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II

A FIHRIST OF SA'ADYA'S WORKS

IBN DAUD mentions in his historical work (*l.c.*, 66) as a source for Sa'adya's biography an epistle which the Gaon's son, Dosa, sent to the celebrated Jewish statesman in Spain, Ḥasdai ibn Shaprut. Dosa was hitherto the only known son of Sa'adya.¹ T.-S. 6 J 9¹ (paper, square writing, damaged, left-hand side torn) contains an interesting list of his works. The colophon of the fragment shows that the MS. dates from Tishri 1425 Sel. (= 1113 C. E.). But the list itself was copied from one which *two* of the Gaon's sons, Sheerit Alluf and his brother Dosa, composed on request when eleven years had not yet passed since the demise in 942 of their great father. We are given the exact time and date when the Gaon died, viz. at the end of the second third of Sunday night, Iyyar 26th, 1253 Sel., corresponding to May 15th, 942 C. E. From Sherira's Letter (*l.c.* 40, ll. 1-2) we know that Sa'adya became Gaon of Sura in Iyyar 928 C. E. Our fragment tells us that his connexion with this academy lasted for fourteen years less four days. Accordingly his accession to the Gaonate took place on Thursday, Iyyar 22nd = May 15th, 928 C. E. Finally, according to Ibn Daud, the Gaon's life lasted for about fifty years, and this has hitherto been the general opinion. But

¹ See especially Poznański's biography of Dosa in *Haggoren*, VI, 41 ff.

our Fihrist states that his life fell short of sixty years by some forty and odd days (see verso, l. 5).² Needless to say the latter number is the more correct one.

So much for the biographical data which our fragment furnishes. It reads as follows:

(recto, colophon)

(1) תם אלכתב ואלחמד ללה (2) רחמנה ישויה על מריה (3) סימן טוב
ויפתח לבו בדת (4) אלהיה ויקים ביה או תבין (5) יראת י' ³ ויעבד
כל מה (6) דכתיב באורייתא וישויה (7) מבני עלמא דאתא וכל יש' ⁴
(8) בכלל אמן אמן (9) סלה כ תשרי (10) אהכה

סימן	סימן
ראש קהל יועין	שמים וארץ
עצה	טובים הם
	אה' ⁵
קובל בהא	אביעה חירות
וצחת	מני קדם
חסב אלוואקת	א' ⁵
	סמך למד
	תיו

These mnemonics are not clear to me.

(verso)

בשמ רחמ פהרם כתב רבינו סעדיה אלפ[יומי נע]
פהרסה
והדה כתבה עלי כתב בהא אולאדה אלי ב
אד סאלוהם פי [ד]לך בדי מיא²ל ולה ש
כתבו שארית אלוף ודוסה [א]חיו אהצצ³
5 פחות משישים שנים מ. ⁶ [י]ם מהן יד שנה ב[י]שי[בת]

² Very likely in Ibn Daud $\bar{\nu}$ שנה כבן $\bar{\nu}$ (not fully rounded up) was misread by a copyist as $\bar{\nu}$.

³ Prov. 2. 5.

⁴ = ישראל.

⁵ = אחר.

⁶ The missing letter can only be one of the first nine of the alphabet (א-ט).

מחסיה חסירות ד ימ[י]ם ו[נפ]טר בליל שני בסוף
 האשמורת הת[י] כונה בששה ועשרים בחודש
 אייר שלשנת [א]לף ורנ"ג היום לאסיפתו פ[חות]
 מי"א שנה המקום ימהר עמידתו בקרוב
 10 וזה הוא מחזור פ[י]ן[ר]ש[י] א^{6a} וכתביו ותשן[בותיו]
 אלתוריה כאמל ב[?] . . . ק[?] בלא מעאני ומה ה[ו]
 במעאני מן בראשית אלי ויצא ואלה שמ[ות]
 ואלה המשפטים [וי]קרא ואחרי מות⁸ וכתא[ב] . . . ?
 אזהאר אלריאץ מן בראשית אלי וזאת הברכה ב[?] . . .
 15 ונכת במעאני^b ומן אלנביאים ישעיהו^c ואלפאצאלת . . .
 מסאיל מן תרי עשר ומן אלתוריה^d ודרשאת עדה . . .
 לם אחציה א . . . לולא אטואל^e ומן אלכתובים תלי[ם]
 ולה צדר מפרש כביר^f ואיוב^g ומשלי^h ודניאלⁱ ואי[כה] j
 ומגלת [אס]תר^k ומגלת בני חשמוני וצדר לה^l
 20 ומן אלכתב אלמולפה סדור אלסלואת⁷ וכתאב אללאמאנאת^m
 וכתאב אלשהאראתⁿ וכתב אלודאיע^o וכתאב אל
 . . . p [ו]תפסיר הלכות יצירה^q וכתאב גמע משראיע^r
 וכתאב גמע אלחנה ללסורונ⁸ וכתאב אל[גמ]ע אבטאל
 אל יה^t ואקאמת אלעיבור^v וכתאב אל[גוב] א[לצל]את^w

The Fihrist seems to be incomplete (probably another page is missing), since no mention is made of the Gaon's *Sepher Haggalui*, *Agron*, or his *responsa*; the latter are expressly referred to in the heading on l. 10.

^{6a} Read perhaps פירושו ואגרותיו.

⁷ Read אלצלואת.

⁸ Read אלשראיע.

NOTES

^a It is stated here explicitly that Sa'adya indeed translated the whole of the Pentateuch into Arabic, but supplied a commentary only to the first half of Genesis (c. 1-28⁹) as well as to the whole of Exodus and Leviticus. The division of the five books of Moses into two halves each was already in vogue in the time of 'Anan, as has been shown elsewhere.⁹

After the Gaon's death, it seems that Aaron b. Sarjado, his bitter opponent during the conflict with David b. Zakkai, set himself the task of continuing the work where Sa'adya left off. However, apparently only the second half of Deuteronomy was commented upon by him (c. 16¹⁸-end). It fell to the lot of Samuel b. Ḥofni successfully to complete the undertaking to furnish the remainder of the Pentateuch with an Arabic commentary, viz. the second half of Genesis (c. 28¹⁰-end), the whole of Numbers, and the first half of Deuteronomy (c. 1-16¹⁷). This complete work, the product of three scholars connected with the Sura academy, was before Joseph Rosh Hasseder b. Jacob Rosh bē-Rabbanan of Fustāṭ when he wrote in 1111 C.E. his commentary (really a collection of views of other authors) on the Haftārot.¹⁰ It

⁹ See Mann, *Journal of Jewish Lore and Philosophy*, I, 1919, p. 348, note 6.

¹⁰ More about this scholar, *infra*, p. 442, note 7, and my work, vol. I, 243. Bodl. 2624¹⁷, which contains a copy of Joseph's work, has a colophon (fol. 83, recto) wherein the writer states that the author Joseph, וקף עלי תפסיר אלתורה אלתלחה מן בראשית עלי ויצא ומן ואלה שמות אלי במדבר לרבנו סעדיה ומן ויצא אלי ואלה שמות ו[מן] במדבר אלי שפטים לרבנו שמואל בן חפני ומן שפטים אלי אכר אלתורה לרבנו אהרן בן סרגאדו

The work of the last scholar seems to have been split up into pamphlets for the Sidrot. Thus Or. 5554, B., fol. 3, recto, begins רחמ (1) בשמ רחמ (2) תנכית אתם נצבים לר אהרן ביר יוסף זל סרגאד (3) כללות נאמרו בסני [ב]לשון יצוב (4) שנ ויתיצבו בתחתית ההר ונשנו (5) באהל מועד שנ ונצבו איש פתח (6) אהל ונשתלשו בערבות מואב כאן הונא אתם

should only be added that in the book-list (printed by Poznański, *ZfHB.*, VII, 184-5, no. 5) תפסיר ואלה המשפטים is not for this Sidrah only, as Poznański thinks, but for the second half of Exodus (c. 21-end). The same applies to no. 6, *ibid.*, where the second half of Leviticus (c. 16-end) is meant.

^b This work, called 'choice of practices', probably dealt with the laws of the Pentateuch in the order given to them in the five books of Moses. Sa'adya furnished them with a commentary. In the book-list (published by Bacher, *RÉF.*, XXXIX, 200, no. 22) there is mentioned a part of this work, viz. on Genesis ברא[שית מן כתא]ב, וגו' מגרד ספר ברא[שית מן כתא]ב, אלאזהאר תאליף רבנן [סעדיה], cp. Bacher, *ibid.*, 206, no. 9, and Poznański, *ZfHB.*, *l.c.*, 186, no. 20).

^c About the commentary on Isaiah, see Steinschneider, *Arab. Literatur*, p. 56 f.

^d 'Explanations of words of . . . questions' based on Minor Prophets and the Pentateuch. This work is so far unknown. It is doubtful whether תפסיר תרי עשר קטעתין (*ZfHB.*, *l.c.*, 184, no. 3) formed a part of it.

^e Sa'adya seems to have composed a number of sermons (דרשות = דרשאות) which are, however, not enumerated.

^f The commentary on Psalms had an extensive introduction. See Steinschneider, *l.c.*, 57.

^{g-k} About these commentaries see Steinschneider, *l.c.*, 57 ff. Those on Job and Esther are also mentioned in the book-list in *ZfHB.*, *l.c.*, p. 185, nos. 11 and 14. As regards

נצבים. There follow explanations of Deut. 29. 12 (vv. 10-11 are left out) and (on the last line of manuscript) on למען ספות הרוה את ה' (v. 18; the intervening verses are not commented upon). Aaron's commentary on וזאת הברכה is quoted in a fragment of a work on the calendar by Joseph b. Yehuda Rosh Hasseder of Mahdiya (*JQR.*, XVI, 692, see XVII, 169 f.).

the Daniel commentary, see especially Poznański, *Haggoren*, II, 92–103.

¹ Evidently a translation of the ‘scroll of the sons of Hashmonai’ (the Maccabees), prefaced by an introduction. It is probably identical with *ומגלת בני חשמונאי ומעניהא* (*ZfHB.*, *l. c.*, no. 15), as well as with the item in *RÉF.*, *l. c.*, no. 33, *ופיה מגלת בני חשמונאי מפסרה*.

^m The well-known Siddur and the famous religious-theological work.

ⁿ An Halakic work on evidence (עדות), probably identical with the one mentioned in *RÉF.*, *l. c.*, no. 38, *ונזו פיה אלשהאדאת ופיה מסאיל לרבנו סעדיה זל*. It seems that the Gaon incorporated therein some of his responsa on this subject.

^o An Halakic work on pledges (פקדון). See Steinschneider, *l. c.*, 49, no. 5.

^p Owing to the lacuna, it cannot be ascertained what this work was.

^q His well-known commentary on *Yeṣirah*; ‘the laws of *Yeṣirah*’ = *Sepher Yeṣirah* (so also Sherira in a responsum, ed. Harkavy, no. 29).

^r ‘A collection of laws’, probably an Halakic work. But perhaps it is identical with the treatise on the defence of the revealed laws (see Steinschneider, *l. c.*, 50, no. 13).

^s The Gaon’s defence of the precept of kindling lights on Friday night (against the *Ḳaraites*). This work is also mentioned in *ḲQR.*, XIII, 55, no. 78, *ומקאלה פי סראג אלסבת*, 78, *לר’ סעדיה* (see also Poznański, *ibid.* 329–30).

^t This seems to have been a polemical work.

^v About this treatise on the calendar (עיבור), see Steinschneider, *l. c.*, 63, no. 26.

^w See above, p. 416.