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AN UNKNOWN GRAMMATICAL WORK BY  
ABUL-FARAJ HARUN

BY HARTWIG HIRSCHFELD, Jews' College, London

WHEN examining a number of Genizah fragments belonging to the British Museum I came across two paper leaves, 18 cm. × 14.5 cm. with 21 lines to the page. They are written in Arabic and in Hebrew square characters. The first page bears nothing but the title **כחאב אלעקוד פי חצאריף אללה** אלעבראניה נפע אללה בה “Pearl-Strings on the grammatical inflections of the Hebrew language—may God make it useful.” No work of this title has been known before, and as the name of the author is absent it must be left to conjecture.

In his opening remarks the author refers to another grammatical work of his to which he gave the title **אלכאפי פי אללה** “The Adequate [book] on the [Hebrew] language.” A copy of a treatise so named exists in Petrograd,<sup>1</sup> but no details of this work are at hand, and at present not easily to be obtained. The author of the last-named work is Abul-Faraj Harun, a prominent Karaite grammarian who lived in Jerusalem in the earlier part of the eleventh century. We possess a large work of his both grammatical and lexicographical under the title **אלכחאב אלמשחמל עלי אלמצול** **ואלפצול פי אללה** אלעבראניה “The Comprehensive work on the roots and sections of the Hebrew language.” Considerable portions of this work have been reproduced in the Arabic original as well as in French translation by the late Prof.

<sup>1</sup> See Steinschneider, *Die Arabische Literatur der Juden*, p. 88.

Bacher.<sup>2</sup> The author states in the beginning of our fragment that he produced a compendium to the "Adequate" work above mentioned under the title אֵלֶּמֶנְטָרִי the "Abridged" [work], and he also says that he wrote yet another and still more condensed compendium of which our fragment is a part. If we compare all these statements with that on the *Kafi*, which, he says, comprehends nearly all the sections of the *Mushtamil*, we come to the conclusion that these two works are identical, as both titles approximately express the same idea. Further support for the identity of the author of the fragment with that of the *Mushtamil* may be gained from the use of two grammatical terms common to both, viz. אֲחָאן (Bacher, p. 236, rem. 2) and מוֹרֵד. The author states that he produced the last abstract at the request of a pupil who wished to possess a *vade mecum* in which the bare grammatical facts were strung together. Hence the title Strings of Pearls which describes the character of the work very neatly. Our fragment gives the first leaf and one of the later ones. This, however, creates a problem of some obscurity. The last few lines of the Arabic text which in the appended reproduction closely follow the original are in a very unsatisfactory condition. The third line from the end is disfigured by a hole in the paper with two half obliterated letters on either side of it. The missing word was possibly הִדָּה, but this is not certain. The last line only shows the word יִדְכֻלְהָא the subject of which is missing. Finally there is the word קוֹבֵלָה written at the bottom of the page which apparently forms no part of the treatise, but states that this had been "collated" with the author's original or some authenticated copy. This is made probable by the various corrections in the MS. Diacritical points are missing, and Hebrew words

<sup>2</sup> *REJ.*, vol. XXX, p. 234 *seq.*

are vocalized according to the Palestinian system. The spelling of the Arabic text shows the same looseness which is common to Jewish-Arabic writings.

Quite in keeping with Abul-Faraj Harun's Karaite denomination is the religious coloring of this dry grammatical treatise. This is another point in support of the assumption that Karaites were amongst the very earliest promoters of grammatical studies among Jews, since all their religious needs depended upon the correct interpretation of Holy Writ. The writer, therefore, holds that to make oneself acquainted with the rules of the language is a religious duty. We should bear in mind that the author was a contemporary of Judah Hayyuj in Cordoba, and it is truly interesting to observe that the first steps in the really scientific recognition of the phenomena of the Hebrew language approximately synchronize in the East as well in the West. "The need," he says, "to gain an acquaintance with the Hebrew language brings with it the obligation of knowing the words of the Lawgiver in their true interpretation. No one can arrive at this whilst being ignorant of the language because he is liable to err and interpret falsely." This the author demonstrates by several examples. First, **אבל מצרים** (Gen. 50. 11) is not the "mourning of Egypt," for if this were so the word should be **אבל** as in the preceding passage, and the meaning would be the "mourner of Egypt," being a form like **אָהַב, תִּצַּב**, etc. Second, **ושמלה מגוללה ברמים** (Isaiah 9.4) is wrongly translated "a garment bespattered with blood." If this were so we should expect **מגואלה**, like **לחם מגואל** (Mal. 1.7), whilst the correct translation is "rolled", as **תלל אבן** (Prov. 26. 27); third, **בלו דבר** (2 Sam. 3. 4) does not mean "without anything," because—but here the first leaf ends.

The second leaf deals with the classification of words

which appear either as prepositions or nouns, as על (Levit. 1. 11; Hos. 11. 7), ער (Levit. 23. 16; Gen. 49. 27). שחק is a proper noun in Amos 7. 16, but an imperfect in Ps. 2.4. ם is past tense in Ps. 78, 431, but a participle in Zech. 12. 2. The test of these instances is that the addition of the termination ם makes them nouns in plural, whilst a prefixed ן yields a verbal form.

The last page contains the beginning of a chapter on the rules of various verbal and nominal formations. Unfortunately the opening word or words are missing, and it is therefore impossible to reproduce the author's words without guessing. He apparently speaks about the formation of a word on the model of another of similar vocalization but different etymology. In some groups the first radicals belong to different classes, in others only the second radicals differ, whilst the first ones are identical. If all three radicals in two roots are identical they are congruent. Four points demand special attention: *first*—the number of identical radicals as in חרון and חוון; *second*—the order of the radicals in nouns with prefixed מ as in מלון and מנוס, which are not formed like רצון; *third*—the number of strong consonants which must not differ in two verbal roots. This yields regular forms and individually bear upon the sense of hearing as זכור and שמור; *fourth*—there should not be a guttural letter in either word, because....the letters....do not enter in it.

Brit. Mus. Or. 5565 E

fol. 13 ro

כחאב אלעקוד פי תצאריף  
אללגה אלעבראניה נפע אללה בה

fol. 13 vo

בשם יי נעשה ונצליח  
קד כנת אכתצרת אלכאפי פי אללגה אכתצארא ישמל  
אבואבה אלא אלשאד מנה סוא מא חצל פיה מן אלויאדאח  
מא למ יתצמנה אלכאפי וסאל סאיל אן אכתצר  
מכתצר אכר אונן מן אלמכתצר אלמדכור יעקד פיה  
עקוד פי אלתצאריף ויגמל פיה גמלא מנהא תכון אצולא  
יִנְעֵעַ אליהא תסתועב פי אליסיר מן אלומאן והא אנא עאום  
עלי אלאכתצאר ממא לו חדפתה למ יכל בכ חדפה  
כתירא ואתסע פימא לום מנה בדא סאילא ללה תעאלי  
אלעצמה מן אלולל ואלכטא והו פאעל דלך במנה ולטפה  
אן שא אללה אלחאנה אלי עלם אללגה דאעיה  
לונוב עלם חקאיק עבאראת אלמשרע תעלי ולא וצול  
אלי עלם דלך ואלמכלף נאהל באללגה לאן אלנאהל בהא  
יול ויגלט כמן זל וגלט פי תפסיר אָבֵל מצרים חון מצר  
ולו כאן כדלך לכאן אָבֵל כָּךְ אָבֵל כבד זה ותפסירה  
חזין מצר מהל קָצֵב אָהֵב ואמתאל דלך וכדלך מן  
זל וגלט פי תפסיר ושמלה מגוללה בדמים ובוה מלותה  
בדמא ולו כאן דלך כדלך לכאנת מגואלה מהל לחם  
מגואל ותפסירהא מרחרנא בדמא מן וגולל אבן  
וכדלך מן גלט ופסר בית מכיר בן עמיאל בלו דָּבֵר  
בגיר שי יקותה ולו כאן כדלך לכאן קד ...

fol. 14 ro

ואמתאל דלך ואלחלאה לא יצלח אן יכון אלא  
כאדם כָּךְ כִּי רָק אָךְ ואמתאל דלך ואלראבע  
יצלח אן ייכון אסם וכאדם כָּךְ על ירך המזבח כאדם  
ותקול ואל על יקראהו אסם וכדלך עד ממחרת

\* On margin.

השבת כֹּאדָם בְּבִקְרַי אֶכְל עַד אֶסֶם  
 וְאַלְכֹאֶמֶס יִכּוֹן אֶסֶם וּפְעַל מִסְתַּקְבֵּל כֶּךָ וְלֹא חֲטִיף  
 עַל בֵּית יִשְׁחָק אֶסֶם יוֹשֵׁב בְּשָׁמַיִם יִשְׁחָק פְּעַל  
 מִסְתַּקְבֵּל וְאַלְסֹאֶדֶס יִכּוֹן אֶסֶם וּפְעַל מֵאֲצִי כֶּךָ  
 אֲשֶׁר שָׁב אֶל יִי פְעֵלָא מֵאֲצִיא הִגְנִי שָׁב שְׁבוֹת  
 אֲהֵלִי יַעֲקֹב אֶסֶם אֲשֶׁר שָׁם בְּמִצְרַיִם אוֹתוֹחִיו פְּעַל  
 הִגָּה אֲנִכִי שָׁם אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם סִף רַעַל אֶסֶם וְתַעֲתֵבֵר  
 הָדָא אֶלְקֶסֶס בִּיּוֹד וּמֵאֵם אֶלְדִּי לִלְגַמֵּעַ וְאוֹ אֶלְצִמִּיר אֶלְדִּי  
 לִלְרַבִּים פֵּאִי לִפְטָה חֶסֶן פִּיהָ יוֹד וּמֵאֵם אֶלְגַּמֵּעַ פֶּקֶט  
 צִלְחַת לִלְאֶסֶס לֹא לִלְפַעַל וְאוֹדָא חֶסֶן פִּיהָ וְאוֹ אֶל  
 צִמִּיר פֶּקֶט צִלְחַת אֵן תְּכוּן פְּעַל לֹא אֶסֶם וְאִי לִפְטָה  
 חֶסֶן פִּיהָ יוֹד וּמֵאֵם אֶלְגַּמֵּעַ וְאוֹ אֶלְצִמִּיר עַלִּי סְבִיל  
 אֶלְבֵּרְדֵּל צִלְחַת אֵן תְּכוּן אֶסְמָא וּפְעֵלָא תְּקוּל מִן דְּלֶךְ  
 שָׁם שְׁמַיִם שָׁב שְׁבִים שָׁם שְׁמוֹ שָׁב שְׁבוֹ

fol. 14 vo

באב פי שרוט אלאוואן

ואמא ון לפטָה בלפטָה ניראה פינבני אן תכון  
 אללפטתין מתסאוויתין פי סאיר וגוהמא אלא פי אחרוף  
 אלאצלייה פאן ינב אן תכון אחרף אלאצלי פי הדה  
 מנייר מן הדה פקד ינו אן תתנייר כל אחרוף אלאצליה  
 כק קנה עשה ויגן יתנייר בעצהא כק עלה ענה  
 ולא ינו אן תכון אחרוף אלאצלייה כלהא גיר מתנאירה  
 לאן אדא כאן דלך כדלך פמא הי גיר להא בל הי הי  
 ואנמא ינב מִמְאֲתִלְתָּהּ להא פי סאיר אלונה סוא  
 מא דכר לתכון מתל להא לאן אן כלפת הדה אללפטָה  
 ללפטָה אלמוונה בהא פי ונה ואחד לס תכו מתלא  
 להא וקד קיל אן אלדי יראעא פי אלאוואן שרוט  
 מנהא עדר אחרוף אלאצלייה מתל חוון קרון אד  
 אלחית ואלואי פי חוון אצליין ואלחית ואלריש פי חרון  
 אצליין ואמתאל דלך ויראעא תרתיב

אַלְחָרוֹף אַלְאַצְלִיִּיהַּ פִּי אַלְלֶפֶטְתִּין תְּרַחֲבָא וְאַחְדָּא מַתְלַ  
 מְנוֹס קְלוֹן אַלְדִּי אַלְמֵאמִין פִּי רוֹסְהַמָּא לִיסָא אַצְלִיִּין  
 פְּלָא אֲחֻנָּא בְּרָצוֹן אֲדִי אַלְרִישׁ פִּי רָאֵס אַלְלֶפֶטְתָּה אַצְלִי  
 וְאַמְתָּאֵל דְּלַךְ וִירָאֵעָא עֵדְדֵּי אַלְמְלוֹךְ וְאִן לֹא  
 תְּכַתְּלַף אַלְמְלוֹךְ פִּי אַלְלֶפֶטְתִּין וְהִדָּא הוּא אַחְכָּאֵם אַלְצִינָהּ  
 וְהוּא אִן יְכוּן מוֹרְדֵהֶמָּא עַלִּי חָאסָה אַלְסִמְעֵ מוֹרְדָּא וְאַחְדָּא<sup>?</sup>  
 כֶּקְ זְכוֹר שְׁמוֹר וְאַמְתָּאֵל דְּלַךְ וִירָאֵעָא  
 אִן לֹא תוֹן חֲרוֹף אֲהַחֵעַ בְּגִירָהָא לֹאן.....<sup>4</sup> אַלְחָרוֹף לֹא  
 יִדְכַּלְהָא  
 קוֹבֵלַת

<sup>4</sup> Hole in MS.