatán de los Profetas posteriores en tradición babilónica I. Isaías; II. Jeremías; III. Ezequiel* (Textos y Estudios "Cardenal Cisneros"), Madrid 1988–1997; a fourth volume, anticipated by several articles, will contain the Twelve Minor Prophets; idem, *El targum de Jeremías: la versión aramea del profeta Jeremías. Versión crítica, introducción y notas*, Valencia 1992; idem, *El targum de Ezequiel*, Estella 2004.

¹¹ A. Sperber, *Zur Textgestalt des Prophetentargums*, "Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft" 44 (1926), pp. 175–176; idem, *Zur Sprache des Prophetentargums*, "Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft" 45 (1927), pp. 267–288.

¹² A. Sperber, *The Targum Onkelos in Its Relation to the Masoretic Hebrew Text*, "Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research" 6 (1934–35), pp. 309–351.

¹³ A. Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic I-IVB*, Leiden 1959–1973.

¹⁴ A. Tal, *L'ešōn ha-Targūm li-N'e'bi'im ri'šōnīm ū-ma'madah bi-k'lal niḥē ha-'arāmīt / The Language of the Targum of the Former Prophets and Its Position within the Aramaic Dialects*, Tel Aviv 1975.

Hebrew was still a living language¹⁵, thus before the Second Jewish Revolt (132–135 A.D.). This is confirmed by the rarity of Greek and Latin loanwords (45 in total), only nine of whom do not occur in Mishnaic Hebrew¹⁶. Their appearance reflects an early phase of Hellenistic influence in Palestine.

Abraham Tal did not examine the syntax of the Targum, although this is a quite stable linguistic area which is not influenced by the particular vocabulary and phraseology of a writer or a scribal school. The reason was probably the idea that the syntax follows the one of the Hebrew *Vorlage*. This might be correct to a certain degree, but a detailed analysis of syntactic aspects would undoubtedly reveal significant differences. These aspects are investigated at present by R.J. Kutý in I Samuel and II Samuel with special attention to five key topics of the syntax: the use of the states of the noun, i.e. formal determination or its lack, the morphosyntax of the numerals, the distribution of the various genitive constructions, the verbal system, and the word order. Kutý's study includes a comparative discussion of these syntactic features in the dialect of the Targum Jonathan and in other Aramaic writings, and attempts to show how the syntax of this Targum can shed light on the classification of its language in the large Aramaic language family, thus contributing to our knowledge of its origin and early history.

In this excellent piece of work Renaud J. Kutý thus made an important contribution to the “vexing question” of the origin of the Targum to the Prophets. As expected, the research is based essentially on the consonantal text. The Author begins by reviewing the present state of research in the introduction to his syntactical studies (p. 1–18). Without further comments, he uses Sperber's edition of the Targum to the Former Prophets, based on the Yemenite Ms.Or. 2210 of the British Library, dated 1469 A.D. Comparisons are made with the *Vorlage* of the Hebrew Masoretic text.

The use of the determination or *status emphaticus* is the topic of the first chapter (pp. 19–54). R.J. Kutý notes that the classical distinction of the absolute and emphatic state is observed in the plural (pp. 25–27). In the singular, formally feminine nouns display a clear preference for the *status emphaticus* ending in *-ā* (pp. 29–30), while formally masculine nouns are often used in the emphatic state despite their indetermination because of certain morphological, morphosyntactic or lexical factors that neutralize the classical distinction between the absolute and emphatic state (pp. 30–50). Globally one notices therefore a combination of East and West Aramaic features.

The second chapter deals with numerals (pp. 55–69), which do not present characteristics leading to a classification in a particular group of Aramaic dialects. The next chapter examines the genitival constructions (pp. 71–124). The proleptic *d*-relation makes up only 1.5% of all genitival phrases encountered in Targum Jonathan to Samuel (pp. 73, 100–101, 104), while the frequent use of the construct state and of the bare *d*-relation does not leave a direct clue for linguistic classification. However, the working

¹⁵ A. Tal, *L'šōn ha-Targūm li-N'bi'im*, pp. 174–175.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

of the two constructions in Targum Jonathan to Samuel and in Genesis Apocryphon from Qumran is strikingly similar (pp. 121–123).

This research is very detailed and accurate. The Author notices, for instance, that the construct state is hardly used with some nouns favouring the *d*-relation (p. 87), thus *m'ln*, “entrance” (e.g. *m'ln' d-gzr*, “the entrance of Gezer”), *msqn*, “ascent”, *mlk*, “king”, and *nhl*, “wadi”. He lists all the occurrences of the construction in question. The examples with *mlk* are quite numerous with the single exception of *mlk m'kh* in II Sam. 10:6 (p. 87, n. 47), but this is precisely a particular case, since Maacah can be a personal name that could be used in apposition (cf. the Septuagint). The Targumist apparently leaves the question open, since he writes neither *mlk' m'kh* nor *mlk' dm'kh*. One should notice that the following words *'lp gbr* rise a similar problem, since one would expect *'lp gbr'* in line with the general Targumist's usage in matter of determination (cf. p. 63, n. 31). Some thirty years ago, the reviewer had suggested to read *'allūf*, “leader of men”, but this passage of II Sam. 10:6 has a slightly different wording in the Qumran version of the Book of Samuel¹⁷ and Targum Jonathan seems to have been adapted to the Masoretic text without following the initial Targumist's usages. Similar cases might occur in I Sam. 14:26 and II Sam. 25:35, where Targum Jonathan respectively reads *bryz dbš* and *qšt nḥš'* instead of the expected *bryz ddbš* and *qšt dnḥš'* (p. 96, n. 74). Now, the Septuagint seems to translate another *Vorlage* in I Sam. 14:26 and the Greek translation of Hebrew *nḥwšh* in II Sam. 25:35 is missing in the Lagardian edition of the Septuagint, what is not surprising since this word overloads the verse. A further research of this kind could be helpful for the study of Targum Jonathan and for the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible.

Chapter IV deals with conjugations (pp. 125–194) and stresses the increasing importance of the participle *qātel*, used with or without *hwh*. The conjugation of Targum Jonathan to Samuel is heavily influenced by its Hebrew *Vorlage*, but its use of *q^etal* expressing anteriority, *yiqtol* referring to the future or indicating modality, and *qātel* signifying simultaneity comes close to the situation observed in Qumran Aramaic¹⁸. The word order in the verbal clause constitutes the topic of Chapter V (pp. 195–241). The regular sequence in Targum Jonathan to Samuel turns out to be verb-subject-object, but this pattern is of limited value for a linguistic classification of its Aramaic, since the Targum follows the word order of the Hebrew *Vorlage* in a great many cases. However, this order is prevalent also in Qumran Aramaic and in Nabataean, while at least the sequence verb-subject is the most frequent order in Palmyrene.

The discussion of the conjugations is based mainly on the graphic appearance of the forms without considering the semantic role of the stress-accent, which can be induced

¹⁷ É. Puech, *4QSamuel^a (4Q51): Notes épigraphiques et nouvelles identifications*, in: H. Ausloos, B. Lemmelijn, and M. Vervenne (eds.), *Florilegium Lovaniense. Studies in Septuagint and Textual Criticism in Honour of Florentino García Martínez* (BETL 224), Leuven 2008, pp. 373–386 (see p. 381). One can propose a slightly different restoration of the fragment, closer to the Masoretic text.

¹⁸ The appellation “Qumran Aramaic” qualifies texts found at Qumran and dating therefore from the Second Temple period. It does not imply that they were composed at Qumran.

sometimes from later vocalized traditions, like *wayyiqtol* < *wa-yíqtol* (accomplished), distinct from (*w^e*)*yiqtol* < (*wa-*)*yiqtól* (unaccomplished). The “accomplished” *yíqtol* occurs in early Hebrew poetry also without *wa*, like in Ugaritian poems, and it is present in II Sam. 22, what R.J. Kuty regards as “peculiar” (p. 144, n. 72). The Targumist understood these forms correctly and translated them with *q^etal*.

The general conclusions of R.J. Kuty’s work (pp. 243–251) locate the Aramaic of Targum Jonathan to Samuel among basically Middle Aramaic dialects with one distinctly Eastern feature of Late Aramaic, namely a subsystem of determination. This can be explained by the final redaction of the Targum in Babylonia, around the 4th century A.D., while the basic linguistic features point towards the Middle Aramaic period, more specifically the Qumran Aramaic. The sole notable difference is the disappearance of a formal distinction between jussive and imperfect (with a final *n*), like in Palmyrene and in Nabataean. This may suggest a slightly later date for the basic Aramaic of Targum Jonathan, possibly the period between the First (A.D. 66–73) and the Second Jewish Revolt (A.D. 132–135). The Yabnean period and context would appear as the most suitable setting in life for the redaction of Targum Jonathan, as well as of Targum Onqelos. The reviewer believes that the initial written form of Targum Jonathan was anterior to the fixing of a standardized and authoritative Hebrew text of the Prophets.

According to R.J. Kuty, the language of both Targums cannot be an Aramaic *κοινή* or Standard speech, contrary to the opinion of A. Tal and J.C. Greenfield¹⁹: it is a literary West-Aramaic dialect, continuing the literary tradition of the earlier period, but influenced in all likelihood by a Judaeen vernacular. Both Targums were subsequently transferred to Babylonia, probably in the aftermath of Bar Kokhba’s revolt, and were revised there around the 4th century A.D. They enjoyed such a prestige in Babylonian schools that their language, slightly adapted to local dialects and vocalized accordingly, even inspired the inscriptions of magic bowls, datable to the 5th–7th centuries A.D.²⁰

Targum Jonathan is quoted quite frequently by Rav Joseph bar Hiyya (270–333 A.D.), head of the Pumbedita Academy²¹. Thus, as early as the beginning of the 4th century A.D., Targum Jonathan was recognized in Babylonia as being of ancient authority. Hai ben Sherira (939–1038), gaon of Pumbedita, seems to have regarded Rav Joseph as its author, since he cites passages from the Targum in his commentary to *Tohorot*, adding: “Rav Joseph has translated”²². This opinion may simply result from Joseph’s frequent quotations

¹⁹ J.C. Greenfield, *Standard Literary Aramaic*, in: A. Caquot and D. Cohen (eds.), *Actes du Premier Congrès International de Linguistique Sémitique et Chamito-Sémitique*, The Hague 1974, pp. 280–289.

²⁰ S.A. Kaufman, *A Unique Magic Bowl from Nippur*, “Journal of Near Eastern Studies” 32 (1973), pp. 170–174, with two lines of Targum Jonathan to Jer. 2:2 and 2:1 or Ez. 21:23; Chr. Müller-Kessler, *The Earliest Evidence for Targum Onqelos from Babylonia and the Question of Its Dialect and Origin*, “Journal for the Aramaic Bible” 3 (2001), pp. 181–198, with the Aramaic version of Ex. 15 in Targum Onqelos.

²¹ Babylonian Talmud, *Moed Katan* 28b; *Sanhedrin* 94b; *Megillah* 3a.

²² Quoted in Alexander Kohut (ed.), *Arukh ha-shalem*, re-edited by Amram Kohut, Wien 1926, vol. II, p. 293a.

of the Targum, but A. Geiger already assumed that Rav Joseph bar Ḥiyya gave its final form to Targum Jonathan²³.

R.J. Kutty's book makes a significant contribution to the question of the origin and transmission of the Targum to the Prophets. Further studies of the kind²⁴, especially dedicated to the Latter Prophets, would certainly be welcome, although the numerous additions and paraphrases, written in a mixed dialect, make the research more difficult. Those interested in Aramaic linguistics, but also in the Biblical exegesis of the first and second centuries A.D., will find Kutty's study of particular value. It is provided with an ample bibliography (pp. 255–275) and a carefully prepared index of passages in Targum Jonathan to Samuel (pp. 277–285). The Author provided us with a work which is in all respects an outstanding contribution to the study of the Targums and to Aramaic linguistics.

Edward Lipiński

²³ A. Geiger, *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel*, Breslau 1857, pp. 163–164.

²⁴ Targum Jonathan to Judges has already been analyzed in great detail by Willem F. Smelik, *The Targum of Judges* (Oudtestamentische Studië 36), Leiden 1995. One may still record the old editions of Franz Praetorius, *Targum zu Josua in jemenischer Überlieferung*, Berlin 1899, and *Targum zum Buch der Richter in jemenischer Überlieferung*, Berlin 1900.