Chapter Seven

Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures

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The Exegetical Texts

The Pentateuch: Onkelos

Targum Onkelos (E Onk) was the official targum of Babylonia, the Babylonian Talmud refers to it as 'our targum' (B.T. Kiddushin 49a), and introduces quotations from it with the phrase 'as we must state' (e.g. B.T. Sanhedrin 106b). On halakic matters, Onk is in close agreement with the Mishna, at least as the Mishna was understood in the Babylonian academies, and the Bavli cites it as an authority even on halakha (see e.g. B.T. Nazir 49a, quoting Onk to Num 6:4). Onk offers a simple, non-expository version. It does contain some aggadah, but this, where it occurs, is presented in highly allusive, abridged form.

The traditional attribution to Onkelos is based on a single passage in the Bavli; the parallel in the Yerushalmi, however, speaks of Aqila:

Rashi Megilla 1a
R. Yerucham: on some say R. Hiyya, A base; R. Hiyya: Aqila to me it was under the guidance of R. Elazar and R. Yehuda.

Yerushalmi Megilla 7a
R. Yerucham said in the name of R. Hiyya: Aqila to me it was under the guidance of R. Elazar and R. Yehuda.

Two points are clear: first, the form Onkelos is simply a corruption of Aqila; the corruption is found elsewhere in rabbinic literature (e.g. T. Demai 6:13 with P.T. Demai 5d). Second, the Yerushalmi is referring to the Greek version of the Pentateuch known as Aqila, which it cites on a number of occasions (e.g. P.T. Sukkah 9d). This is clear from the context, which concurs with the dictum of R. Shimon ben Gamliel that it is permissible to write the Sacred Books only in Greek, and from the recheh in the Yerushalmi: 'yagadolah mi'bne' e'hadim, which is taken to mean, not 'you are fewer than the sons of men', but 'you have used the language of Japhet better than the language of

1 For examples of aggadah in Onk see Genesis, 'Reuven in the Onkelos Targum', and Bodeler 'Yagadolah in the Targum Onkelos'.

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Japhet being Greek; see Gen 10:2, where Javan (= Greece) is put among the sons of Japhet, and compare B. T. Megilla 7b (parallel t. Genesis Rabba 36:8, p. 32), where 'the words of Japhet' mean Greek. If this interpretation of P. Y. Megilla 71c is correct, then the Bavli parallel becomes problematic, for it is obvious in context that it refers to an Aramaic version. The simplest solution is to suppose that the Babylonian misread the logogram of R. Yirmeyahu, and took it to convey information about their own Aramaic translation of the Tora.

Compared to the Palestinian targumim, Onklos comes down to us as a highly unified, stable tradition. It never has its own missa, which includes a list of readings where the tradition of Nehardea differs from that of Sura. All the evidence points to some sort of official recension of the text in Babylonia in the talmudic period. Already among the Geonim Onklos was received as being of the highest sanctity. There are, nonetheless, significant divergences between its text. The aim of the text-critics must be to recover the Babylonian form of the targum. This may be possible through Yemenite mss which preserve strongly the Babylonian tradition. Of these mss 131 (EMC 952), 133 (Yama 1705), 152 (EMC 89), and 153 (EMC 38) of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, and Ms. B 447 of the Vatican Library are particularly important.

The Pentateuch: Palestinian targumim

Neofiti I. In 1956 A. Diez Macho discovered a copy of the Palestinian Targum of the Pentateuch (Codex Neofiti I [= Neof]) in the Vatican Library, where it had lain largely unnoticed because it had been miscatalogued as Targum Onkelos.3 The text, written by three hands, is virtually complete. A colophon states that it was copied at Rome in (5)264 A. M. = 1504 C. E. for Giles of Viterbo. It is possible to trace this recension back much earlier for it has been shown to agree significantly with the Palestinian Targum notation in earlier Jewish writings (e.g. the Arakh of Nathan ben Yehiel of Rome, d. 1060), where these cannot be paralleled in other extant texts of the Palestinian Targum.4 On the whole the translation is restrained and sober, the aggada being less extensive than that in either the Fragmentary Targum or Pseudo-Yonatan. Neof is richly supplied with glosses, both marginal and interlinear, in about ten different hands. These are, in the main, alternative Palestinian Targum readings. Different sources were drawn upon. Note, e.g. Gen 10: where there are two variants, the second of which is introduced by L"= lohun 'ather, 'another

3 The rabbinitic traditions are discussed by Friedmann, Onkelos and Akyas, and Silverstone, Agguas and Onkelos, but see especially Barthodomy, Les devanciers, 193-56.
4 Diez Macho, "The Recently Discovered Palestinian Targum", 218.

Reading. The glosses sometimes agree with Pseudo-Yonatan, sometimes with the Fragmentary Targum, sometimes with the Cairo Geniza fragments, and sometimes with Onklos. A number of them are textually unique.

Pseudo-Yonatan The title of this work found in the editio princeps, viz. 'Targum of Yonatan ben Uziel', is a misnomer which came about through a false resolution of the abbreviation TY as Targum Yehezkinai instead of Targum Yehezkiel. The mistaken attribution of this targum to the supposed author of the Babylonian Targum to the Prophets may go back to Menahem b. Benjamin Recanati in the 14th century. The work is, in fact, a recension of the Palestinian Targum of the Pentateuch, which save for a few verses, is complete.

Pseudo-Yonatan (= Ps-Y) is the most paraphrastic of all the Pentateuchal targumim; it is estimated to be about twice the length of the original Hebrew text. It is a highly mixed tradition, an amalgam of interpretations from widely different periods. It has been argued that it contains at one end of the earliest and some of the latest, datable targumic material. Some of its aggadic traditions are not attested elsewhere in rabbinic literature. In its final state the collection has been worked over with some care, and in many ways Ps-Y is the most literary of the Palestinian targumim. That its final reduction cannot have been earlier than the 7th cent. C. E. may be deduced from its rendering of Gen 21:21,

Ps-Y

And he (Isma'il) dwelt in the wilderness of Paran; his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

Ps-Y: And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran; and he took a wife: d'adisah b. Hidasah, a Genshurite prospesy 'Ayshah, and he divorced her; and his mother took him Fatima as wife from the land of Egypt.
There are four other mss, which cannot be related systematically to the Bomberg group, though they show all the characteristics of the ft. These should be regarded as four further recensions of ft. The mss are:

1. P = Hebr. MS, fol. 16r, 11th cent., Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris (15th/16th cent.); 589 verses of the Pentateuch;


3. B = Or. 10744 (Gaster collection), fol. 8, British Library, London (? 12th/13th cent.); Deut 1:1-5:9;


There are, then, in all, some five different recensions of the targum-type known as the Fragmentary Targum.

Why did the ft text-form evolve? Why should anyone make such a collection of Palestinian Targum fragments? It is hard to say. Some have seen it as an attempt at variant readings intended to supplement a complete text of the Palestinian Targum. In support of this idea it should be noted that if the marginal glosses of Neofiti 1 were collected and published separately they would constitute a kind of ft. On the other hand, it is arguable that, like the targumic Tosefta (on which see below), the collection was made to supplement Onk. Both the Tosefta and the ft may have arisen at a time when Onk was becoming the dominant targum in the west. Since Onk is, on the whole, a non-agadic targum, the need was felt to preserve the aggadic material of the Palestinian Targum. The Tosefta may be rather random Palestinian traditions known toscribes who copied Onk. ft, however, looks like something more systematic; it has probably not arisen through collecting traditions from different sources, but by deliberate abridgment of complete recensions of the Palestinian Targum. Complete Palestinian targumim were collated against Onk, and the non-agadic passages excised. This view gains support from the fact that the verses which are not represented by any of the recensions of ft are usually rendered more or less literally in at least one of the complete recensions of the Palestinian Targum.

TARGUMIC TOSEFTA. Here and there in the mss of Onk aggadic passages are to be found under the rubric ‘Tosefta’ or ‘Tosefta Yerushalaim.’ These passages are clearly interpolations, derived from the Palestinian Targum, which were meant to embellish the literal version of Onk. The Tosefta may be inserted into the text of Onk at the appropriate place, or written in the margin, or gathered together at the end of the main text. Separate collections of Tosefta are attested. The Tosefta differ from ft in two respects:

1. They are always expansive, whereas ft contains a significant number of verses which are translated literally; and

2. While ft’s Western Aramaic dialect has been preserved more or less intact
the dialect of the Toséfot has been deliberately corrected (with varying degrees of consistency and success) to conform to the dialect of Onk. This linguistic recasting is a feature not only of the Toséfot inserted into the Onk. mss, but also of the separate collections of Toséfot as well, thus showing that the latter too were intended to supplement Onk. Where the Toséfot overlap with other Pal. Targ. texts they often prove to represent independent recensions of the Pal. Targ.

FESTIVAL COLLECTIONS. Some mss contain collections of targumim covering the Torah lections for the festivals and special Sabbaths. The nature of this type of text is well illustrated by Bodleian Ms 112b, fols 57-57 (= Kalhi F), the colophon of which states: 'This is the notebook (diwar) of Jacob son of Samuel... It contains the targum of the additional readings (masafon) for all the Festivals, and the targum for Hanukkat (fol 57r). The relationship between these Festival Collections and the complete Palestinian targumim such as Neof is analogous to the relationship between the homiletic midrashim (e.g. Pesikta de-Rab Kohana) and the straightforward exegetical midrashim (e.g. Mehilta de-R. Yishmael). The Festival Collections differ from each other both as to content and as to textual reading. There is nothing to suggest that they go back to a common archetype, or arecotypes, or that there was any attempt to produce a standard collection.

TARGUMIC POEMS. The character of these Aramaic compositions is well illustrated by the poem 'Ezr Moshe', which gives, in the form of an alphabetic acrostic, a dramatic version of Moses' encounter with the Red Sea during the Exodus from Egypt. Though not strictly a targum, there is evidence connecting the poem to the targum of the Torah reading for the 7th day of Passover (Exod 14:15). It is inserted into the targum after Exod 14:29 in ms Paris 110, and interwoven with the verses of the targum in ms 355 of the University Library, Cambridge. The poem represents, in rather extreme form, the sort of aggadic embellishment of the biblical narrative which is common in the Palestinian targumim. The different ways in which it is presented in the Paris and Hamburg ms in relation to the targum may reflect different ways of reciting the poem in synagogue. The antiquity of the 'Ezr Moshe' is confirmed by the fact that a 4th/5th cent. papyrus fragment of it is extant. A number of other Aramaic poems relating to the 7th day of Passover are known, as well as to Shabbat te Shabbat ha-Hodesh, and to the story of the death of Moses (Deut 34). These poems throw light on the aggada of the targum, and on its historical presentation in synagogue.

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1 Yaloham, 'Ezr Moshe', edits the papyrus and compares it with the medieval versions of the poem.
2 The most extensive list of these poems is still Jeruz. Liturgische, 18-22, 74-80, 150-51

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THE PROPHETS: YONANAN

Targum Yonanan [= Yan] is the counterpart of Onk on the Pentateuch; it is the official Babylonian targum to the second division of the canon. The attribution to Yonanan ben Uziel is based on B.T. Megilla 3a: 'Y. R. Yonanan said: The targum of the Prophets was composed by Yonanan ben Uziel from the mouth of [ = under the guidance of] Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi'. Yonanan is a shadowy figure. Accordine to B.T. Sukkah 29a (ed. B.T. Bevit Bara'a 34a, P.T. Nechirin 29a, Aaron de Rabbi Natun Al-A. 29a) he was the first distinguished disciple of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, the last of the prophets. Barthélemy has argued that in fact the reference in B.T. Megilla 3a is not to an Aramaic version, but to the Greek version of Theodotion (= Yonanan). He points out that on a number of occasions elsewhere in the Talmud the Targum of the Prophets is, by implication, attributed to Ray Yosef bar Hiyya (c. 270-333 C.E.), the head of the Academy of Pumbeditha - a scholar reputed to have made a special study of targum. Thus Targ. Isa 5:17 is cited in B.T. Pesahim 68a, and Targ. Ola 6 in B.T. Bevit Bara'a 3b, under the rubric, 'as Ray Yosef translates'. (See also R. G. E. A. Winnett's commentary on Tovvau quoted in the Arakh, ed. Kolnit, II pp. 293a, 308a.) The tradition is cited in the name of R. Yonanan and R. Hiyya b. Abba (both 4th century Palestinian authorities), so it could well have referred originally to Theodotion. There can be no doubt, however, that in Babylonia it was taken as referring to an Aramaic version. The mistake would be analogous to the transference to the Targum of the Pentateuch of a tradition originally about the Greek version of Aquila.

Son was held in high esteem in Babylonia and is cited as authoritative in the Barli. On several occasions quotations from it are introduced by the formula: 'Were it not for the targum of this verse we should not know what it means' (B.T. Megilla 3a: parallel: B.T. Megilla 24b; B.T. Sanhedrin 48b; B.T. Bevit Bara'a 3a). It has close affinities with Onk, both in language and in the character of its translation, though it is rather more aggadah than Onk, and in poetic passages can be quite expansive (see e.g. B.T. Yada 5 and B.M. 2:1-10). It has all the marks of thorough editing, its renderings being, on the whole, consistent. Yonanan was probably reedited in Babylonia about the same time as Onk. Though, like Onk, it is not very stable there are significant textual variants in the ms. The major text-critical problem is the relationship of the Yemenite ms with squarepr incination (e.g. Ms Or 2211 and Or 2211 of the British Library, London, to western ms with Fidrian vocalisation e.g. Codex Ruchlinianus). There appear to be two slightly different recensions of the targum - a western and a Yemenite. It is generally assumed that the Yemenite ms takes us closer to the Babylonian form of the targum.

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1 An analysis of the rabbinic traditions regarding Yonanan may be found in Passen, Devebram, 90 and Babylonian Talmud, 1, 198, 200, 206, 318.
2 Yaloham, 'Ezr Moshe', 90.
The character of the targum is described as follows:

The targum, a translation of the Hebrew Bible, was used as a commentary and parallel text to the Hebrew text, particularly in the synagogues of the Diaspora. It contains interpretations and explanations of the biblical text, as well as additional material not found in the Hebrew Bible. The targum was not a literal translation but rather a profound commentary, often providing insights into the historical and geographical context of the biblical narrative.

The targum was written in Aramaic, a language closely related to Hebrew, and was originally intended to be understood by the communities in which it was used. Over time, different targumim developed, each with its own unique style and emphasis.

The targumim were compiled from a variety of sources, including oral traditions, tannaitic teachings, and other written works. They were passed down through generations, often through the oral tradition, before being written down for the first time.

The targumim were composed to serve different purposes. Some were intended to be used as a commentary to the Hebrew text, while others were used for liturgical purposes or as a means of teaching and instruction.

The targumim were an important part of Jewish religious and cultural heritage, providing a unique window into the history and thought of the Jewish communities of the Diaspora. They continue to be studied and used today as a valuable resource for understanding the Jewish tradition and its development.
(1) Treatment of the Samson oath.

The tínhu in many adjectives, such as the significance of the Samson oath, is an important technique in biblical studies. The following are some of the more important translation-techniques which have long been in use.

2. Gen. 11:5. "The Lord came down and sate on the city." For this verse, see the city of Shechem.

3. Exod. 3:20. "I will put forth my hand and smite the Egyptians." For this verse, see the city of Beersheba.

4. Exod. 15:8. "With the blast of thy power I will destroy them." For this verse, see the city of Jericho.

5. Lev. 26:3. "The sons of Israel are your holy people." For this verse, see the city of Shiloh.

Since the time of the Maccabees, scholars have argued that such expressions are modified by divine or human agents. The key is the use of the divine name, or names. This is a significant role in the ancient Near Eastern literature. The term "translation" has been applied to this process of modifying the text.

6. Eze. 47:23. "The river of the Lord, the river eternal." For this verse, see the city of Jerusalem.

The translators have a tendency to update the terminology, e.g., "the water of life," to reflect the modern usage. For example, "the water of life" is used to refer to a source of spiritual renewal.

7. Joel 3:11. "And I will come out of the north like a cloud, and I will be like a dew for all the mountains of Israel." For this verse, see the city of Mount Moriah.

The translators have a tendency to update the terminology, e.g., "the water of life," to reflect the modern usage. For example, "the water of life" is used to refer to a source of spiritual renewal.
co Neof has, 'like the taste of pancakes with honey'. The psychological mechanism of associative translation is not always clear. In some cases the influence of the parallel text seems to be subconscious; there is no deliberate harmonization; the parallel simply echoes at the back of the translator's mind. In other cases the association may be more calculated, perhaps triggered by a linguistic problem. In the example just given the metargumin may have been pizzled by the expression ḫaad ḥaṣṣenē in Num 11:8, and simply for convenience re-used the translation of the parallel passage in Psal 16:31.

(5) Complementary translation

This is a variant of associative translation. However, instead of an element from text A displacing the parallel element in text B, the parallel elements are combined in a composite translation worked out which is used in both texts. E.g. Cain is described in Gen 4:2 as 'a tiller of the soil' [אִדָּם 'adom]; Noah is called 'a man of the soil' [אָדָם 'adam] in Gen 9:20. Ps-Y translates in both cases, 'a man tilling the soil'.

(6) Converse translation

A converse translation the targum appears to give a sense opposite to the plain meaning of Scripture. This frequently involves the insertion or deletion of a negative. E.g. Gen 4:14, 'Behold, you have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and I shall be hidden from your face'; N.T. 'Behold, you have banished me this day from the face of the earth, and it is not possible for me to be hidden from before you'. In some of these cases the targum has reversed the sense of Scripture by treating positive statements as questions without an interrogative particle, to which the implied answer is 'no'. Note Ps-Y's translation of Gen 4:14, 'Behold, you have banished me this day from the face of the earth: yet is it possible that I should be hidden from before you?'. Converse translation in this instance is motivated by doctrinal concerns: the plain sense of Scripture appears to call into question the omniscience of God.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF TARGUM

Analysis of the translation-techniques of the targum is an important subject, but its limitations should be clearly recognized. It very rapidly ends up in subjectivity: we find ourselves trying to guess what was going on in the minds of the metargumin. (I note, particularly the problem of associative translation.) Moreover a definition of targumin in terms of exchange-technique can hardly be adequate because it fails to discriminate between texts, and it ignores fundamental questions of literary form. There are, in fact, quite different types of transmission found within the confines of the targumin-corpus. A distinction is commonly drawn between 'paraphrastic' and 'literal' targumin, by measuring the relative lengths of the targumin against the original. That is not a very meaningful approach, for it obscures the fact that paraphrastic translations may differ fundamentally from each other, and that a paraphrastic and a literal targumin may, formally speaking, have more in common that two paraphrastic targumin. There are more important classifications to be made. Two basic types of targumin - type A and type B - should be distinguished. To illustrate their character we will present an extensive sample of each.

Type A Targum

TARGUM PSEUDO-ONYANAN. GENESIS 4:3-16

13. MT: It came to pass in process of time, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord.

TARGUM: It came to pass in process of time on the fourteenth of Nisan, that Cain brought of the produce of the ground, of the seed of flix, an offering of first-fruits before the Lord.

14. MT: And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of the flock and of the fat thereof, and the Lord favoured Abel and his offering.

TARGUM: And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof, and it was pleasing before the Lord, and the Lord favoured Abel and his offering.

15. MT: But Cain and his offering he did not favour. And Cain was very angry and his countenance fell.

TARGUM: But Cain and his offering he did not favour, And Cain was very angry and the expression of his countenance fell.

16. MT: The Lord said to Cain: Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen?

TARGUM: The Lord said to Cain: Why are you angry, and why has the expression of your countenance fallen?

17. MT: If you do well, is there not lifting up [םָעִי]? But if you do not do well, sin couches at the door; to you is its desire, but you shall rule over it.

TARGUM: If you will amend your deeds, shall not your guilt be forgiven you? But if you will not amend your deeds in this world, your sin is kept till the great day of judgement. Sin couches at the doors of your heart; but into your hand I have given authority over the evil inclination; so shall it be its desire, but you shall rule over it, whether to act justly or to sin.

18. MT: And Cain said to Abel his brother... And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and killed him.
TARGUM: Cain said to Abel his brother: Come, let us both go out into the field. And it came to pass, when they had gone out, both of them, into the field, that Cain answered and said to Abel: I see that the world has been created through mercy, but it is not ordered according to the fruit of good deeds; and that there is partiality in judgement. Otherwise why was your offering accepted with favour, whereas my offering was not accepted from me with favour? Abel answered and said to Cain: The world has been created through mercy, and it is ordered according to the fruit of good deeds, and there is no partiality in judgement. It is because the fruit of my deeds was better than yours and preferable to yours that my offering was accepted with favour. Cain answered and said to Abel: There is no judgement, so judge, no other world; there is no fair reward given to the righteous nor punishment exacted from the wicked. Abel answered and said to Cain: There is judgement, there is a judge, and another world; there is a fair reward given to the righteous and punishment exacted from the wicked. On account of these matters they were quarreling in the open field, and Cain rose up against Abel his brother, threw a stone into his forehead, and killed him.

4:9, MT: The Lord said to Cain: Where is Abel your brother? He said: I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?
TARGUM: The Lord said to Cain: Where is Abel your brother? He said: I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?

4:10, MT: He said: What have you done? The voice of the blood of your brother cries to me from the ground.
TARGUM: He said: What have you done? The voice of the blood of the killing of your brother that we swallowed up in the clay cry before me from the ground.

4:11, MT: And now arise, go from your place, which has opened its mouth to receive the blood of your brother from your hand.
TARGUM: And now, because you have killed him, cursed are you from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive the blood of your brother from your hand.

4:12, MT: When you cultivate the ground, it shall not henceforth yield its strength to you; a fugitive and a wanderer shall you be in the earth.
TARGUM: When you cultivate the earth, it shall not henceforth yield the strength of its fruits to you; a fugitive and a wanderer shall you be in the earth.

4:13, MT: Cain said to the Lord: My sin is too great to bear.
TARGUM: Cain said to the Lord: My rebellion is too great to be borne, yet before you is the power to forgive it.

4:14, MT: Behold, you have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and I shall be hidden from your face. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that anyone finding me will kill me.
favouritism. God has accepted Abel's sacrifice on an arbitrary whim. By introducing this debate the meturgeman universalizes the story: Abel becomes the prototype of the martyr who dies for the profession of his faith; Cain the prototype of the heretic who persecutes the faithful. Some have detected an anti-Sadducean polemic here. 1 This is speculative. There is only one element in Cain's position which is arguably distinctively Sadducean: viz., the denial of the world to come. But it should be noted that there is no stress on this: it comes in incidentally, in the context of the denial of divine justice.

At a number of other points the targum fills in narrative lacunae.

(1) The Bible fails to give a satisfactory reason why Abel's offering was accepted, and Cain's rejected, thus leaving dangerously open the possibility that God acted arbitrarily. Two small additions in the targum of verse 1 are addressed to this problem. The targum asserts that the events took place on the 4th of Nisan, i.e., at the time of Passover, and that the offering brought by Cain was 'the seed of flux'. The implication is that Cain and Abel were celebrating a primitive Passover: Abel's offering was appropriate (the 'firstfruits of the flock'), but Cain's was not ('produce of the ground').

(2) At the beginning of verse 8 the masoretic text states that 'Cain said to Abel his brother', but does not tell us what he said. The targum renders: 'Cain said to Abel his brother: Come, let us both go out into the field'. It is possible that the meturgeman actually had a Hebrew text which read the additional words (cf. TXX and Peshitta); the MT may simply be defective. In this case we would be textual rather than a narrative lacuna. However, it is equally possible that the meturgeman had the MT before him and deduced the missing words from the context.

(3) At the end of verse 8 the targum supplements the Bible by suggesting how Cain killed Abel: 'He drove a stone into his forepart'. This tradition, which may have been influenced by a memory of Exod 21:18 ('if man contend, and one smites the other with a stone...'), is as old as Jud 4:31.

(4) The targum identifies the 'sign' which the Lord set for Cain (verse 15) as a letter from the 'great and glorious Name' (= the Tetragrammaton), which God inscribed on his face (i.e., presumably on his forehead). The letter of the divine name acted as an amulet to shield him from harm.

In each of these instances the meturgeman has supplied the sort of circumstantial detail which an audience would demand from a retelling of the Bible story, though at the same time he never misses an opportunity to impose his own theology on the text. At other points he expands the text to cope with more immediate exegetical problems. Verse 7 is a case in point. The meturgeman produces a coherent, and in its way convincing, resolution of this hiatus in interpretation. He takes the ambiguous סֵת́אָשׁ = סֵתֶאָדֶו, 'removal of guilt', i.e., forgiveness (cf. Psalm 85:3). So the sense of the first part of the verse becomes: If you amend your ways — in effect, if you repent — you will be forgiven. The

verse is then added: If you do not repent, your sins will be judged on the day of judgement. 'Sin coming at the door' is read as an image of temptation — an allusion to the evil inclinations of your heart. The 'doors' are the doors of the heart. Sin enters to enter and dominate, but it lies entirely within man's power whether he does good or evil. Once again the meturgeman has skillfully worked his own ideas into the text. In this case it is the doctrine of the two inclinations, in particular the notion that man can subdue the evil inclination and choose to do good.

Repentance is a major motif in the targum's reading of the story. Cain is a notable example of repentance, as well as of heresy. At verse 13 Cain acknowledges the heinousness of his crime: 'My rebellion is far too great to be borne'. The sense appears to be that it is intolerable to God, as the translation 'rebellion' (amurah) for the Hebrew שְׂדֵדַּמָה indicates. Yet God's power of forgiveness transcends even Cain's sin. Verse 13 is read as a prayer for pardon. In effect it involves a double 'melding of the Hebrew שְׂדֵדַּמָה — as 'bear/tolerate' and as 'forgive'. Cain's repentance explains the suspension of divine punishment for seven generations (perhaps to allow him to prove the sincerity of his change of heart), and the protection of the divinelineage — a privilege which would not have been granted to an innocent scoundrel (cf. caT‘ides Rabba 4.12, 2: 'The weapons which were given to them at loreh had the imnole Name inscribed on them, and when they sinned it was taken away from them'). The Hebrew שְׂדֵדַּמָה (sevenfold) in verse 15 has been interpreted as 'for seven generations', and, contrary to the masoretic accentuation, has been joined with the preceding phrase ('whoever kills'), rather than with the following verb ('punishment shall be exacted'). That this is the intention of the targum becomes clear from Ps 28 to Gen 4:24: 'If for Cain who sinned and returned in repentance, (judgement) was suspended for seven generations, so Leah, the son of his son, who did not sin, it is right that the judgement should remain in suspense for seventy seven generations.'

It is not possible to go into detail here as to the Ps-Y's relationship to the other targumim of the passage. Two brief notes must suffice.

(1) At verse 1 the sense of the targum is not immediately clear. The meaning is probably that the land of Cain's exile was one of the special things, like the Garden of Eden, created at the beginning of the world. 8 Rather the idea is that before Cain's exile the earth was like the Garden of Eden. His sin had a disastrous effect on nature. God's curse on the earth (Gen 3:17-18) was suspended, and only became operative after the murder of Abel. The meturgeman saw a parallel between Cain's exile and Adam's expulsion from Paradise, between the curse of Gen 3:17-18 and the curse of Gen 4:12. The sense of the targum thesis: Cain dwelt in the land of his exile, which had been to him formerly like the Garden of Eden. Some of the other targumim are more explicit: 'Cain went out

1 As noted by Bovender, 'Haggadah in the Targum Onkelos', 44-55. The parallel with Ps-Y Gen 2:8 is not compelling.

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from before the Lord and dwelt as an exile and a wanderer in the land east of the Garden of Eden. If he killed Abel the earth had borne him fruit like the fruit of the Garden of Eden, but after he smote and killed Abel it changed and bore him thorns and thistles (Neof.). Its Y’s interpretation is allusive. The obscurity of its translation has come about, because it is abbreviating a fuller tradition.

(2) At verse 10 Vs-Y surprisingly does not explore the plural ‘bloods’ (লদং). There was an old and wise read tradition (found in M. Sanhedrin 4:5, and in the other targumim to this verse) that the plural alludes to Abel’s righteous progeny whom Cain aborted by murdering his brother. The omission is surely significant, even though the precise reason for it is unclear. Perhaps the scribe who wrote it did not want to break Cain too much, and to make his repentance and forgiveness less plausible.

Type B Targum

Type B Targum, like type A, is paraphrastic, but it displays a fundamental difference in form. In type A a viable one-to-one translation of the Hebrew can be extracted from the paraphrase by bracketing out the additions. In type B a base translation cannot be recovered; the translation is dissolved in the paraphrase. Type B Targum may be illustrated from the description of the body of the beloved in Canticles 5:10-16.

TARGUM CANTICLES 5:10-16

5:10, Mt: שְּלִישִׁיָּהוּ וְשְׁלִישֵׁיָּהוּ דֵּרְשֵׁי בְּרוּאָבָהּ.

My beloved is white and ruddy, pre-eminent above all thousand.

Targum: Then began the Assembly of Israel to speak of the praises of the Lord of the Universe, and thus she said. That God do I desire to serve who is in the day is wrapped in a robe white as snow, and is occupied with the Twenty Four Books—the words of the Law, and the words of the Prophets and the Writings; and by night he is occupied with the six Orders of the Mishna. The splendour of his face shines like fire, on account of (his) great wisdom and powers of argument. On his crown (kupha) is over ten thousand myriads of angels who minister before him.

5:11, Mt: רָךָּו יָכִין פָּזָא וּנָוָסְבָּיְּוָהוּ תַּלָּתָו סַרְוָתָו לִי תָרֵךְ.

His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are curled, and black as a raven.

Targum: His head is the Law, which is more precious than pure gold; and his locks are the interpretation of the Words (of the Law), which are heaped up

5:12, Mt: יְּנִיֵּיָו מָאֵיָיְּוָהוּ יְּלָדָא יְּבַלְעָא יְּשַׁבְּטָא יְּלָדָא יְּלָדָא.

His eyes are like doves beside the water-breaks; washed with milk, and full set.

Targum: His eyes look constantly upon Jerusalem, to do good to her and to bless her, from the beginning of the year to its end (like doves that stand and look at fountains of water) through the merit of those sitting in the Sanhedrin, who busy themselves with the Law, and make justice shine (בְּמִירָנְתָא), so that it is smooth like milk, and (through the merit) of those sitting in the Houses of Study, who are circumcised in judgment, till they reach an occlusion to acquire and to condemn.

5:13, Mt: נְחֵיָו קַרְחָא שְׁבַבְּאָפָא נְפַּלְּאָא בַּלְעָא מַעֲנָיָא בְּשַׁבְּאָפָא הַשָּׁבְּאָא.

His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as banks of sweet herbs; his lips are as crowning myrrh.

Targum: The two tablets [לדָא] of stone; which he gave to his people are written in ten lines, similar to the line in: a spicer-gardens, and produce [יוֹרֵבָא] myrtlebushes just as the garden produces spices. And the lips of his sages, who busy themselves with the Law, asپreasons on every side, and the utterance of their mouths is as choice myrrh.

5:14, Mt: יָדָיוּ גִּלְלִּיָא בְּדוֹדָא יִמּּוֹלָא יִמּוֹלָא הַבָּרְשָׁא מִטָּאָו וּכְּלָאָא מְלָאָא יָתוֹלִּי יָטרָמיָא.

His hands are as rods of gold set with beryl; his body is as polished ivory overlaid with supplies.

Targum: The twelve tribes of his servants Jacob were enrolled [רְבָּאָב] upon the breast plate, the golden ornament of holiness—engraved upon twelve gems along with the three Patriarchs of the world. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Ruben was engraved on carnelian; Simon was engraved on topaz; Levi was engraved on sardonyx; Judah was engraved on carbuncle; Dan was engraved on saphire; Issachar was engraved on emerald; Gad was engraved on jacinth; Asher was engraved on sardonyx; Naphtali was engraved on ametyst; Zebulun was engraved on beryl; Joseph was engraved on onyx; Benjamin was engraved on jasper. (These were) like the twelve signs of the zodiac, shining like a luminous [יָשֵׁבָא], resplendent in their workmanship as ele-kant’took, and shining like supplies.

5:15, Mt: יְּנִיֵּיָו קֶמָּאֵיָו יַשָּׁבְּאָא יַלָּדָא פִּזָּא מָרָאָבָא עַלָּאָוִּי לְוִיָא הָלָאָא קַרְחָא קַרְחָא.

His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold; his asperes is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedar.
Targum: The righteous are the pillars of the world, resting on supports of fine gold, that is to say, of the words of the Law with which they busy themselves, and by means of which they admonish the people of the House of Israel to do his will. Comedy like, and filled with compassion towards them is an Ancient One, and he makes him the last of the House of Israel white as snow. He is ready to wage triumphant war against the nations who transgress his word, like a young man, mighty and strong as cedars.

5:26. **MT**: חַיּוּת מְעָרָאִים וּכְלָל מְדַעְמָאֵים וַחֲזֵי נְפַלּוֹת נַעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל.

His mouth is most sweet; yea he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

**Targum**: The words of his palate are sweet as honey, and all his precepts are more desirable to his sages than gold or silver. This is the praise of God, my beloved, and this is the strength of the might of the Lord, my friend, O you prophets, whó prophesy in Jerusalem.

The targum’s reading of the original is highly coherent. Following the general lines of rabbinic exegesis of Canticles, the speaker is taken as the Assembly of Israel, the Beloved as God. The emphasis in the targum is notably unmystical: the relationship between God and Israel is defined in terms of love and literal terms. Like much of the targum Canticles, this whole passage is presented as a parable of praise to the life of the Oral and Written Law. God himself acts as an example: he spends the day studying Scripture, and the night studying Mishnah.

At first sight the targum appears unanalyzable. Closer analysis suggests that behind it lies a disciplined and exact exegesis of the biblical text. Each element in the original is taken as a symbol or cipher to be decoded and arranged in a coherent story, with the broad hermeneutical perspective that the text is an allegorical statement about God’s relationship to Israel through Torah. Canticles 5:13 illustrates the method. ‘Checks’ (תַּקְאָיוֹן) in the MT is interpreted, on the basis of similarity of sound, as alluding to the ‘two tablets’ (תַּכּוֹת) of the Law. But how can the tablets of the Law be like ‘a bed of spices’? The comparison must be between the ordered rows of plants in the herb-garden, and the lines of writing on the tablets. The talmudic interpretation of the next word seems to turn on a re-interpretation: for the mosaicist ‘מָגְדְלֹת’ he reads מָגְדָּלָה, ‘producing’. ‘מָגְדָּלָה’ is then given a twofold sense: literally as ‘spices’, and allegorically as ‘the subtleties of the Law’. Hence: The Law produces subtilets, just as an herb-garden produces spices. God’s lips are taken naturally as referring to his spoken word, the Sages, and the ‘myrrh’ which flows from his lips is the pronouncement of the Sages on matters of Law.

The exegesis underlying the targum is not always obvious. Sometimes it appears to ignore elements in the original. At other times, where the correspondence between the targum and the Hebrew is fairly certain, the basis of the correspondence is not clear. E.g., in Targum Canticles 5:13 what has happened to the biblical ‘לֶבֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל’? One suspects it is represented by ‘the Law’ in the phrase ‘who busy themselves with the Law’. But on what grounds has this equation been made? Canticles Rabba 5:13, I comments: ‘his lips are as lilies: This is the scholar who is fluent in his Mishnah’. This clearly implies a correspondence between סומא and מַסָּה. Perhaps a similar idea lies behind Targum Canticles, but we cannot be sure. It is similarly unclear why in verse 11, ‘head’ is equated with ‘Law’, and ‘hands’ with ‘the interpretation of the Law’, or way in verse 14, ‘the twelve tribes of his servant Jacob’ should stand against ‘his hands’. The reason for these uncertainties is simple. The talmudic tradition has not made clear its exegetical reasoning, and it has not done so because he remained conscious that, despite the large element of paraphrase which he was introducing, he was producing a text in the form of a translation, not in the form of a midrash. Sometimes he says close tonadashim term, at the beginning of verse 11, but his discipline and restraint are quite remarkable. There are a sufficient number of clear correspondences between the targum and the original (shown in italics in the targum translation above) to reveal the basic pattern: each element of the original is translated in its proper order and expanded, and all elements of the original are represented. In those cases where elements appear to be ‘lost’, we may give the talmudic the benefit of the doubt. It is simply due to our ignorance of the underlying exegetical processes. So then, type B targon, as a general method, turns out to be similar to type A: both types aim to exegesis every element in the biblical text in proper, literal order. The difference comes down in the end to one of form. From type A a straightforward, one-to-one rendering can be extracted; from type B it cannot: the original is dissolved in the paraphrase.

The ingenuity and learning of the talmudic interpretation of Canticles should not be underestimated. To sustain this sort of paraphrase over the whole book is a tour de force. Targum Canticles is not ‘folk’ literature: it is a highly learned book, displaying a degree of coherence which suggests that the basic scheme must have been worked out by a single author. Who he was, or where and when he lived it is impossible to say. Its originality is shown when we compare his targon with the great compendium of rabbinic interpretation on Canticles. Canticles Rabba. There are overlaps between the two works: that is hardly surprising. More significant are the numerous cases where Targum Canticles offers an interpretation not found in Canticles Rabba. E.g., Canticles Rabba is totally unaware of the targon’s view that Canticles 5:14 alludes to the rich priest’s breast-plate, engraved with the names of the twelve tribes. Though Targum Canticles and Canticles Rabba draw at certain points on a common tradition of exegesis, it is unlikely that either work is directly dependent on the other.
Sitz im Leben

in what circumstances did these Aramaic versions of the 'Hikke originale, and how were they used? These questions bring us to the Sitz im Leben of the targum.

The targum was a flourishing institution in the period of the Talmud, and a large number of statements scattered through classic rabbinic literature reveal something of its character, use, and purpose. These statements must be treated with caution: they are, often prescriptive; i.e., they indicate what the rabbinic authorities thought ought to happen rather than what was in fact the case, and they come from different periods and diverse regions. For they are our only real evidence on the Sitz im Leben of the targum, and they must be the starting-point of any discussion on this subject. Rabbinic literature points to the use of the targum in three distinct settings (a) synagogue; (b) private devotion; (c) school. 8

The primary setting for the targum was the synagogue. The majority of the rabbinic references relate to its use in this context. It was part of the institution of the public reading of the Torah. As the biblical lessons were read out (both Torah and Haf'tara) they were simultaneously rendered into Aramaic. The rabbinic rules for the delivery of the targum expressed some very clear ideas as to the targum's nature and function. Targum belonged to the category of Oral Law (Tora sh'el pe) and it was to be delivered not to illustrate the rabbinic view of the relationship between Oral and Written Torah (Tora sh'bihkhuva). Every effort had to be made to avoid confusing the targum with the written text of Scripture. The Scripture reader and the translator (metegeman, targumim, ha-metegeman) must be two different people. The Scripture reader had to be clearly seen to be reading from the scroll; the translator had to recite the targum from memory; he was not allowed to use a written text in synagogue, nor was he permitted to glance at the scroll - lest the people should say that the transition is written in the Torah. 9 Nor was the reader allowed to prompt him if he faltered. Translation was simultaneous, but targum was not allowed to overlay Scripture. Scripture and targum were delivered alternately, in the case of the fenatach, each verse of Scripture was followed by the corresponding verse of targum, in the case of the prophets up to three verses could be read before the targum was given.

The underlying purpose of these rules is obviously to keep Scripture and targum apart. At the same time a contrary tendency can be observed - to bring Scripture and targum closely together. The reader and translator stood side by side. Only small portions of the original were read against the translation, and while translation and original were not allowed to overlap, ideally there should be no pause between Scripture and targum; Scripture and targum were intended to form one continuous, speechless text; they interworked to make a single unit. The rabbinic view of the function of the targum does not envisage it as an independent version; targum should always stand in the presence of Scripture; original and translation should always be juxtaposed and live in dialectical tension. Again a twofold purpose is discernible. On the one hand the Rabbis were concerned to prevent targum taking off into a life of its own, and so, possibly, replacing Scripture; Scripture had absolute priority. Targum was only a bridge to the understanding of Scripture. Once one had mastered over to a secure understanding of Scripture, the bridge could, in theory, be ignored. On the other hand targum offered a useful means of imposing a certain reading on Scripture, without resorting to the drastic expedient of altering the text of the original; a reading that would be in keeping with rabbinic hecology and that would exclude other readings (e.g., Christian) of which the Rabbis disapproved. The fact that Scripture was in Hebrew and the targum in Aramaic was a help. The two texts were easily distinguished on linguistic grounds, so in bringing targum close to Scripture there was little danger of one being confused with the other.

There is clear evidence that the Rabbis viewed the targum as more than translation in any narrow sense; its purpose was to ex-eg and to interpret Scripture. Significantly they traced the inauguration of the targum back not to Sinai, but to the representation of the Law to Israel by Ezra after the exile in the square before the Water Gate (Nehemiah 8):

What is the Scriptural justification (minuyin) for the targum? R. Zeira said it is the name of Rav Hananel: And they read from the book, from the Law of God - this refers to Scripture; clearly (me'p'orah) - this refers to targum; and they gave the sense - this refers to the context; so that the people understood the reading - this refers to the classical text; some say it means the decisions, others the beginnings of the verses.

(P.T. Megilla 73d)

The targum, then, makes the Scripture 'clear' (me'p'orah); it contains an element of pershu. The metegeman performs a Levitical role. The sense of the word 'targum' itself should be noted: its semantic field corresponds closely to that of the Latin interpretatio, i.e., it covers both translation from one language into another, and explanation of a text in the same language. When Joseph was talking to Pharaoh and to the Hebrews, he spoke to his brothers through a metegeman (Neof and Ps-Y Gen 42:23). Equally Aaron, when acting as Moses' spokesman to Pharaoh and to the Israelites, is referred to as Moses' metegeman (Neof Exod 5:1, cf. Exodas Rabbah 8:3). All the evidence suggests that both these elements of interpretation - translation and commentary - were meant to be present in the targum.

8 See Alexander, 'Rabbinic Roles', and Yorke, 'The Targum in the Synagogue and in the School'.

9 The major rabbinic references on the use of the targum in synagogue are: M. Megilla 4a-6a; T. Megilla 4:3-20; 25; P. P. Megilla 74a, 75a; B. T. Megilla 21b, 23a-b, 32a; B. T. Be'Akko 3a-b; B. T. Tora 39b; Pesikta Rabh 82 (p. 149b) - Tannam R. Hanan 11, 87-88 (Peyper 6). The rules are summarized by Hammurabi in Hilkoth Tfilla, 122b-124a. The language chosen for the targum is school

10 B. T. Megilla 13a.
The use of the targum in other settings—private devotion and in school—is closely related to its basic liturgical use in synagoge. The *bets chassidim* for the use of targum in private devotion is B.T. *Berakhot* 8a (ed.): “Rab Huna bar Yehuda said in the name of Rabbi Ammi: A man should always complete his *parashiyot* with the congregation—twice in the Hebrew and once in the Targum.” The idea is that one should prepare oneself in the privacy of one’s own home to hear the public reading of Tora in synagoge by going through the relevant section both in the Hebrew original and in the Aramaic translation. The aim presumably was to be able to follow the public reading with understanding. Besides being able to understand the Hebrew, one would have been in a position to recite the Targum—a point to which we shall return presently.

Note once again, as with the liturgical presentation of Targum in synagoge, Scripture and Targum are juxtaposed, a relationship of interdependence is established. However, the priority of Scripture is maintained by having it read twice, as against the one reading of the Targum.

The staple of primary education in the school (*beit ha-tesh*) was the Hebrew Bible. The *Bible* was approached through the Targum. Besides giving the pupils an approved translation of the original, the Targum would have played a fundamental role in the acquisition of Hebrew by forming a bridge between the vernacular and the sacred tongue. Yet again the fundamental fact shines through: the Targum was meant to function only side by side with Scripture. The school setting was probably of vital importance for the transmission of the Targum. The Targum was largely passed on by oral means. Though there seems to have been no strong objection to the use of written texts of the Targum in private devotion or in school, it is unlikely that many copies of the Targum would have been in circulation. In general, books were rare and expensive. Apart from the schoolmaster, few would have owned a copy of the Targum. Following normal pedagogical practice the Targum would have been learned off by heart in school. It was there that boys first acquired a knowledge of the text which they might later be called upon to recite in synagoge.

Rabbinic literature has little to tell us to who was responsible for the Targum, or when they originated. The tradition noted earlier about the inauguration of the Targum in the time of Ezra should be seen more as a statement about the nature and function of the Targum than a straightforward historical fact. The traditions attributing the Pentateuchal Targum to Onkelos, the Prophetic Targum to Yonathan ben Uziel, and the Targumim of several of the Writings to Ray Yosef, are, as we saw, totally unreliable. One point, however, is clear: the rabbinic authorities were aware of the influence these versions could exert and attempted to control not only the manner of their delivery but their content as well. It was forbidden to translate certain sensitive portions of Scripture, and certain translations were explicitly censured. The congregation was encouraged publicly to rebuke or to silence a translator who gave an unauthorized translation.” This should be seen in the light of the fact that all the males would have learned the Targum in school and would have refreshed their memories of it before coming to synagoge. If Rabbi Ammi’s rule (“twice in Scripture, once in Targum”) was at all widely observed. The way in which the Targum was transmitted would have made strict standardization difficult. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the *metegeman* would have been free to translate more or less as he chose. The Targum was a “text,” and its content would have been fairly comprehensively determined by tradition.

How do the extant Targumim relate to the Targum in the Talmudic period as reflected in classic rabbinic literature? Can we assume that the texts as they now stand go back to the talmudic period and that they represent direct transcriptions of Targumim actually used in synagoge? There is clear evidence that at least some of the extant texts did play a liturgical role. Thus, a number of the Cairo Geniza texts have been marked with the *sidrot* le the triennial lectionary cycle, and it is natural to assume that the *Sidra* collections of Targumim, consisting exclusively of readings for festivals and special Sabbaths, were put together for liturgical use. The Aramaic poems, such as *Ezra Moshe* clearly formed part of the liturgy, and as we have seen, they are often intimately bound up with the Targum. Onk and Youse were certainly recited in synagoge, and the liturgical use of a number of other Targumim has continued in Yemenite synagogues down to the present day. There can be no doubt that most of the texts are ancient (the oldest Cairo Geniza fragments date to the 9th/10th century), and that they gave us access, sometimes very directly, to the Targum as delivered in the old synagoge in the talmudic era. But it would be wrong to generalize: not all the Targumim had a liturgical role, and it is unwarranted to make liturgical use integral to the definition of Targum. Some simple facts should be borne in mind. Youse covers the whole of the Former and the Latter Prophets, despite the fact that only part of the second division of the canon would ever have been read in synagoge. A similar situation pertains in the Writings: there are, for example, Targumim for Joel and Proverbs, but we do not know how these were used. The Targum had a role in the *beit ha-Midrash*, which, though often shadowed by its synagogal role, was not dependent on it. The Targumim continued to be copied and, possibly augmented and altered, in the Middle Ages, long after the Targum had ceased to function as a liturgical version in most synagogues. They were valued as convenient repositories of traditional exegesis, as readings of Scripture. They had a life as purely written texts. Targum became solely a literary genre. Indeed, it is not inconceivable that some of the later Targumim were composed in the early Middle Ages purely for private use.

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5 See Alexander,”Rabbinic Lists.” The main rabbinic references are: M. Megilla 49a, 10; T. Megilla 49b; B.T. Megilla 29a b.
History of the Targumim

INTERRELATIONSHIPS

In attempting to reconstruct the history of the targumim, the first point to be clarified is the interrelationship of the texts. Most of the work done on this subject relates to the Pentateuchal targumim, which have been subjected to detailed internal analysis and synoptic comparison. As our survey indicated the Pentateuchal targumim fall into two groups: group 1 consists of Onk; group 2 of Neof, Ps-Y, Fi, CG and the other representatives of the Palestinian Targum.

The distinction between the groups has to do partly with the nature of the translation: Onk is the whole literal, whereas the Palestinian Targumim tend to be paraphrastic. It is also, in part, a distinction as to dialect: Onk is in a type of Standard Literary Aramaic; the Palestinian Targumim display a number of varieties of Galilean Aramaic. A third factor is provenance: Onk was the official targum of Babylonia, and there is good evidence that it reached its present form there; the Palestinian Targumim, as their name suggests, circulated in Palestine. However, the distinction as to provenance should not be pushed too far, for analysis suggests that Onk is, in fact, Palestinian in origin. The dialect of Onk is not Babylonian (that is to say, it differs from that in the Babylonian Talmud). Though as a type of Standard Literary Aramaic it could, in principle, have been written either in the east or the west, it has been shown to display certain linguistic traits which point to a western origin. Its Aramaic is close to that of the Genesa Apocryphon from Qumran. Moreover, Onk, though generally non-expansive, does contain a certain amount of aggadah. This aggadah, which as to content appears to be of Palestinian origin, is often presented in a highly allusive form which suggests that a fuller tradition is being abridged. The fuller tradition is frequently attested in the Pal. Targ. The most economical explanation of the facts is that Onk has evolved from a fuller Palestinian Targum, which was shortened, perhaps with a view to bringing it into closer conformity to the Hebrew text. It should be noted that, although mistaken as to the precise authorship of the targum, Babylonian tradition does recognize Onk as a product of the west. The interrelationships of the Pentateuchal targumim are displayed on Fig. 1.

The situation in the second division of the canon is probably analogous. Yon, the official targum of Babylonia, is in a dialect similar, if not identical to, that on Onk, and like Onk it probably originated in the west. The Tosefta, despite attempts to reject them in the dialect of Yon, were originally in Galilean Aramaic, and are remnants of a Pal. Targ similar to the Pal. Targ of the Pentateuch.

As for the third division of the canon, distinction between 'Babylonian' and 'Palestinian' does not seem to apply; all these texts are Palestinian in origin. There are, indeed, different recensions extant of various books, analogous perhaps to the different recensions of the Pal. Targ to the Pentateuch, but the requisite work has not yet been done to clarify their interrelationships. As was indicated earlier, a grouping of the targumim of the Writings, on the basis of translation-equivalents and style, is widely recognized: three groups are distinguished: (1) the Five Megiloth; (2) Job, Psalms and Proverbs; (3) Targum Chronicles. Affinities between some of the targumim of the Writings, and the targumim of the Pentateuch and the Prophets, have been clearly demonstrated: e.g. Targ. Chmm., in dialect, translation-equivalents and aggadah particularly close to Ps-Y. However, it is hard to establish in such cases which text has priority, and one should be careful not to jump to conclusions.

DATING CRITERIA

Literary analysis and synoptic comparison establish the genealogical relationships between the targumim, and give some indication as to their relative dates. They do not, however, furnish us with absolute dates. The wide divergence of opinion among the experts shows that dating the individual targumim is by no means an exact science. It simply has to be conceded that in the case of the Aramaic targumim, objective dating criteria (apart from the terminus ante quem provided by the dates of the MSS) apply do not exist. The major problems lies with the extremely fluid nature of the texts. Apart from Onk and Yon there is little to suggest that any of the texts was reduced or standardized at a definite point in time. Most of the texts underwent change and development over long periods; with this in mind, they are at composite analogues of elements of very different dates. Few of the targumim have an absolute date.

Despite the difficulties there are a number of methods which have been widely applied to the problem of the dating of the targumim. Three in particular are worthy of note: analysis of the aggadah; analysis of the hikla; and analysis of the geographic equivalents in the targumim. It should be stressed that none of these methods can yield an absolute date. However, if used with circumspection they do provide clues as to the history of the targumim.

ANALYSIS OF AGGADAH. It can often be established from datable early Jewish texts (such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, Josephus, and certain of the Pseudepigrapha) how early a given aggadic tradition was current. If it can be shown that a targum contains a large number of early traditions, then there is at least a prima facie case for seeing a stratum of text targum as early. This method can be refined in a number of ways. A more rigorous approach is to trace how the
interpretation of a particular biblical verse develops through early Jewish and Christian literature and then finds its way into the targumic exposition. For example, theaggadic sources (the Targum on Genesis 6:3 was taken to mean 'angels'). Later, however, probably for doctrinal reasons, a reaction to this view set in both in rabbinic and Christian circles: it was taught that the reference was to heavenly beings, but not to angels. The standard rabbinic view became the 'sons of the judges' or 'sons of the nobles'. Christian reaction against equating the 'sons of the judges' with angels seems to begin in the late second century C.E. In rabbinic circles, however, this exegesis came under attack a little earlier, if Genesis Rabba 36:5, p. 217 is to be believed: "R. Shimon ben Yohai called them i.e. the 'sons of the judges'. R. Shimon ben Yohai cursed all who called them the 'sons of God'." The targum in the following translations: O=P, 'sons of the nobles'; Neof, 'sons of the judges'; Neof margin, 'angels'; Ps-Y, 'sons of the nobles'. O=P and Neof agree with the newer exegesis, Neof margin with the older. Ps-Y, at first sight, also agrees with the newer exegesis, but in fact it's text is mixed, for a little later in 6:4 it renders 'sons of the angels' by 'Shaphazai and 'Azael, who fell from heaven. Shaphazai and 'Azael were angels, according to 1 Enoch 6:11, of the angels who rebelled against God. There are other elements in Ps-Y at this point which recall the traditions found in 1 Enoch 6:11. So Ps-Y's 'sons of the angels' appears to be a later revision of the targum, possibly in the light of O=P. This sort of analysis discloses the mixed nature of the targum in the majority of the texts reflect an exegesis that became current probably after 150 C.E.; however, there are also traces of an earlier stage of the targum which has escaped the reviser's hand. [3]

ANALYSIS OF THE HALAKHA. The targumim translate the halakhic portions of the Pentateuch, and in doing so interpret the halakha. Their halakhic interpretations can be compared with the halakha in the Mishna (compiled around 200 C.E.). In cases where the targumim disagree with the Mishna, the possibility is worth considering that they represent an exegesis that arose prior to the redaction of the Mishna and its acceptance as authoritative. This argument must, obviously, be used with caution; it would be a mistake to imagine that the Mishna imposed a monolithic uniformity on subsequent halakha. The Mishna itself quotes divergent rulings. However, the methods does have its use, and a significant number of such disagreements between the Mishna and a text intended to explain Scripture in the synagogue, may reasonably be taken as an indication of the presence in the targum of early, possibly pre-Mishnaic material. E.g., the Mishna established as the standard rabbinic interpretation of Exod 22:5 (Hebrew text 22:5) that "Exod 22:5 refers to the case of a man who..."
borders of the Land of Israel as defined by each of the Palestinian Targumim prove to be the same. These targumic borders can be compared with the rabbinic definitions of Erets Israel. The Rabbis showed interested in this subject because it affected the operation of the 'commandments pertaining to the Land (mishveret ha'avot). A line of development can be traced through the rabbinic pronouncements, running from a boundary-formula contemporary with Gamliel I (c. 100 B.C.E.) (M. Hullin 4:1; M. Shevit 6:1), through a boundary formula of Yehuda bar Hai (c. 150 C.E.) (M. Gittin 1:2; B. T. Gittin 5a), to the Tannaitic boundary list (c. 200 C.E.) (Sifre Deut. 51, p. 117; Shabbat 4:1; P. T. Sheviiit 36c). The general tendency is to retract the borders of the land as time goes on, those in the time of Gamliel being much wider than those described in the Tannaitic Boundary List. The targumic borders agree with those defined in the time of Gamliel, and diverge from the other definitions. An early date for the Palestinian targumic borders is confirmed by the fact that almost identical borders for Erets Israel are found in the Genesis Apocryphon (1QGenAp 21:14–19). The revised nature of Onk also emerges from this analysis: Onk offers only one identification in this whole passage (viz. Kadesh Barnea = Reqem Ge‘ah, i.e. Petra). This happens to be the sole point where the Palm Targum, border definition and the Tannaitic Boundary List coincide.  

**Concluding Synthesis**

We are a long way yet from writing a definitive history of the vast and complex corpus of the Targumim. The following concluding notes offer a tentative synthesis of the results so far achieved.

1) The practice of translating the book of the Bible into Aramaic began in the late Second Temple period. This is proved beyond all doubt by the existence of the Qumran Targumim of Job and Leviticus, as well as the *Genesis Apocryphon*, which, though doubtfully a targum in the rabbinic sense, does attest the practice of paraphrasing the Bible into Aramaic. Corroboration for such an early date for the institution of the targum can be drawn from the rabbinic targumim. There is now a wealth of evidence that all the rabbinic targumim contain early aggadot, and converge significantly as to their Bible interpretation with reliable early texts (e.g. Josephus, Philo, and the NT).

Moreover, given their dialect, it is highly unlikely that Onk and Yon (at least as to their basic text) could have originated after 135 C.E.  

2) It is impossible to say how much of the Bible was available in Aramaic in the late Second Temple period. It is natural to assume that the Pentateuch would have been translated first. However, it should be remembered that we have excellent evidence for very early translations of the Writings into Aramaic. There is not only the direct evidence of the Job Targum from Qumran,
but indirect evidence from rabbinic literature of early Aramaic versions of Job and Esther. 79

(3) From the beginning the institution of the targum had a twofold setting—in both the synagogue and the study. It is a mistake to overstate its liturgical function. Aramaic versions were used not only to translate the biblical lection in synagogue, they were used as a way of offering an interpretation of Scripture for the Bible student, and bridging the gap between his vernacular and the original Hebrew. As a type of Bible commentary the targum has a number of advantages: it affords the original biblical text intact; the interpretation carried by a separate text, which, for simple linguistic reasons, is immediately distinguishable from original Hebrew. The antiquity of the Egal ha-Ma'asseh setting of the targum is once again indicated by the Qumran Job Targum: it is hard to conceive of any liturgical use for Job.

(4) The Old Palestinian targumim were probably in Standard Literary Aramaic. This is the dialect of the Qumran targumim. It is also the dialect of Onk and Yon. Their language was literary, and probably did not correspond precisely to spoken Aramaic, either in Judaea, or (a fortiori) in Galilee. It is a mistake to suppose that in dialect, or linguistic register, a targum must correspond precisely to the vernacular. There is clear evidence of targum being used liturgically where the language does not correspond to the vernacular: Onk and Yon in Babylonia are a case in point. An important observation flows from this: the targumim are learned versions. By overemphasizing the targum's function to translate the Bible into the vernacular, the impression can be given that they are popular in origin, that they constitute a kind of folk-literature. This is not borne out by close analysis. Though some targumim may have been aimed at the common man, they are deeply learned versions, the work of scholars. By the same token it is wrong to suppose that the targum in synagogue was ever a spontaneous rendering. The translation was always likely to be traditional and predetermined.

(5) It is hard to say whether the Old Palestinian targumim were expansive or non-expansive. The evidence suggests that both types of targum were known. The Qumran Job Targum is "literary," whereas the Genesis Apocryphon is expansive. There are indications that Onk at least was derived from a more expansive targum, and it has been shown that some of the aggadic additions in the extant Palestinian Targumim are of a very early date. In the light of this evidence one should avoid the facile rule of thumb that the shorter and simpler version, the earlier it is.

(6) At some point the Old Palestinian targumim in the younger dialect of Galilean Aramaic were recast in the younger dialect of Galilean Aramaic. This probably happened after the Bar Kokhba war when the centre of Jewish cultural life moved from Judea to Galilee. However, the change was not solely connected with a change in the spoken dialect of Aramaic. As was stressed earlier, the language of the targum (either in regular or dialect) probably never coincided precisely with the vernacular. Moreover, there is reason to believe that the main features of the so-called Galilean dialect had already emerged in Galilee before the Bar Kokhba war. The linguistic change probably reflects the newfound acceptability of Galilean Aramaic which, as the Gemara of the Palestinian Talmud shows, was now widely used in the schools for the discussion of halakhic questions. The implication of this argument is clear: one of our extant Palestinian Targumim, as to their basic linguistic form, can be earlier than the late second century C.E.

(7) The Palestinian Targumim were never standardized. This is evident from the number of recensions now extant. Though the various targumim clearly belong to the same tradition, and often overlap in content, no official text of the targum emerged in Palestine. There was some attempt by the rabbinic authorities to control the content of the targum: certain texts were not allowed to be translated in public, and certain translations of individual verses were censored; but rabbinic control was never extensive nor all that successful. The rabbinic injunctions are sometimes ignored. Targumim were in circulation which took up halakhic positions diverging from those advocated in the Mishna. It is impossible to say whether, broadly speaking, the various extant recensions of the Palestinian Targumim represent successive revisions of the targum, or were contemporaneous forms which differed due to regional variation. The latter is more likely to be the case. The regional diversity in the text of the targum would be analogous to the regional diversity in the text of the standard synagogue prayer (the Amidah and the Shema).

(8) A recension of the Old Palestinian Targum (both to the Pentateuch and the Prophets) was taken to Babylonia, probably before the Bar Kokhba War, i.e., before the Old Palestinian Targum began to be recast into Galilean Aramaic. There it was subjected to thorough revision and standardization which resulted in the emergence of Onk and Yon. The Babylonian recension of the Old Palestinian Targum involved two stages: first, a shortening to bring the targum into close conformity to the Hebrew text; and second, a thorough revision of the halakhic aspects of the targum to bring it into agreement with the halakha of the Babylonian schools. The Babylonian recension did not, however, involve a critical recasting of the targum into the Aramaic dialect of Babylonia: the targum remained basically in its original dialect—a western form of Standard Literary Aramaic. The preservation of the original dialect of the targum probably reflects conservatism on the part of Babylonian Jewry, as well as the prestige of the original version brought to Babylonia. It arrived with a certain sanctity, at a time when the spiritual authority of the Exile was paramount in Babylonia.

(9) In the post-Talmudic period the Babylonian recension of the Old Palestinian Targum, i.e. Onk and Yon, returned to the west. This return reflects the growing authority of the Babylonian Gemara in the early middle ages and its spiritual hegemony over world Jewry. Onk and Yon did not, however, totally displace the Palestinian Targumim, but their arrival did have profound effects.

on the targum in the west. First, it led to the emergence of truncated forms of the Pal. Targ., which were designed to supplement Onk and Yon. The so-called Fragmentary Targum, and the targumic Tosefta illustrate this phenomenon. These forms of the Pal. Targ. presumably arose in a milieu where Onk and Yon had become the dominant targum. Second, the arrival of Onk and Yon led to extensive linguistic contamination of the Palestinian Targumim from the dialect of Onk and Yon. This is seen at its most extreme in certain targumic Toseftot where the original Palestinian Targumim have been systematically recast into the Onk/Yon dialect. It is also illustrated by Ps.-Y. which is dialectally mixed - i.e., it contains features of both Galilean and Onk-type Aramaic. The targumim of the Writings are in a mixed dialect, broadly similar to that of Ps.-Y.

(10) The liturgical use of the targon began to die out in the middle ages. A major factor in this development was the rise of Islam and the emergence of Arabic as the vernacular of the Jews in the middle east. It is possible that Saadia's Targum bore the liturgical function of the targon in some synagogues. The liturgical use of the targon continues in Yemenite synagogues to this day; it is hard to say whether this represents a genuine historical continuity with talmudic and post-talmudic practice, or a revival of the institution of the targon. After its liturgical demise the targon continued to be widely used as an aid to the study of the Bible: it never lost its place in the Beit ha-Midrash.

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