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ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES IN PASHTO

Although it is commonly accepted that the Pashto language should not be considered as related to Caucasian, Semitic or the Albanian languages and although it is classified among the Eastern Iranian rather than Indian languages, theories pertaining to Iranian or even Aryan languages cannot provide adequate explanation of the whole of its phonological, morphological and lexical system.

The reason of such a state of affairs must be looked for among external factors, such as ethnogenesis and history of the Afghan tribes. It was already before 1000 B. C. that the Iranians had ceased to be ethnically homogeneous; the process of disintegration of the Eastern Iranian community took place not later than in the 9th century B. C., and possibly even earlier than that. In any case, the group of Scythians who moved westwards about the 8th century B. C. already spoke a well formed Eastern Iranian dialect. Other Eastern Iranian tribes migrated to the East, some of them wandering towards Punjab¹. In this way in the 7th and 6th centuries B. C. the ancestors of the Eastern Iranian nations of today, as well as the Sakas, tribes closely related to Eastern Iranians, occupied the territory between Pamir and the north-western outskirts of India. It was at the same time that the Afghan tribes, whose tongue had already become differentiated from those of the ethnically related tribes of Yidgha and Munji,

¹ Грантовский, Э. А., *Ранняя история иранских племен передней Азии*, Москва 1970, pp. 354—358.

settled to the west of the Indus Valley²; most scholars consider the inhabitants of the Sulaiman Mountains as the aboriginal Pashtun population. Although no final explanation of their ethnogenesis has yet been provided, anthropological features of Afghan tribes point to the heterogenous character of their components³.

Apart from the variety of ethnical groups with whom the Pashtuns came into contact, one must also mention the pre-Aryan substratum which the Indian and Iranian tribes must have found on their new territories and about which we do not know much today.

Comparison of adjectives seems to be one of the numerous phenomena in Pashto language whose explanation cannot be provided solely in terms of the description of the family of languages to which Pashto belongs. In his *Grundriss der iranischen Philologie* Geiger stated that the flexional mode of comparison has not been preserved. However, he does not provide any explanation of this phenomenon⁴. Is it really true that no relics of flexional comparison have remained? What other linguistic device, and of what origin, was then employed to fill the gap? The only information that one finds in most grammars of Pashto⁵ is that the comparative is made by placing a preposition (and sometimes also an appropriate postposition) with the meaning of 'than' in front of the object to which something else is being compared, this object being expressed by means of a noun in an oblique case, while in the superlative the object is replaced by the

² Грантовский, Э. А., *Из истории восточноиранских племен на границах Индии*, in: „Краткие Сообщения Института Народов Азии“, 61, Москва 1963, p. 29.

³ Массон, В. М., Ромодин В. А., *История Афганистана*, I, Москва 1964, p. 19.

⁴ *Grundriss der iranischen Philologie*, Band II, Strassburg 1898—1901, p. 216.

⁵ D. L. R. Lorimer, *Pushtu. Part I. Syntax of colloquial Pashtu with chapters on the Persian and Indian elements in the modern language*, Oxford, 1915. Шафеев, Д. А., *Краткий грамматический очерк афганского языка* Зудин, П. Б., *Русско-афганский словарь*, Москва 1964, p. 1078. Дворянков, Н. А., *Язык пушту*, Москва 1960, p. 40.

word meaning 'all'. Sometimes additional information is provided concerning the formation of the superlative without the word 'all'; the explanation is followed by examples of such usage: instead of the object to which something else is being compared the plural of an adjective in an oblique case is used. Besides the types described, in her 1972 outline of Pashto lexicology Kalinina⁶ mentions also reduplication of adjectives — the device used to express the maximum concentration of a given quality.

In literal translation, the following comparative phrases might be formed from, e.g., the adjective 'big':

Comparativus: 'A big than B'

Superlativus: 1. 'A big than all'

2. 'A big of big' (or: 'A big than big')⁷

3. 'big-big'.

Such are in fact the most frequent (though not the only) analytical modes of comparison of adjectives in Pashto.

Considering the time at which each of these modes of comparison appeared in Pashto, one could arrange them in the following order:

1. relics of lexicalized adjectives in the comparative degree, once formed synthetically by means of a special suffix,
2. various types of analytical comparison,
3. lexical borrowings from Persian and Arabic.

Traces of old synthetic comparison are found in two lexemes: *kəšər* 'younger' and *məšər* 'older' (their meanings referring to both age and position). Their lexicalization is proved by the fact that they both serve as a basis for derivation of other words. They refer exclusively to people and have been preserved probably because of their close affiliation to the set of basic lexical items, such as 'son', 'brother', etc. Primarily their usage was not restricted to refer only to people. In Avesta we find *masyayā afš* 'great

⁶ Калинина, З. М., *Очерк лексикологии современного литературного пушту*, Москва 1972, p. 94.

⁷ The second occurrence of the adjective requires the plural form, which cannot be rendered in the English translation.

water' and *kasywḥam apam* 'of small waters'*. In contemporary Baluchi there is *kašnai gweta* 'little finger'.

The etymology of Afghan *məšar* and *kəšer* is given by Morgenstierne¹ who hypothetically derives final -r from -tar- (-r < *-θr < -tar-). This derivation is confirmed by Abayev¹⁰:

*kasyatara- > *kašθr > *kəšer*

Since these antonyms are found both in Avesta and in Old Persian (*maθvišta*)¹¹, they must have been used already at the time of the Iranian community which began to disintegrate as early as before 1000 B. C.¹² Is there anything that might prove the existence of these forms in Indo-Iranian or even Indo-European?

In his work about the language of the Khotan Sakas Bailey¹³ states that, in spite of the Greek μακρός ('long', 'high', 'great') the root *mas-* did not occur in Old Indian. Still there exists the word *kāsūtārī* 'short javelin', 'short spear'¹⁴ which attests the existence of the root *kas-* and justifies the hypothetical existence of its antonym. Bartholomae¹⁵ related Greek κακός 'worthless', 'second-rate', 'poor', 'ugly', 'coming from the vulgar herd' to Old Iranian *kasav-* 'small', 'minute', and Greek μασσων 'longer' — to Old Iranian *masyah* — 'bigger'¹⁶. Significantly enough, the basic meaning of the positive degree of Old Iranian *masyah-* was also 'long'¹⁷. Perhaps one should also mention in this place

⁸ A. Debrunner, *Die Nominalsuffixe*, in: Wackernagel, J., *Altindische Grammatik*, Band II, 2, Göttingen 1954, p. 44.

⁹ G. Morgenstierne, *An etymological vocabulary of Pashto*, Oslo 1927.

¹⁰ Абаев, В. И., *Историко-этимологический словарь осетинского языка*, I, Москва—Ленинград 1958, p. 630.

¹¹ Ch. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, 2. unveränderte Auflage, Berlin 1961, p. 1155.

¹² Cf. fn. 1.

¹³ H. W. Bailey, *Sad-dharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra, The Summary in Khotan Saka*, Canberra 1971, p. 16.

¹⁴ Cf. fn. 8, p. 603.

¹⁵ Cf. fn. 11, p. 459.

¹⁶ Cf. fn. 11, p. 1155.

¹⁷ G. Morgenstierne, *Report on a linguistic mission to Afghanistan*, Oslo 1926, p. 12.

Lithuanian *kašeti* 'become slim(er)' and compare this form with New Persian *kāstan* 'to make smaller', 'to shorten'.

All these examples provide evidence for the very ancient origin of the roots in *mešer* and *kešer*. The comparative suffix -tara-, later transformed into final -r, which occurred parallel both in Iranian and Indian languages, is equally old. It comes from the pra-Indo-European secondary suffix -tero- which expressed opposition between a pair of concepts. It is due to this meaning that -tero- developed into the suffix used to form the comparative degree adjectives in Greek and the Indo-Iranian group¹⁸.

It is difficult to establish at what particular time the tendency to replace the synthetical mode of comparison, already felt as less expressive, with the analytical type began to spread in the Eastern Iranian dialects which gave origin to the Pashto language. However, generally speaking, in these dialects the Old Iranian nominal flexion was preserved to a larger extent than in the Western group¹⁹. It is possible that the first linguistic manifestations of this tendency occurred after the group of Scythian that migrated westwards had separated from the rest of the community and the ancestors of Pashtuns, Sakas, Yidgha, Munji and some other closely related ethnical groups moved to the East. Such a hypothesis is justified by the fact that the majority of languages of this particular group of tribes provides evidence of the tendency — stronger in some languages and weaker in others — to replace the synthetic mode of comparison with an analytical type, while in Ossetic language — in spite of its strict isolation from other Iranian languages — the comparative suffix (-dār or -tār)²⁰ has been preserved till now. In any case, the process could not have started before the 7th century B. C.

If we took a map of Middle Asia and marked in some conventional way, say with dots, the area of Iranian languages and dialects which employ the analytical mode of comparison of adjectives

¹⁷ Cf. fn. 11, p. 1154.

¹⁸ A. Meillet, *Wstęp do językoznawstwa indoeuropejskiego*, Warszawa 1958, pp. 230—231.

¹⁹ Оранский, И. М., *Иранские языки*, Москва 1963, p. 180.

²⁰ V. I. Abayev, *A grammatical sketch of Ossetic*, Mouton & Co., The Hague 1964, p. 20.

tives, and in some other way, say with lines — the territory of synthetic comparison, we would obtain the following picture: moving from the north to the south, we should first observe a horizontal zone marked with lines and covering the territory of the Tajik, Wanji, Yazghulami, Bartangi and Roshani languages. Next, there would be the mixed zone of those languages which had partially lost the synthetic mode of comparison: Sarikoli, Shughni, Wakhi, Ishkashmi, Munji. The extent of this loss differs in different languages: most often the suffix of the comparative degree remains while the superlative is formed analytically. Sometimes also the use of the suffix is optional. No language exists in which the suffix of the superlative would be the only one to remain, which is a manifestation of a more general tendency: the suffixes of the superlative are the first to disappear, as they are both less frequently used and easier to replace. The superlative can be easily expressed by means of the comparative: 'A is bigger than all'. The lowest zone would be all covered with dots, representing the languages with analytic systems of comparison: Pashto, Dari, Yidgha, Ormuri and also the Dardic languages, partially classified as Indian and partially as Iranian. In general, there are hardly any exceptions in any of those zones, and those few which do occur can be explained. Baluchi, for instance, although placed in the lowest zone, employs mainly the synthetic mode of comparison, even though in some of its dialects adjectives are already compared analytically and the use of the suffix is optional. Still it is generally recognized that Baluchi belongs to the Western Iranian group of languages and that the first Baluchi tribes reached the borders of Sind only in the 13th century, while their regular settlement began during the following centuries²¹. Among the Dardic languages such an exception is constituted by the Pashai dialects, used in the southern part of the Afghan Nuristan whose inhabitants had always lived in isolation; they adopted Islam only in the 19th century and antropologically they differ markedly from other tribes. The variety of Persian spoken in Afghanistan, i. e. the Dari language, as it has become called in recent years, shows another peculiarity. Even though it has re-

²¹ *Encyclopédie de l'islam*, Leyd—Paris 1960, p. 1036.

tained a productive suffix of the comparative and superlative, the analytical mode of comparison, used both in dialectal and literary variations, is most characteristic²², even though the Persian language reached those territories some dozen centuries after the East-Iranian, though it belongs to the Western languages and as such, it could be considered an exception. Both Baluchi and Dari prove that the analytical mode of comparison is very 'infectious' on those territories. On the other hand, however, a change of this kind seems relatively easy to transmit from one language to another through mild and readily accepted stylistic innovations.

It proves interesting to consider the map in its diachronic aspect by placing upon it the Avestian, Sakian, Khvarazmian or Sogdian languages (in so far as it is possible in view of our present knowledge of those languages). We shall then notice that all these languages also conform to the rule governing each zone. Thus, it was not time that was the chief factor in the process of change of the mode of comparison but the geographical movement southwards, towards the Indian Peninsula. If we also take into consideration the fact that New Indian languages (Sindhi, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, and Gujarati) have also developed a mode of analytical comparison, justification is provided for the hypothesis that the stimulus which caused replacing synthetic comparison with a new model in Pashto was connected with the geographical territory of Punjab rather than with the influences of the Turkish or Mongolian nations with whom the Iranians also entered into contacts and who still live in Afghanistan and employ very similar devices of analytical comparison. In any case, those influences could not have functioned as a decisive factor: they could only — to some extent — promote the process in its late stages of grammaticalization of the new forms, and even that was done only through lack of collision between particular system; even more so, that — for prestige reason — the Turks and Mongolians in general learned Persian rather than Pashto. (For instance, the Mongolian Hazaras in Afghanistan have almost completely lost

²² Дорофеева, Л. Н., *Язык фарси-кабули*, Москва 1960, p. 37 and Пахалина, Т. Н., *К характеристике кабульского просторечья* in: *Индийска и иранская филология*, Москва 1964, p. 53.

their original language)²³. Moreover, they settled in these territories too late, i. e. already after the Pashto language had been shaped. In addition, the Altaic languages should have influenced most strongly the northern zone; and yet it is just there that the synthetic mode of comparison was preserved.

The concept of foreign influence prior to the settlement of Eastern Iranians in Middle Asia does not seem justified either, as the period between the disintegration of the Eastern Iranian community and the settlement was relatively short. It is assumed that they were there as early as the 7th and 6th centuries B. C.²⁴

Even though much has been said about the Indianisation of Pashto, it does not seem right to overestimate the influence of the Indian languages which began to employ the analytical mode of comparison of adjectives after Pashto had already developed into a language very similar to the one which is spoken today. The late influence of the Indian languages can be perhaps treated only as the proverbial finishing stroke of the brush: it caused that as the result of the process of shaping the new model of comparison there appeared some patterns which often make the impression of being calques from New Indian languages. (For instance, in his work on the languages of India Grierson quotes an Afghan story about Pashtuns who spoke both Pashto and Hindki²⁵. And with habitual parallel use of two languages, features of one of them are automatically transferred into the other). Thus, the influence of New Indian languages must be quite legitimately limited to the last millenium. And what happened before that time?

One should assume the existence of some factor which must have brought about the same tendencies and caused the same effects all over the vast territory of Dardic, Indo-Aryan and Iranian (those which are spoken in the territories closest to Deccan)

²³ L. Ligeti, *О монгольских и тюркских языках и диалектах Афганистана*, Acta orientalia Academiae scientiarum Hungaricae, t. IV, Budapest 1955, pp. 99—100 and Эфимов, В. А., *Язык афганских хазара*, Москва 1965, p. 8.

²⁴ Cf. fn. 2.

²⁵ G. Grierson G., *Linguistic Survey of India*, T. X, Calcutta 1921, p. 63.

languages. The substratum must have influenced the Pashto language directly rather than through the Indo-Aryan languages and in some respects this influence was even stronger than in the case of these latter; such an assumption is confirmed by the number of retroflex phonemes which are much more numerous in Pashto than in the Indo-Aryan languages. (It is interesting that in one of the dialects spoken near Kandahar the opposition between retroflex and non-retroflex phonemes disappeared altogether, the retroflex phonemes being the only ones that were left). Such a phenomenon cannot be ascribed to the Indo-Aryan influences²⁶. Moreover, as was noticed already by Morgenstierne, retroflex sounds occur in Pashto not only in Indian borrowings but also in numerous words of obscure origin which include phonemes alien to the Indian systems²⁷.

Before the problem of establishing the nature of substratum can be solved, the Mohenjodaro and Harappa script must be deciphered and the question concerning the origins of the creators of the whole civilization answered. So far, no satisfactory explanation has been offered. Taking into consideration, among other things, the existence of an enclave of a Dravidian language Brahui in Punjab, which once must have covered an area much larger than today, most scholars tend to assume that the territory was inhabited by Dravidian peoples and that the language of the inscription must be considered a member of the Dravidian group. Obviously, the Dravidians themselves could have well constituted a superstratum on that territory²⁸.

Did Brahui itself influence Pashto in any way? Even though nowadays its system of comparison employs the suffix *-tir*, a borrowing from Baluchi²⁹, before the Baluchi surrounded and then penetrated its territory, like other Dravidian languages, it must

²⁶ Дворянков Н. А., *О взаимоотношении пашту с индийскими языками*, Языки Индии, Пакистана, Непала и Цейлона, Москва 1971, p. 412.

²⁷ Morgenstierne, G. *Report on a linguistic mission to Afghanistan*, Oslo 1926, p. 12.

²⁸ *Journal of Tamil Studies*, special number on the decipherment of the Mohenjodaro script, Volume II, number 1, Madras 1970.

²⁹ Андронов, М. С., *Язык брауи*, Москва 1971, p. 53.

have possessed a syntactic mode of comparison. (After the two peoples came into contact, an exchange took place: Brahui adopted the synthetic mode of comparison while Baluchi partially assimilated the analytic system). The works of Arabic and Persian writers and travellers of the 10th and 11th centuries convey the information that some Afghan tribes, mixed with the Brahui, lived on the south-western side of the Sulaiman Mountains as early as at the beginning of the process of Arabic expansion in Northern India, that is in the first quarter of the 8th century³⁰. It is not known when they first came there. One of the manifestations of the Brahui influence upon the Afghan language, somehow connected with the emphatic comparison by reduplication of the adjective, is the rule of the formation of the so called 'echo-words'. In Brahui such echo-words are formed by replacing the word initial consonant with the consonant *m*- or adding the consonant *m*- to the word beginning with a vowel. Thus the echo from *urā* 'house' is *murā*, the echo from *ullī* 'horse' — *mulī*, etc. The echoes do not have individual existence; they are always used together with the words from which they had been derived. Thus one says: *urā-murā*, *ullī-mulī*, etc., which is a sort of reduplication³¹. In Pashto, nearly all echoes are formed in the same way³². Since construction of this type of repetitions was originally taken from Brahui, one cannot exclude the possibility of this influence upon grammaticalization of comparison by reduplication in Pashto. In Persian, repetitions of an adjective is never considered as equivalent to comparison³³ and in Mongolian and Turkish, even though it functions as a kind of intensivum, it is rarely formed by repeating the whole adjective. More often the first element of the compound is either reduced or transformed. It also happens in appropriate contexts that such repetitions are used to express the idea of the reduced intensity of a given quality. (Eg. Turkish *mavi-mavi*

³⁰ Кудрявцев, М. К., *Об этническом составе армий мусульманских завоевателей Индии*, in: Этническая история народов Азии, Москва 1972, p. 177.

³¹ Cf. fn. 29, pp. 123—124.

³² Cf. fn. 6, pp. 98—100.

³³ M. Shaki, *A study on nominal compounds in Neo-Persian*, Praha 1964, pp. 62—67.

can acquire the meaning of 'slightly blue', 'bluish')³⁴. The rules of the formation of echo-words are also different. The significance of echo-words in the present argument is due to the fact that such a device, not unlike reduplication, constitutes a linguistic habit which seems easy to adopt, even with inadequate knowledge of the given foreign language.

However, the assumption that the absorbed substratum which played an important part in the process of the formation of analytical modes of comparison of adjectives in Pashto was of Dravidian origin is mainly based upon the significant feature of Dravidian languages: in those languages no comparative or superlative suffixes have existed that would be added to adjectives; instead, they employ certain syntactic structures, in general almost identical to those used in Pashto. Thus the object to which something else is being compared is expressed by means of a noun in an oblique case (ablativus or locativus) and is preceded by a preposition; the adjective itself is in the positive degree. The superlative is formally the same; the only difference is that the object to which something is being compared represents the whole group of objects or is replaced by the adverb 'all'. Another form of the superlative is complete reduplication of the adjective³⁵. All these types are also found in Pashto.

When investigating the formation of the analytical system of comparison one must obviously consider also the internal factors, such as the so called analytical tendency which occurs in the development of flexional languages: grammatical categories which were originally formed by means of flexional forms are gradually replaced with special and separate exponents, i.e. individual words with particular grammatical functions, eg. prepositions. Disappearance of comparative and superlative suffixes in the group of dialects from which Pashto originated might have been promoted by mere isolation from other Iranian languages: their example ceased to exert its influence and good conditions were created for the operation of the law of minimal effort, a general

³⁴ Аганин, Р. А., *Повторы и однородные парные сочетания в современном турецком языке*, Москва 1959, p. 102.

³⁵ R. Caldwell, *A comparative grammar of the Dravidian or South-Indian family of languages*, London 1913, pp. 316—318.

mental tendency which is manifested also in language; as the result of this tendency, the elements of language which are no longer considered necessary, disappear. Especially with relative comparison, that is when the adjective occurs within a context, the suffix proves unnecessary as even without it the communicative load is preserved. The devices used to fill the gap again are also limited. Independently of their mental habits, certain basic features can be undoubtedly found in all populations, no matter how much they might differ. There exists a universal system of logic, common to the whole mankind and basic logical categories occur in languages spoken by all people who can think. It is those categories of logic that provide the basis for the categories of grammar³⁶. Therefore it is possible that two languages which are not mutually related or exposed to any common influence develop very similar models of analytical comparison. Comparison of adjectives is a linguistic phenomenon in which the logical and grammatical categories overlap to a great extent. Then why should one believe that Pashto, which at the time of its development came into numerous contacts with numerous languages that employ analytical systems of comparison, was in this respect influenced just by a Dravidian substratum rather than by some other languages? Such an assumption is justified because the similarities are most numerous when one juxtaposes the Afghan comparison against the Dravidian system; moreover, there exist some other manifestations of this influence, as well as certain borrowings from Brahui. In addition, the frequency of occurrence of the superlative formed by means of reduplication increases towards the territory of Deccan. The above regularity is confirmed both by anthropological and historical data.

However, even though the theory of the Dravidian substratum provides an explanation of the structures of the type 'A big than B', 'A big than all' and 'big-big', it does not justify the occurrence of the phrase of the type 'big of big', a formation which in Pashto clearly employs the genitive exponent, i.e. a preposition followed by a plural adjective in an oblique case.

Where else do we find similar structures? They occur in the so called Asianic (eg. Elamite or Basque) and Turkish languages.

³⁶ J. Vendryes, *Język*, Warszawa 1956, p. 111.

In Turkish, however, like in Pashto, it is a device of a foreign origin³⁷. Is it possible that the Eastern Iranian languages in Middle Asia could have absorbed a substratum of the Asianic origin? Such a possibility cannot be definitely excluded. On the borderland between Pamir and India there still exists an Asianic remnant: the Burushaski language, which proves that the Asianic league must have reached far enough to cover these territories. Contacts with such a substratum may be confirmed by the occurrence of some other similarities, eg. vigenticimal system of counting in the Hindu Kush region³⁸.

The superlative structure 'A big than big', which also occurs in some New Indian and Dardic languages, is a hybrid of the phrases of the type 'A big than all' and 'big of big'.

The last mode of comparison of adjectives employed in the Afghan language that remains to be discussed is the system of lexical borrowings from Persian and Arabic. The Arabic borrowings are less numerous. Arabic elativus, formed after the *af'alu* pattern, is sometimes used to express the comparative degree, in the way very similar to the usage of the lexemes *kešer* and *mešer*. Thus Arabic *aršad* can be used to replace *mešer* when the speaker refers to a person's rank or position. These lexical elements penetrated into Pashto not only through the influence of Persian. In Persian there is about 40 per cent words of Arabic origin while Pashto has more than 50 per cent³⁹. Arabic borrowings, which clearly indicates that there must have been direct contacts between these two languages. Besides personal contacts, the borrowings appeared as the result of studying the Koran and reading works by Arabic authors.

Borrowings from Persian, with the comparative suffix *-tar* and the superlative suffix *-tarin* added to Persian adjectives and words that the Persians took from Arabic, are more numerous. The way of their penetration into Pashto does not require any special explanation in view of the important part that the Persian language

³⁷ A. von Gabain, *Altürkische Grammatik*, Leipzig 1941, p. 172.

³⁸ Розенберг, Б. *Материалы по двадцатному счету*, in: *Языковые проблемы по числительным*, Ленинград 1927, p. 169.

³⁹ W. Skalmowski, *A note on Persian and Arabic loanwords in Pushto*, *Folia Orientalia*, t. VII, Kraków 1966, p. 314.

has been playing in Afghanistan. Most Pashtuns are actually bilingual, and lexical items are transferred from one language into the other with total freedom whenever there occurs a need for such a transplantation. They often appear in poems (though not in folk poetry) and in those texts which are published with disregard for puristic ambitions. The Afghan classics did not restrain themselves from using them either.

The investigation of the process of development of the system of analytical comparison in Eastern Iranian languages is especially difficult because most of the peoples who speak those languages have no literary tradition. It does not exist in any of the languages of Pamir and inside the group of Dardic languages, Kashmiri is the only one which has its own literature, even though its literary tradition is of relatively recent origin. The Dravidian language Brahui has never had any writing and it is only now that the first steps towards creating a literature are taken. Such samples of these languages and dialects as have been collected in recent years do not prove ideal as the source of information about the actual system of comparison: they were not collected with this aim in view, and consequently all significant findings are purely accidental. The extant descriptive grammars are also very reticent on this subject, if they deal with it at all. Even the Pashto language itself does not make the task any easier, even though it possesses some literary relics. The oldest of those come from the period between the 12th and the 15th centuries. As far as earlier Pashto literature is concerned, some poems are also known which, although composed in the 8th—11th centuries, have been preserved in manuscripts of a definitely later origin⁴⁰. Nothing is known today about any writings that might have been created earlier than that. Dating the origins of the first relics is also the subject of many controversies; the 13th century and the 'Anthology of Afghan Saints' by Suleiman Maku is generally quoted as the most reliable date⁴¹. All these factors contribute to the character of present discussion which, out of necessity, must be tentative and hypothetical.

⁴⁰ Дворянков Н. А., Introduction to Асланов, М. Г., *Афганско-русский словарь (пушту)*, Москва 1966, p. 6.

⁴¹ *Большая советская энциклопедия*, Москва 1970, 2, p. 428.

BASTIAAN JONGELING

THE JOB TARGUM FROM QUMRAN CAVE 11 (11QtgJob)

1. THE MANUSCRIPT

Among the numerous manuscripts which from 1947 onwards turned up from several caves in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea¹ the Aramaic book of Job from cave 11, which was edited in 1971 with introduction, translation and notes², takes an important place.

The manuscript is in the possession of the Palestine Archaeological Museum in Jerusalem, which bought it, together with other manuscripts from the same cave, from Bedouins of the desert of Judah who discovered the cave in 1956. Another manuscript of the same lot contained not only a great number of Psalms known already from the canonical book of Psalms (but often appearing

¹ There are many general works on the finds in the desert of Judah, e.g. M. Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, New York 1955/London 1956, which has been translated into several languages; *More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, New York/London 1958, translated into German, French and Swedish; in Eastern Europe: W. Tyloch, *Rekopisy z Qumran nad Morzem Martwym*, Warszawa 1963; I. D. Amusin published the first volume of *Teksty Kumrana*, Moskva 1971. A most interesting account of the beginning of the discoveries has been written by J. C. Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, Westwood N. J. 1965; German edition: *Das Abenteuer von Qumran*, Kasel 1967.

² J. P. M. van der Ploeg, O. P. et A. S. van der Woude (avec la collaboration de B. Jongeling), *Le Targum de Job de la grotte XI de Qumran*, Leiden 1971.