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1. The following five papers from the Panel Discussion “LXX and Descriptive Translation Studies—Making the Connection: The Case for Locating Septuagint and Targum Research within the Framework of Descriptive Translation Studies” were originally presented at the Twelfth Congress of the IOSCS at Leiden, The Netherlands, on July 30, 2004.

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# *Locating Targum in the Textual Polysystem of Rabbinic Pedagogy*

STEVEN D. FRAADE  
*Yale University*

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## *Introduction*

Central to the paradigm of "Descriptive Translation Studies" is what Gideon Toury terms its "target-oriented approach," where the "target" is not just the target text of translation but the target culture that determines the "socio-cultural conditions in which [that] translation is performed and consumed."<sup>2</sup> In the academic study of ancient biblical translations, such translations have more commonly been approached for their "source orientedness,"<sup>3</sup> that is, for the light they shed on the history of the Hebrew text of Scripture, or for the history of its interpretation, and hence as a subspecialty of Old Testament or biblical studies. While such employments of ancient scriptural translations are not invalid, and indeed can be very useful, according to Toury's model that is not the best place to begin to understand such translations, or the translation strategies of which they are the textual realizations as cultural products in their own right. Rather, one must first recognize the positions and functions of translations within their target cultures, since such are determinative of, and hence inseparable from, the processes of translation and

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1. Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1995) 21, 83. I wish to thank Opher Kutner, Tzvi Novick, and Lawrence Venuti for helpful comments to an earlier draft of this article.

2. *Ibid.*, 275. See also Toury's earlier formulation in *In Search of a Theory of Translation* (Tel Aviv: The Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics, Tel Aviv University, 1980) 11-50 ("A Semiotic Approach to Translation").

3. For the term, applied to earlier "Translation Studies" in general, see *ibid.*, 24.

their textual productions.<sup>4</sup> A concomitant axiom to this “target orientedness” is that translations need to be studied in comparative relation not just semantically to their source texts, but functionally and dynamically to other translation texts, and, indeed, to nontranslational kinds of text production, with which they share space within the same cultural polysystem, even as their semiotic functions may vary therein.<sup>5</sup>

In the case of the ancient Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Bible (sing. *targum*; pl., *targumim*), of which we have many spanning several centuries, the question of their location, position, and function within their host or target cultures has only relatively recently been attended to, and with contested results. In addition to the “textual” sources of the extant *targumim* themselves, whose dating is uncertain (with earliest manuscripts from the seventh to the ninth centuries C.E.),<sup>6</sup> we have “extratextual” sources, all within rabbinic literature beginning in the second/third centuries C.E. that seek to regulate the practice of targumic translation within the domains of synagogue and school, to the extent that those were under rabbinic control or influence.<sup>7</sup> As Toury notes more generally, while the latter sort of evidence cannot be taken at face value as representing the norms that governed production of the former, neither (especially in the absence of any other “extratextual” sources) can they be denied a voice.<sup>8</sup> In what follows I shall survey recent efforts to define the place of targum within postbiblical Jewish society and culture, present my own view of the place of targum among the textual corpora of rabbinic pedagogy, and provide one textual case of targumic translation to model the advantages of a target-oriented approach to targumic studies.

4. See the chart, *ibid.*, 11–14.

5. *Ibid.*, 61. For the term “polysystem,” within which translations are a “subsystem,” see Itamar Even-Zohar, *Polysystem Studies* (Tel Aviv: The Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics / Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990 = *Poetics Today* 11 [Spring 1990]) esp. 45–51: “The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem.”

6. For reasons given below (n. 37), it is questionable whether the fragments of Aramaic scriptural translation among the Dead Sea Scrolls should be included here.

7. See Philip S. Alexander, “The Targumim and Rabbinic Rules for the Delivery of Targum,” in *Congress Volume: Salamanca, 1983* (VTSup 36; Leiden: Brill, 1985) 14–28; Steven D. Fraade, “Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum, and Multilingualism in the Jewish Galilee of the Third–Sixth Centuries,” in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. Lee I. Levine; New York and Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1992) 253–86.

8. See Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, 65–66.

### Retrospect

In modern times, the idea that the *targumim*, which in their extant forms have mainly been transmitted through rabbinic channels, derive from pre-rabbinic times and/or extrarabbinic (i.e., popular, synagogue) contexts arose with the discovery and publication of targum fragments from the Cairo Geniza in the 1920s and gained greater prominence with the discovery and publication of the complete *Neofiti Targum* to the Pentateuch in the 1950s and 60s, especially as articulated by such scholars as Paul Kahle<sup>9</sup> and Gustaf Dalman in the earlier period and Renée Bloch, Alejandro Díez Macho,<sup>10</sup> Martin McNamara, and Geza Vermes in the later period. In particular, such scholars hoped to find in what they termed “the Palestinian Targum” both the language and exegetical basis of Jesus’ teachings in first-century Galilee and Jerusalem. Not surprisingly, many of the scholars who flocked to the newly burgeoning field of targumic studies did so from New Testament studies, in many cases with insufficient facility in the Aramaic language of the *targumim* and with minimal knowledge of rabbinic literature. Underlying their claim for both a prerabbinic (that is, pre-Christian) time frame and an extrarabbinic (popular) *Sitz im Leben* for “the Palestinian Targum” were certain assumptions, not the least of which was that those for whom the vernacular Aramaic translation of Scripture was intended were ignorant of Hebrew and relied on “the Palestinian Targum” as a complete *substitute* for the Bible in Hebrew. Therefore, it was presumed, “the Palestinian Targum” could provide a much-needed (or -desired) window onto the “popular” Judaism of Jesus’ time and place.

Proof for this pre- or extrarabbinic setting, aside from premature announcements of the death of Hebrew in all but scholastic circles, were claims that in a very few instances a targumic rendering of scriptural legal terminology contradicted Mishnaic law, which was assumed to have had statutory

9. Kahle published the Geniza targum fragments as “Das palästinische Pentateuchtargum,” *Masoreten des Westens II* (BWANT 3/14; Stuttgart, 1930) 1–65. See also *idem*, “Das palästinische Pentateuchtargum und das Zeit Jesu gesprochene Aramäisch,” *ZNW* 49 (1958) 103–30; *idem*, “Das zur Zeit Jesu in Palästina gesprochene Aramäisch,” *TRu* 17 (1949) 201–16.

10. A. Díez Macho, “The Recently Discovered Palestinian Targum: Its Antiquity and Relationship with the Other Targums,” in *Congress Volume: Oxford, 1959* (VTSup 7; Leiden, 1960) 222–45.

force, and hence not to be contradicted within the rabbinic orbit.<sup>11</sup> In other words, a few deviations within the *targumim* from rabbinic law were claimed as proof of the pre- or extrarabbinic provenance of those translations.<sup>12</sup> To the much greater extent to which rabbinic midrashic collections reflect understandings of Scripture concordant with those of "the Palestinian Targum," this was presumed to reflect the degree to which the prerabbinic targum had influenced or left its literary traces in those later midrashic compilations. Thus, according to Renée Bloch, "the Palestinian Targum" represents the intermediary exegetical link between the Hebrew Bible and later rabbinic midrash aggadah, but even more so the creative germ of the latter. The Targum, so situated, was understood to be the principal embodiment of midrash and aggadah at the turn of the era—the foundation upon which both rabbinic and New Testament exegesis stand.<sup>13</sup> As Geza Vermes formulated in an all-

11. See Paul Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza* (2nd ed.: Oxford: Blackwell, 1959) 205–8, on Exod 22:4–5 in relation to *m. B. Qam.* 1:1. See also Joseph Heinemann, כב, תרגום שמות כב, *Tarbiz* 38 (1969) 294–96, responding to D. Reider in *Tarbiz* 38 (1969) 85. Note Kahle's conclusion: "In the Palestinian Targum of the Pentateuch we have in the main material coming from pre-Christian times which must be studied by everyone who wishes to understand the state of Judaism at the time of the birth of Christianity. And we possess this material in a language of which we can say that it is very similar to that spoken by the earliest Christians" (Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, 208). For subsequent discussion of the targumic legal renderings, in particular from *Tg. Pseudo-Jonathan*, that contradict rabbinic halakhah, see Jose Faur, "The Targumim and Halakha," *JQR* 66 (1975) 19–26; Yeshayahu Maori, "On the Relationship of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Halakhic Sources," *Te'udah* 3 (1983) 235–50 [Hebrew]; Efraim Itzhaky, *The Halacha in Targum Jerushalmi I (Pseudo-Jonathan Ben Uziel) and Its Exegetic Methods* (Ph.D. dissertation, Bar-Ilan University, 1982) [Hebrew]. As Michael L. Klein stated, "The time is ripe for a full-length study on the subject encompassing all of the extant Palestinian Targumim" (*Genizah Manuscripts of Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch*, vol. 1 [Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1986], xxii, as well as xxxiii–xxxiv).

12. For a critique of this presumption, from the perspective of Descriptive Translation Studies, see below.

13. Renée Bloch, "Midrash," *Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible* (Paris, 1957) vol. 5, col. 1279: "Il comporte déjà toute la structure et tous les thèmes du midrash. Il contient des traditions très anciennes et constitue une sorte d'articulation, un passage entre le texte biblique et son interprétation." Similarly, idem, "Note sur l'utilisation des fragments de la Geniza du Caire pour l'étude du Targum Palestinien," *REJ* 114 (1955) 30: "Il ne fait pas de doute non plus que ces Targums palestiniens contiennent déjà en germe presque toute l'Aggada postérieure et semblent être à l'origine de toute cette tradition." These conclusions are based on a comparison of targumic renderings for just 14 verses, Gen 38:17–30.

too-convenient "rule of thumb"; unless otherwise indicated, it could be assumed that the targumic aggadah predated 132 C.E.<sup>14</sup>

My interest in the present context, however, is to emphasize something else in these constructions of the place of "the Palestinian Targum" in the history of ancient Judaism, which is that Judaism in the early centuries C.E. could be neatly divided into two domains, which Martin McNamara denotes as "Rabbinic Judaism" and "Liturgical Judaism," the latter being best represented by the *targumim*.<sup>15</sup> The problem for New Testament scholars with the former is that, in its present form, it is relatively late, even as it incorporates earlier traditions, and being "linked with the Jewish schools," "it need not necessarily have been known to the masses of the Jewish people, or if it was, this was probably from sources other than the scholastic discussions in which we now find it."<sup>16</sup> By contrast, "the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch," representing "Liturgical Judaism," is written in "the language spoken rather generally in Palestine in the time of Christ, and indeed for some centuries preceding it." These Aramaic translations, "standing as they do at the very heart of Jewish religion, would at first sight appear to be of prime importance to any study of the Jewish religion of Christ's day."<sup>17</sup> But the origins of the Targum are even older: "When these [targumists] stood up in the synagogue to render the written Word in Aramaic, they spoke as heirs of a tradition,"<sup>18</sup> so as to "make the mass of the people acquainted with the Law of Moses."<sup>19</sup> Elsewhere McNamara avers that "the [Palestinian Targum] represents the religion of the ordinary Jews much better than do rabbinic sources, which come to us in good part from Judaism as reorganized after the Fall of Jerusalem and the disappearance of the Sadducees and Essenes from the picture,"<sup>20</sup>

14. Geza Vermes, "The Targums," in Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (rev. and ed. G. Vermes and F. Millar; Edinburgh, 1973) 1:105. Vermes states the same rule as a "working hypothesis" in "Bible and Midrash," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible* (Cambridge, 1970) 1:231, and on 229–30 he states that "the Palestinian Targums preserve untouched or retouched Bible exegesis in its earliest form."

15. Martin McNamara, *Targum and Testament: Aramaic Paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible—A Light on the New Testament* (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1972) 5–16.

16. *Ibid.*, 11.

17. *Ibid.*, 12.

18. *Ibid.*, 35.

19. *Ibid.*, 48.

20. *Ibid.*, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch* (AnBib 27; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1966) 22–23.

and, quoting from an article written in 1920 by R. Harris, "Whether [the Tgs] were written or not, the Christian Church must have passed through a state of Targumism, if it emerges from the synagogue where Targumism prevails."<sup>21</sup>

Such splitting of Liturgical Judaism from Rabbinic Judaism, with the former represented chiefly by the *targumim*, is not the purview only of Christian scholars or scholars of the New Testament, but also of Jewish scholars of rabbinic Judaism. For example, David Halperin, in *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision*,<sup>22</sup> identifies the *hekkhalot* interpretation of Ezekiel's vision of the heavenly *merkabah* with what he calls "the synagogue tradition," which derives, he argues, principally from the targum to Ezekiel, "the product par excellence of the synagogue,"<sup>23</sup> "made in and for the synagogue,"<sup>24</sup> to suit "the needs of the synagogue."<sup>25</sup> I will not deal here with the circular and strained reasoning by which Halperin argues for such a monolithic identification of targum with synagogue,<sup>26</sup> but rather with the conclusions that he draws from it: that targumic and *hekkhalot* interpretations of the *merkabah* vision reflect "popular" views, which are not just non-rabbinic in their origins, but anti-rabbinic (antinomian?) in their thrust. The fact that many of these interpretations also appear in unquestionably rabbinic collections is simply an indication that they secondarily left "traces" or were "encased" there. Underlying Halperin's argument is the presumption that there existed a singular "synagogue tradition" to which the synagogue populace of late antiquity was universally exposed. No matter which synagogue one entered on a given Sabbath or festival day, one would encounter the same popularly based "synagogue tradition," whose "touchstone" is the targum.<sup>27</sup>

21. Ibid., 23, quoting from R. Harris, "Traces of Targumism in the New Testament," *ExpTim* 32 (1920-21) 374. However, more recently McNamara has acknowledged the high degree of concordance between the halakah and aggadah of the Palestinian Targums and rabbinic literature. See Martin McNamara, trans., *Targum Neofiti I: Genesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1993) 41-43.

22. *Faces of the Chariot* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988). See especially, chap. 4, "The Synagogue Tradition," 115-56.

23. Ibid., 117.

24. Ibid., 119.

25. Ibid., 122.

26. For example, argues Halperin, the addition of the words "the prophet said" in the targum at the beginnings of chaps. 8, 14, and 20, indicates a synagogue audience who might otherwise think that the reciter of the targum is referring to himself in the first person. See *ibid.*, 118. We have no evidence that the book of Ezekiel, except for select sections, was read as part of the synagogue lection.

27. Ibid., 119.

In order to construct such a unitary "synagogue tradition," Halperin must presume an equally unitary rabbinic tradition, within which both the *hekkhalot* tradition and the *targumim* could find no room.

More recently, another scholar of rabbinic Judaism, Daniel Boyarin,<sup>28</sup> has claimed that the frequent use of the word *mêmrâ'* ('word' [of God]) in the *targumim* denotes the widespread dissemination of a "pararabbinic" Logos theology that not only recognized but also worshiped a "second God" (binitarianism), along with Philo and the Prologue to the Gospel of John. My concern here is not whether the *targumic mêmrâ'* can bear the weight of Boyarin's reading (which, to my mind, it cannot), but with Boyarin's presumption that since the extant *targumim* represent the Judaism of the ancient synagogue, their binitarianism was the "religious koine of Jews in Palestine and the Diaspora, their theological lingua franca," vehemently rejected ("crucified") in turn by the rabbis.<sup>29</sup> Boyarin states his sociohistorical presumption of targumic provenance explicitly, unambiguously, and emphatically: "There is a point that I have been hinting at until now, but which is crucial to understanding the argument in this section, namely that the Targums, as products of the synagogues, in contrast to the House of Study, were *not* rabbinic in their religious ethos."<sup>30</sup> For someone so intent on problematizing polar oppositions, Boyarin falls into a dualistic trap of his own making: that the *targumim* must be located either in the synagogue or in the "house of study," even though rabbinic sources uniformly and copiously locate them in both (which is certainly not to conflate the two).

Other scholars of rabbinic literature who stress the popular nature of the *targumim* do so not to argue for a pre- or antirabbinic provenance, but rather to claim that the *targumim* (like the homiletical midrashim) represent the "public face" of rabbinic Judaism, "turned to the masses" in attendance at the

28. Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) chap. 5: "The Jewish Life of the Logos: Logos Theology in Pre- and Pararabbinic Judaism," 112-27; *idem*, "The Gospel of the Memra: Jewish Binitarianism and the Crucifixion of the Logos," *HTR* 94 (2001) 243-84.

29. See *idem*, *Border Lines*, 126 for the first quotation, 128-47 for the second idea.

30. *Ibid.*, 116. This (mis)use of the *targumim* is fundamental to the argument of Boyarin's book, for without it, he is left with Philo and the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel as the two direct exempla of what he wishes to portray as the dominant (while not unanimous) Jewish theology. However, it would be very difficult to argue from these two works, composed by single authors, for a Jewish "theological lingua franca" of binitarianism.

synagogues.<sup>31</sup> That is, while the rabbis had their *intramural* texts of elite legal discourse, they also sought to “translate” their teachings into terms with which the larger populace would resonate and be receptive, particularly through the *targumim* and midrashic homilies. Particularly important in this regard has been the work of Avigdor Shinan, extending scholarly lines already set by Joseph Heinemann, and arguing, based primarily on *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to the Pentateuch, for such a rabbinic “public face” based on what he deems to be recurring popular, “folk,” and “superstitious” motifs in targumic texts.<sup>32</sup> Unlike earlier scholars, such as Bloch and Vermes, who viewed the *targumim* as *chronological* mediators between the earlier biblical text and later rabbinic literature, this view sees the *targumim* as *socially* mediating between the rabbinic elite and the Jewish masses. For example, “the *meturgeman* mediated between the elite learning of the rabbis and the masses, who were the listeners-consumers of the targum,” or, “the *meturgeman* [functioned] as the mediator between the spiritual academy and the people and as the conduit for the dissemination downwards of the elite Torah.”<sup>33</sup> The *targumim*, therefore, provide an important window into “the spiritual world of those who attended the synagogue.”<sup>34</sup> I must admit, however, that as attractive as I find this portrayal of targum and *meturgeman*, I find the identification of certain literary motifs as *inherently* “popular” fraught with methodological difficulties, not the least of which is the danger of circular argument. In any case, since most of this sort of analysis has been applied to *Tar-*

31. Avigdor Shinan, “Live Translation: On the Nature of the Aramaic Targums to the Pentateuch,” *Prooftexts* 3 (1983) 44.

32. See in particular, idem, *The Aggadah in the Aramaic Targums to the Pentateuch* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Makor, 1979); “Live Translation: On the Nature of the Aramaic Targums to the Pentateuch,” *Prooftexts* 3 (1983) 41–49; “The Angelology of the ‘Palestinian’ Targums to the Pentateuch,” *Sefarad* 43 (1983) 181–98; “Miracles, Wonders and Magic in the Aramaic Targums of the Pentateuch,” in *Isaac Leo Seeligmann Volume, Essays in the Bible and the Ancient Near East* (ed. A. Rofé and Y. Zakovitch; Jerusalem: Rubenstein, 1985) 419–26; “Sermons, Targums, and the Reading from Scriptures in the Ancient Synagogue,” in *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity* (ed. Lee I. Levine; Philadelphia: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1987) 97–110; “Echoes from Ancient Synagogues: Vocatives and ‘Emendations’ in the Aramaic Targums to the Pentateuch,” *JQR* 58 (1991) 353–64; *The Embroidered Targum: The Aggadah in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1992); “The Aramaic Targum as a Mirror of Galilean Jewry,” in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. Lee I. Levine; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1992) 241–51; *The Biblical Story as Reflected in Its Aramaic Translations* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1993).

33. Shinan, “Live Translation,” 44.

34. *Ibid.*, 49.

*gum Pseudo-Jonathan*, which is atypical among the so-called Palestinian *targumim*, it remains a question to what extent conclusions drawn from this unique targum can be extended to the full range of targumic texts.

Finally, Paul Flesher has argued that because of differences in language, form, and content between the *targumim* and other discursive branches of rabbinic literature, Palestinian targums “come from a social location outside rabbinic circles, namely the priests.”<sup>35</sup> I am in general sympathy with the notion that the priests continued to play a significant role in Jewish society long after the destruction of the Second Temple, and did not quickly or easily abandon their scripturally-assigned roles of teachers and adjudicators of Torah. However, I am not convinced by Flesher’s arguments that the extant *targumim* as a group represent the priestly “literary legacy,” largely based on their differences from other types of rabbinic textual practice, especially in light of the important place of priestly descendants and priestly interests within rabbinic culture.

### Critique

Since claims for dating of extant targumic texts to premishnaic times, whether based on the language or contents of those texts, have been conclusively disputed by others, I shall not rehearse the arguments here.<sup>36</sup> Needless to say, the extant texts may contain “traditions” that have earlier origins, but the same can be said for “traditions” contained in other genres of rabbinic literature. In any case, textually disembodied “traditions” are of little historical usefulness. Here, rather, I would like to reemphasize that the only evidence that exists for the *practice* of targum, certainly within the context of the synagogue lectionary practice, derives from rabbinic texts, with no

35. Paul V. M. Flesher, “The Literary Legacy of the Priests? The Pentateuchal Targums of Israel in Their Social and Linguistic Context,” in *The Ancient Synagogue: From Its Origins until 200 C.E.: Papers Presented at an International Conference at Lund University, October 14–17, 2001* (ed. Birger Olsson and Magnus Zetterholm; ConBNT 39; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2003) 467–508, esp. 469. Most recently, see Beverly P. Mortensen, *The Priesthood in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Renewing the Profession* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

36. See, in particular, Anthony D. York, “The Dating of Targumic Literature,” *JSJ* 5 (1974) 49–62; Stephen A. Kaufman, “On Methodology in the Study of Targums and Their Chronology,” *JSNT* 23 (1985) 117–24.

evidence to be found pre- or extrarabbinically.<sup>37</sup> Some have tried to adduce circumstantial evidence for the existence of such targumic practice in pre-rabbinic times, but this evidence, it seems to me, remains flimsy.<sup>38</sup> While absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, neither can we adduce the existence of that for which we have no evidence. At most we must remain historically agnostic with regard to any prerabbinic (or extrarabbinic) targumic practice. But neither should we ignore the fact that our earliest rabbinic texts, beginning with the Mishnah, provide plentiful evidence that at least in tannaitic rabbinic eyes, the practice of Aramaic targum was a regular *accompaniment* to the Hebrew reading of the Torah and prophets in the synagogue. Of course, mishnaic proscription should not be confused with historical description, and we should not presume that the practice of targum was conducted in every synagogue and even less that it was conducted uniformly according to rabbinic rules.

However, we need not presume the mishnaic rules to be complete fictions.<sup>39</sup> The alternatives should not be reduced to complete rabbinic control or no rabbinic influence at all. The story of R. Simeon, the "teacher/scribe," in the synagogue of Tarbanet, as told in the Palestinian Talmud (*y. Meg.* 4:5,

37. See above, n. 7, as well as Philip S. Alexander, "Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. Martin Jan Mulder; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1988) 217–53. Although we have fragments of an Aramaic translation of two non-continuous sections of Leviticus (4Q156) and parts of two copies of an Aramaic translation of the book of Job from Qumran (11Q10 and 4Q157), both of these being fairly literal in their translations, we have no way of knowing what their function would have been within that community or its larger movement, but it would appear that they did not function in conjunction with the lectionary recitation of Scripture in a synagogue context. For an excellent recent study of the *Aramaic Job* from Qumran, in comparison to Peshitta Job and the rabbinic *Targum Job*, see David Shepherd, *Targum and Translation: A Reconsideration of the Qumran Aramaic Version of Job* (SSN 45; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004). Shepherd concludes that it is better not to call the Qumran *Aramaic Job* a targum at all. For the absence of any mention of the practice of targum in Second Temple references to scriptural reading in the synagogues, see my "Rabbinic Views," 254 n. 2. I should stress again (*ibid.*, 254 n. 3) that, although amoraic texts trace the origins of targum to the time of Ezra, tannaitic texts never include the practice of targum in their references to the reading of Scripture in Second Temple times.

38. See, most recently, Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) 147–51. Note the review by Ze'ev Safrai, *Zion* 66 (2001) 239, who criticizes Levine for retroverting rabbinic evidence for targum back to Second Temple times. See also *idem*, "The Origins of Reading the Aramaic Targum in Synagogue," *Immanuel* 24–25 (1990) 187–93; Safrai dates the origins of the practice of targum in the synagogue liturgy to the Ushan period (mid-second century).

39. See above, n. 8.

75b), portrays a rabbinic communal functionary in the synagogue attempting to follow rabbinic rules for scriptural reading, and presumably targum, but rebuffed by the congregants, suggesting, again, that the question is not all or nothing. On the other hand, the mishnaic evidence should caution us against thinking that the practice of targum in the synagogue was a postmishnaic invention, or even diffusion, as Seth Schwartz has recently argued, so as to comport with his overall narrative of the Judaization of the synagogue beginning only in the fourth century C.E.<sup>40</sup> We should employ the evidence of rabbinic literature, beginning with the Mishnah, for the practice of targum and the extant *targumim* that have been transmitted through rabbinic channels first and foremost for what they can tell us about the role of targum within the institutional settings within which the rabbis operated. Employing them in order to gain direct entry into pre- or extrarabbinic settings, in the absence of hard extrarabbinic evidence, rests on much shakier foundations.

The scholarly preoccupation with targum functioning in the "popular," nonrabbinic liturgical context of the synagogue has had several unfortunate consequences, most notably that of ignoring the substantial rabbinic evidence, already in "tannaitic" collections, for the practice of targumic translation in the bilingual context of rabbinic *study*, whether communal or private.<sup>41</sup> Rabbinic literature attests to a study practice whereby the targumic

40. Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001) 242–43, under the rubric "Synagogue and Community from 350 to 640." Although Schwartz bases himself on my earlier study ("Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum," cited by him, 242 n. 5), he dates the ritualized practice of scriptural reading (including targum), already well evidenced in the Mishnah, to "the fourth century and following" (p. 242). Nor is it clear to me why we should assume that "in synagogues with fixed shrines, raised platforms in front of them, and chancel screens, we can be fairly certain that it [targum] was performed" (p. 243).

41. Anthony D. York, "The Targum in the Synagogue and in the School," *JSJ* 10 (1979) 74–86; Rimon Kasher, "The Aramaic Targumim and Their *Sitz im Leben*," in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies, vol. 9: Panel Session: Bible Studies and the Ancient Near East* (ed. Moshe H. Goshen-Gottstein; Jerusalem, 1988) 75–85 (esp. 82–83); Alexander, "The Targumim and Rabbinic Rules for the Delivery of Targum," 22–23; *idem*, "Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures," 238–41; *idem*, "How Did the Rabbis Learn Hebrew?" in *Hebrew Study from Ezra to Ben-Yehuda* (ed. William Horbury; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999) 71–89; Ze'ev Safrai, "The Origins of Reading the Aramaic Targum in Synagogue," *Immanuel* 24–25 (1990) 191–92; Willem F. Smelik, *The Targum of Judges* (Leiden: Brill, 1995) 10, 23, 24–31; Steven Fine, "Their Faces Shine with the Brightness of the Firmament: Study Houses and Synagogues in the Targumim to the Pentateuch," in *Biblical Translation in Context* (ed. Frederick W. Knobloch; Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland, 2002) 63–92; Fraade, "Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum," 62–65; *idem*, "Scripture, Targum, and Talmud as In-



rendering of a scriptural verse follows the reading of that verse in its Biblical Hebrew original and precedes its midrashic study or interpretation in Rabbinic Hebrew, or whereby studying Scripture at a minimum entails reading it in Hebrew and rendering its Aramaic targum.<sup>42</sup> This practice certainly presumes a *bilingual* facility, though not necessarily complete fluency, in both Hebrew (biblical and rabbinic) and Aramaic. Whereas previously discussed scholarly perspectives stress targum's *medial* position in terms either of chronology (between early and late) or society (between elite and popular), the rabbinic texts themselves view targum as neither, but rather as *pedagogically* mediating and transitioning between scriptural reading and the dialogical modes of rabbinic interpretation. To quote one "tannaitic" midrash: "Miqrā' (Scripture) leads to *targum*, *targum* leads to *mishnah* (oral teaching), *mishnah* leads to *talmud* (dialectical commentary)," etc.<sup>43</sup> There is no reason, it seems to me, to presume that the *extant* texts of targum derived from or were used in the context of the synagogue any more so than in the context of study, whether communal or private. At the very least, *targumim* to those biblical texts for which we have no evidence of their having been read liturgically in the synagogue (e.g., Job) must be presumed to have been employed in study. So why not others as well? If the Aramaic *targumim* functioned as interlinear glosses to Hebrew Scripture in the context of rabbinic study, there is no reason necessarily to presume that they did not similarly function in the context of the synagogue lection, even if the overall level of Hebrew facility

of the synagogue attendees is presumed to have been inferior to that of the rabbis.

The synagogue-only or synagogue-mainly model for targum, with its assumption that the Aramaic targum functioned monolingually for a popular audience that relied on it alone for their reception of Scripture, much as it is often presumed that the Septuagint functioned for Greek-speaking Jews, prevents us from appreciating what we know from rabbinic rules for targum and also from the physical layout of our earliest targumic manuscripts to be its bilingual, interlinear format.<sup>44</sup> That is, both physically and functionally, the Aramaic targum never existed apart from its Hebrew source, the two being recited, studied, and written (as best we can tell), as, what Toury (citing Brian Harris) terms a "bi-text."<sup>45</sup> Designation of targum as "The Aramaic Bible," as in the title of a new journal and a recent series of translations of the *targumim* into English, is, therefore, an unfortunate misnomer, since no such self-contained "Aramaic Bible" ever existed, at least not in the context of the ancient synagogue or rabbinic pedagogy. Happily, in the most recent volume in that series (*The Targum to Canticles*), Philip S. Alexander represents the targum, even in English translation, in interlinear alternation with its biblical source. As he explains, "All the Targumim should be read in dialogue with the biblical text and not as free-standing translations."<sup>46</sup> In this regard, it should be noted that several scholars have recently argued that the Greek Jewish Torah (Septuagint) itself might have originally functioned as an "interlinear" translation for a bilingual (Hebrew/Greek) Jewish audience, perhaps originally in the context of study rather than worship, following the model of Greco-Roman bilingual pedagogy.<sup>47</sup>

struction: A Complex Textual Story from the *Sifra*," in *Hesed ve-Emet: Studies in Honor of Ernest S. Frerichs* (ed. Jodi Magness and Seymour Gitin; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) 109–22; Abraham Tal, "Is There a Raison d'être for an Aramaic Targum in a Hebrew-Speaking Society?" in *REJ* 160 (2001) 357–78; Michael L. Klein, "Targumic Studies and the Cairo Genizah," in *The Cambridge Genizah Collections: Their Contents and Significance* (ed. Stefan C. Reif; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 47–58, esp. 53, 58; S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971) 2:175–77.

42. See *Sifre Deut.* 161 (ed. Finkelstein, 212); *Sifra Shemini parashah* 1:9 (ed. Weiss, 46d); *t. B. Mesit* 2:21; *'Abot R. Nat.* B12, 28 (ed. Schechter, 29, 58); *y. Sanh.* 10:1, 27d; *b. Ber.* 8a–b.

43. *Sifre Deut.* 161 (ed. Finkelstein, 212), treated by me in "Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum," 263. Compare Saul Lieberman (*Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* [New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1962] 48), "But the first rudiment of the interpretation of a text is the ἐρμηνεία, the literal and exact equivalent of the Hebrew תרגום, which means both translation and interpretation."

44. On this physical format, see my "Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum," 265 n. 31. Note in particular MSS B, C, and D from the Cairo Geniza, on which see Klein, *Genizah Manuscripts of Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch*, 1:xxii.

45. For this term, see Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, 96–99, quoting from Brian Harris, "Bi-text: A New Concept in Translation Theory," *Language Monthly* 54 (1988) 8–10.

46. Philip S. Alexander, trans., *The Targum of Canticles* (Aramaic Bible 17A; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002) xi.

47. See Albert Pietersma, "A New Paradigm for Addressing Old Questions: The Relevance of the Interlinear Model for the Study of the Septuagint," in *Bible and Computer: The Stellenbosch AIBI-6 Conference. Proceedings of the Association Internationale Bible et Informatique. "From Alpha to Byte."* University of Stellenbosch, 17–21 July (ed. Johann Cook; Leiden: Brill) 337–64; idem, *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and Other Greek Translations Usually Included under That Title: The Psalms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) ix; Arie van der Kooij, "The Origin and Purpose of Bible Translations



Another negative consequence of the exclusive association of targum with the synagogue has been the tendency to overlook it as a component of the rabbinic study curriculum and to fail to include its interpretive practices within the broader corpora of rabbinic, especially midrashic, literature.<sup>48</sup> Doing so would allow a more complete and systematic appraisal not only of the degree to which targumic interpretations are in concord or discord with those of other branches of rabbinic literature,<sup>49</sup> but also of the way in which targu-

in Ancient Judaism: Some Comments," *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 1 (1999) 204–14; Albert I. Baumgarten, "Bilingual Jews and the Greek Bible," in *Shem in the Tents of Japhet: Essays on the Encounter of Judaism and Hellenism* (ed. James L. Kugel; JSJSup 74; Leiden: Brill, 2002) 13–30; Benjamin G. Wright III, "The Jewish Scriptures in Greek: The Septuagint in the Context of Ancient Translation Activity," in *Biblical Translation in Context* (ed. Frederick W. Knobloch; Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland, 2002) 3–18; idem, "Access to the Source: Cicero, Ben Sira, The Septuagint and Their Audiences," *JSJ* 34 (2003) 1–27; idem, "Translation as Scripture: The Septuagint in Aristeas and Philo," in *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures* (SBLSCS 53; ed. Wolfgang Kraus and Glenn Wooden; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006) 47–61. On the possible study context for the origins of the Septuagint, in conjunction with its Hebrew source text, see Sebastian P. Brock, "The Phenomenon of the Septuagint," in *The Witness of Tradition: Papers Read at the Joint British-Dutch Old Testament Conference Held at Woudschoten 1970* (OtSt 17; Leiden: Brill, 1972) 11–36. For a similar function for Aquila's Greek translation, see Alexander, "How Did the Rabbis Learn Hebrew?" 83–84, as well as pp. 82–83 for Greco-Roman analogues.

48. The same point is made by Fine, "Their Faces Shine with the Brightness of the Firmament: Study Houses and Synagogues in the Targumim to the Pentateuch," 67. It is not uncommon for surveys of or introductions to rabbinic literature to overlook targum entirely.

49. See, for example, Israel Drazin, *Targum Onkelos to Deuteronomy: An English Translation of the Text with Analysis and Commentary (Based on A. Sperber's Edition)* (New York: KTAV, 1982) 7–10, 19–57, for statistics comparing *Targum Onkelos's* "deviations" from the Masoretic texts with those of the "Palestinian" *targumim* as with the *Sifre* to Deuteronomy, with which Drazin finds a high degree of agreement. For similar results, see Drazin's other volumes: *Targum Onkelos to Exodus* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1990); *Targum Onkelos to Leviticus* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1994); *Targum Onkelos to Numbers* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1998). Other works that have systematically compared specific targumic texts with rabbinic literature have similarly found a high degree (by no means absolute) of concordance. For some recent studies, see Harry Sysling, *Tehiyyat Ha-Metim: The Resurrection of the Dead in the Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch and Parallel Traditions in Classical Rabbinic Literature* (Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 57; Tübingen: Mohr, 1996); Bernard Grossfeld, *Targum Neofiti I: An Exegetical Commentary to Genesis Including Full Rabbinic Parallels* (ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman; New York: Sepher-Hermon, 2000); Eveline van Staaldruine-Sulman, *The Targum of Samuel* (Studies in the Aramaic Interpretation of Scripture 1; Leiden: Brill, 2002); Timothy Edwards, *The Old, the New and the Rewritten: The Interpretation of the Biblical Psalms in the Targum of Psalms, in Relationship to Other Exegetical Traditions, Both Jewish and Christian* (Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford University, 2003).

mic discourse semiotically contributes to the broader culture of rabbinic textual practice and production, with its plethora of counter-voices. Furthermore, the inclusion of the bi-textual genre of targum would contribute to a fuller appreciation of the bilingual and dialogical nature of the rabbinic textual and discursive polysystem overall. Certainly there are significant differences between the forms, terminology, contents, and tones of targum and those of other genres of rabbinic discourse, but so too are there among those other genres themselves (e.g., midrash and mishnah, mishnah and tosefta, halakhah and aggadah). Those differences should not be too hastily historicized as deriving from *separate* chronological, geographical, or social settings, without first considering how they might be the consequences of differences of rhetorical function among the respective discursive genres into which rabbinic teaching is divided, while still dynamically interlinked as a unitary curriculum of study. To paraphrase a passage of tannaitic midrash: each variety of rabbinic teaching has its own distinct flavor, but collectively as "Torah discourse," they are one, *דברי תורה כולה אחת*.<sup>50</sup>

From the perspective of Descriptive Translation Studies, the very differences of form, language, and interpretation between the *targumim* and other genres within the rabbinic polysystem of "Torah discourse" may be manifestations of the distinctive dialectical function played by scriptural translation in bridging the gap between holy writ and human orality, between biblical source text and rabbinic target culture, respectively. While rabbinic *midrash* ("interpretation," whether expository or homiletical) similarly shuttles between scriptural text and rabbinic culture, it is structured much less tightly in this regard than is *targum* as translation. As Toury argues, translational deviation may itself be a surface realization of the position assigned to translation by its target culture: "While translations are indeed intended to cater to the needs of a target culture, they also tend to *deviate* from its sanctioned patterns, on one level or another, not least because of the postulate of retaining invariant at least some features of the source text—which seems to be part of any culture-internal notion of translation."<sup>51</sup> Thus, apparent discordances

50. *Sifre Deut.* 306 (ed. Finkelstein, 339), treated by me in *From Tradition to Commentary: Torah and Its Interpretation in the Midrash Sifre to Deuteronomy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991) 96–99.

51. Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, 28. See also, *ibid.*, 41–45, for the place of such deviation in "pseudotranslations." The category of "pseudotranslation" may well apply to targumic pluses, which often follow the more equivalent renderings of a verse, thereby absorbing some of the status of the true translation.

between targumic and other rabbinic interpretations, whether legal or narrative, need not suggest an extrarabbinic position for targum (any more so than, say, between *mishnah* and *midrash*). Rather, the charge of Descriptive Translation Studies to targumic studies would be to understand both how *targum* fits within the rabbinic textual polysystem overall and how it plays its particular rhetorical function as scriptural translation therein.

### Prospect

As noted at the beginning of this article, the burgeoning comparative field of "translation studies," with the contribution of Descriptive Translation Studies in particular, has moved away in recent years from viewing translations solely in closed semantic relation to their source texts, and increasingly toward viewing translations more broadly and dynamically within the communicative contexts of their target cultures. Translated (if I may) into the context of ancient targum, this requires viewing targum not simply with regard to its *semantic* rendering of the biblical source, but equally with regard to its *semiotic* contribution to the textual polysystem of rabbinic pedagogy, or *talmud torah*, which was in all its forms deeply engaged in scriptural interpretation. To the extent that some targumic texts also informed the oral renderings of Scripture within some synagogues, targum might further be explored as a mediating channel between the intersecting domains of rabbinic study and Jewish worship, between *bet midrash* and *bet keneset*,<sup>52</sup> but that would not be my point of departure.

52. On the relation of the synagogue to the *bet midrash*, see Fine, "Their Faces Shine with the Brightness of the Firmament: Study Houses and Synagogues in the Targumim to the Pentateuch"; G. Hüttenmeister, "Synagogue and Beth Ha-Midrash and Their Relationship" [Hebrew], *Cathedra* 18 (1981) 38-44; Aharon Oppenheimer, "Houses of Study in the Land of Israel at the Beginning of the Amoraic Period" [Hebrew], *Cathedra* 8 (1978) 80-89; idem, "Beth Ha-Midrash: An Institution Apart" [Hebrew], *Cathedra* 18 (1981) 45-48; Ze'ev Safrai, "Notes on the Essence of the 'House of Study' in the Land of Israel" [Hebrew], *Cathedra* 24 (1982) 185; Dan Urman, "The House of Assembly and the House of Study: Are They One and the Same?" *JJS* 44 (1993) 236-57; idem, "The Synagogue and the Beth Ha-Midrash: Are They One and the Same?" in *Synagogues in Antiquity* (ed. Aryeh Kasher and Aharon Oppenheimer; Jerusalem, 1987) 53-75.

### A Targumic Example

Let us look at one targumic example so as to model an approach that views targum as dynamically mediating between its biblical source and its rabbinic target culture. The verse in question, Exod 7:1, is part of God's charge to Moses and Aaron to return to Egypt to deliver a powerful message to Pharaoh, who claimed for himself divinity, to release the Israelites from servitude.<sup>53</sup>

#### Exod 7:1

ויאמר יהוה אל משה ראה נתתיך אלהים לפרעה ואהרן אחיך יהיה נביאך

The Lord said to Moses: Behold, I have set you [as] God before Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be [as] your prophet.

#### Tg. Onqelos

ואמר יוי למשה חזי דמניתך רב לפרעה ואהרן אחוך יהי מתורגמןך

The Lord said to Moses: Behold, I have appointed you [as] master to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be [as] your *meturgeman*.

#### Tg. Neofiti

ואמר יוי למשה חמי דמניית יתך רב ושליט לפרעה ואהרן אחוך יהוי חרנמןך

The Lord said to Moses: Behold, I have appointed you [as] master and ruler to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be [as] your *meturgeman*.

#### Tg. Pseudo-Jonathan

ואמר יוי למשה למא את מסתפי חמי דכבר שוית יתך דחילא לפרעה כאילו אלהא דיליה ואהרן אחוך חוי נביא דילך

The Lord said to Moses: Why are you afraid? Behold I have already made you

53. There appears to be nothing from the Cairo Geniza targum texts or from the *Fragmentary Targum* to this verse. Text editions from which the following are taken are *Onqelos* (ed. Sperber), *Neofiti* (ed. Diez Macho), *Pseudo-Jonathan* (ed. Clarke).

awesome to Pharaoh, as if [you were] his god, and Aaron your brother will be your prophet.

*Targum Onqelos* follows Scripture very closely with three word changes: (1) In place of the Hebrew verb *ntn* ('give', here rendered 'set'), it uses the Aramaic verb *mny* ('appoint'), which is a stock substitute when the former verb is understood to denote the appointment of someone to a position of authority.<sup>54</sup> The latter verb, both in Hebrew and in Aramaic, is frequently used in rabbinic literature for the appointment of sages to positions of authority. (2) More significantly, in place of "God" the targum uses 'master' (*rāb*), which word, in both Rabbinic Hebrew and targumic Aramaic, means, in general terms, one of superior authority, or more specifically a rabbinic master or teacher (a sage). This is one of only two places where *Targum Onqelos* makes this substitution. The other is Exod 4:16, where it is said that Aaron will serve as Moses' "mouth" (translated as *meturgeman*) to the people, and that Moses will be to him (as) God.<sup>55</sup> In other passages where the word 'ēlōhīm is taken to refer to a human or humans, *Targum Onqelos* translates it 'judge'/'judges' *dayyānā*/'*dayyānayā*', as in Exod 21:6; 22:7, 8, 27, or as 'great men' ([*bēnē*] *rabrēbaya*'), as in Gen 6:2, 4; 33:10. If the latter had been intended here by the targum, that is, Moses as a superior authority to Pharaoh, which is more likely the verse's simple meaning, the latter, more common translation would presumably have been employed.<sup>56</sup> (3) In place of 'prophet' it uses *meturgeman* ('interpreter'), the *only* place where *Targum Onqelos* makes this substitution. This loanword functions identically in Rabbinic Hebrew and targumic Aramaic. The usual targumic rendering of

54. For examples, see *Targum Onqelos* to the following verses: Gen 41:41, 43; Exod 18:25; Num 14:4; Deut 1:15, 16:18.

55. There, too, *Tg. Onqelos* substitutes *rāb* for "God," but *Tg. Pseudo-Jonathan* expands it to "a *rāb* seeking teaching from before the Lord." The same idea is found in the translations of *Targum Neofiti* and the *Fragment Targum* (MSS V, B) to Exod 4:16. Saadia renders 'ēlōhīm in Exod 4:16 as *ustadh* ('instructor'), presumably under the influence of *Tg. Onqelos*. Note that the *Peshitta*, which translates Exod 7:1 literally, renders *neh* ('mouth') in Exod 4:16 as *mtgrmn*. Although "to him" in Exod 4:16 and 7:1 refer to Moses, one later *midrash*, of unknown origin, takes it to refer to Pharaoh, under the influence of Exod 7:1. See *Midr. Haggadol* Exod 4:16.

56. But compare *Targum Onqelos*'s use of *rāb* in Gen 23:6 (for Hebrew *nāṣī*); Gen 27:29, 37 (for Hebrew *gēbīr*); Gen 39:9 (for Hebrew *gādōl*); Exod 2:14 (for Hebrew *sār*). My point is not that *Targum Onqelos* could not use *rāb* for a human of superior authority, but that its substitution for 'ēlōhīm in combination with *meturgeman* is unusual (except for Exod 4:16), and hence more likely denotes 'master' as 'teacher'. See previous note.

'prophet' is simply its Aramaic equivalent, *nēbiyyā*. The word *meturgeman* is used in *Targum Onqelos* only in two other places: Exod 4:16, where it also refers to Aaron (as Moses' 'mouth'), and Gen 42:23, where it renders *mēlīṣ* ('interpreter', 'translator'). Thus, *Targum Onqelos* achieves its translation without increasing or decreasing the number of scriptural words: each word of the Aramaic targum can be directly "mapped" onto one of the Hebrew Scripture. In this sense (alone) it can be said to be "literal," even as I shall now demonstrate, it has significantly transformed the verse's meaning.

The *meturgeman* referred to here is *not* one who translates Scripture in the synagogue (from Hebrew to Aramaic), but one who is appointed to a rabbinic master (*rāb*) to communicate (within Hebrew) and mediate the master's teaching to his audience, an example of what George Steiner calls "internal translation."<sup>57</sup> This position is already known from tannaitic sources,<sup>58</sup> but appears more prominently in amoraic sources (as the 'āmōrā').<sup>59</sup> The practice appears to have been for a distinguished sage, either when delivering a homily to the public on the Sabbath or especially when teaching the disciples of the sages in the school, to speak quietly to the *meturgeman*, who standing beside him would broadcast the sage's teachings to his audience.<sup>60</sup> Such a human amplifier confers socioreligious status upon its speaking source.<sup>61</sup>

57. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975) 28–30, 45–47. I could find only two examples of the *meturgeman* to the sage translating from Hebrew to Aramaic. In those cases he translates either an ambiguous phrase from Scripture (*Gen. Rab.* 70:16 and parallels) or one from the Mishnah (*b. Yoma* 20b) into Aramaic, presumably in the context of communicating the sage's teaching on that passage. In both cases the sage takes issue with his translation.

58. See *i. Meg.* 3:41, where he is juxtaposed to the *meturgeman* of the Torah reader, on which see Saul Lieberman, *Tosefta Ki-Fshutah*, part 5, 1221–23.; a *barayta* in *b. Pesah.* 50b; *Sifre Num.* 140; *Sifre Deut.* 176, 305.

59. For fuller, albeit not historically critical, treatment of this figure, see Abraham Shaul Amir, *Institutions and Titles in Talmudic Literature* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1977) 76–101.

60. *B. Sanh.* 7b suggests that a judge would also employ a *meturgeman* (or 'amora). On the *meturgeman* to the sage being paid for his services, even on the Sabbath, see *b. Pesah.* 50b (*barayta*). Some sages appear to have had a regular *meturgeman*, e.g., R. Judah b. Nahmani, who is frequently mentioned as the *meturgeman* Resh Laqish: *b. Git.* 60b; *Sanh.* 7b; *Hag.* 16a; *Sotah* 37b. The *meturgeman* could make minor changes to what he transmitted, e.g., in the attribution of a teaching, depending whether it is in the name of the father or teacher of the sage or of the *meturgeman*. See *y. Meg.* 4:10 (75c); *b. Qidd.* 31b. Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah Hil. Talmud Torah* 4:3. See also *b. Soferim* 40a. For later evidence of this practice, see Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 2:198.

61. For example, according to midrashic tradition, when Moses transferred his teaching authority to Joshua, he signified the latter's elevation by assigning to him a *meturgeman*.

Since the Hebrew words for “God” and “prophet” are very common in Scripture (as in postbiblical Hebrew) and have Aramaic stock equivalents in *Targum Onqelos*, the present renderings respond to a stimulant not so much in the language of the individual words of the verse as to its contextual meaning, whether in the source text, the target culture, or, most likely, the former as transposed into the latter. Note, therefore, that all of the other ancient translations render the words of the verse routinely.<sup>62</sup> The biblical verse is obviously employing “God” and “prophet” as metaphors: Moses will speak to Pharaoh as authoritatively as if he were Pharaoh’s God, and Aaron, serving as Moses’ mouthpiece, will act the part of prophet. But the targum is uncomfortable with this metaphor and its potential for the interpretation that Moses was elevated to the status of God, as are several midrashic comments to this verse.<sup>63</sup> So a different metaphor is substituted:<sup>64</sup> Moses is a rabbinic master (*rāb*) who teaches through the intermediary agency of a *meturgeman*. This rendering can work, except that the familiar combination of *rāb* and *meturgeman*, together with the verb *mny*, so much suggests a pedagogic context that it seems a bit out of place in the biblical narrative context in which Moses and Aaron are to *command* Pharaoh to release the Israelites from captivity.<sup>65</sup>

It is precisely because of this uncomfortable fit, I presume, that the more expansive *Targum Neofiti* translates *’ēlōhīm* with the double translation *rāb wēšallīf* (‘master and ruler’), using two words for Scripture’s and *Targum Onqelos*’s one, and now making clear that Moses is to be Pharaoh’s superior in power.<sup>66</sup> Having so translated, *Tg. Neofiti* is able to retain the translation of

See *Sifre Num.* 140 (ed. Horowitz, 186); *Sifre Deut.* 305 (ed. Finkelstein, 323–24); *Abot R. Nat.* A17 (ed. Schechter, 65).

62. However, in Exod 4:16 the Peshitta renders “mouth” as *mtrgmīn*.

63. See *Tanh. Wā’ērā’* (ed. Buber) 7, 8, 9, for a collection; as well as *Exod. Rab.* 8:2.

64. For metaphor substitution in translation, see Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, 81–84.

65. The combination works better in Exod 4:16, where the biblical context speaks of Moses’ need to address the *people* on God’s behalf, with Aaron as his intermediary. It should be noted that elsewhere Moses himself is conceived in relation to God as *meturgeman* to Torah reader. See *b. Ber.* 45a.

66. The phrase *rāb wēšallīf* presumably derives from Dan 2:10. It is used as a doublet frequently in *Tg. Neofiti*, either as a substitute for a single scriptural word, or to fill in a perceived scriptural lacuna, in all cases referring to a human of stature or power. See *Tg. Neofiti* to Gen 27:29, 37; 39:2, 9; 41:41, 43; 44:15; 49:26; as well as marginal glosses to *Tg. Neofiti* to Gen 23:6; Deut 7:24, 11:25; *Tg. Ps.-Jonathan* Gen 27:29, 49:26; *Frg. Tg.* Gen 27:29 (MSS P, V, N, L); Deut 11:25 (MSS P, V, N); and Geniza MS E Gen 39:9. On

‘prophet’ as *meturgeman*, the latter now denoting not so much a pedagogic as a bureaucratic interpreter, a well-attested usage for *meturgeman*. The even freer *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* renders: “And the Lord said to Moses: Why are you afraid? Behold, I have already made you awesome (*dēbārā*) to Pharaoh, as if (כְּאִלּוֹ) [you were] his god, and Aaron your brother will be your prophet.” Once this targum has paraphrastically explained and made explicit the *comparison* of Moses to God (as inducing fear in Pharaoh), it is able to render ‘prophet’ literally without difficulty, but in so doing fully eliminates the rabbinic, pedagogic projection onto the relationship of Moses to Aaron.<sup>67</sup> In contrast to these freer renderings, the semantic simplicity but contextual awkwardness of *Targum Onqelos*’s rendering stands out. Whereas they might make sense as substitutes for the biblical lemma, *Targum Onqelos* would only do so with difficulty. It would be attractive to reinterpret *Targum Onqelos* in light of the other, more expansive targumic renderings, taking *rāb* to denote one of superior authority, but this should not be done for two reasons: First, if that had been *Targum Onqelos*’s intended meaning, it could have used another word, e.g., *rabrēbā*.<sup>68</sup> Secondly, *Tg. Onqelos*’s interpretation of Exod 7:1, that Moses and Aaron stand for master and *meturgeman*, is well attested in rabbinic midrashic sources, both early and late.<sup>69</sup>

If *Targum Onqelos*’s rendering is awkward in the context of the biblical narrative, it at least avoids the even more awkward possibility of the

such doublets, see Michael L. Klein, “Associative and Complementary Translation in the Targumim,” *Erlsr* 16 (Orlinsky Volume; 1983) 134–40, esp. 138–39. A marginal gloss to *Tg. Neofiti* Exod 7:1, representing another but related targumic tradition, uses only *rbwn* (presumably, *ribbōn*), meaning ‘lord’ or ‘master’, thereby communicating the same sense with a single word. Otherwise *Tg. Neofiti* translates as does *Tg. Onqelos*, substituting *meturgeman* for ‘prophet’. Similarly, Rashi in his commentary renders “God” as *šōpē’ ūrōdeh* (‘judge and ruler’), even while citing explicitly *Tg. Onqelos*’s rendering of ‘prophet’ as *meturgeman*.

67. In Exod 4:16, where the context is different (that is, pedagogic), *Tg. Ps.-Jonathan* uses *mētūrgemān* for ‘mouth’ (Aaron) and *rāb* (‘master’, ‘teacher’) for *’ēlōhīm* (‘God’), but adds for the latter, “who seeks teaching from before the Lord.” Note that *Tg. Neofiti* and the *Fragmentary Targum* (MSS V and B), render *’ēlōhīm* in Exod 4:16 simply as “one who seeks teaching from before the Lord.” See above, n. 55. Nowhere else besides Exod 7:1 does *Tg. Ps.-Jonathan* render Hebrew *’ēlōhīm* with Aramaic *dēhīlā’*.

68. See above, n. 56.

69. See *Exod. Rab.* 3:17 (3); 8:3 (2) (ed. A. Shinan, 143, 205); *Tanh. Wā’ērā’* 10 (and parallels). But that this understanding is much older than these midrashic formulations can be seen from *t. Meg.* 3(4):21, which cites Exod 7:1 in such a way as to *presume* that Moses represents the Torah reader (or in another context the rabbinic sage) and Aaron the *meturgeman*.

scriptural attribution of divinity to Moses. However, if we read the translation not as a *substitute*, continuous narrative but as an interlinear translation, that is, in relation to the verse of Hebrew Scripture that has preceded it and that it *accompanies*, whether in public recitation or in private study, it takes on a new meaning. So read or heard as a *bi-text*,<sup>70</sup> the biblical identification of Moses with God has been targumically supplemented with an even more daring (and in social terms more significant), albeit subtle, identification: that of the rabbinic master with God and of his *meturgeman* with the prophet, in both instances thereby enhancing the status of the sage. The former is not uncommon in rabbinic exegesis,<sup>71</sup> and the latter is also common: the *meturgeman* serves not simply as a translator in some ancillary sense, but as an essential component of the medium by which Torah teaching, like revelation itself, is mediated to the people.<sup>72</sup> Such an understanding of *rāb* in relation to 'ēlōhīm and *mētūrgēmān* in relation to *nābī'* presumes an audience that heard *and* understood (however imperfectly) Hebrew Scripture and Aramaic targum in responsive, dialogical juxtaposition with one other.<sup>73</sup> In that case, the targum may be said not only to interpret Scripture but to require Scripture for its own interpretation, and to assume a bilingual audience that could attend to this translational transition from Mosaic to rabbinic authority within the social pedagogic context in which such rabbinic empowerment mattered the most. So understood, the verse is no longer simply about God's historical bestowal of authority upon Moses, but about that divinely bestowed authority

70. See above, n. 45.

71. I have gathered several examples in "The Early Rabbinic Sage and His Torah in the Text of the *Sifre*," chap. 3 of *From Tradition to Commentary: Torah and Its Interpretation in the Midrash Sifre to Deuteronomy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991) 69–121. One example will have to suffice here (*Sifre Deut.* 49): "Loving the Lord your God, walking in all His ways, and holding fast [literally, attaching yourselves] to Him' (Deut. 11:22): But is it possible for a person to ascend to heaven and to cleave to fire? . . . Rather, attach yourselves to the sages and their disciples and I will account it to you as though you had ascended to heaven."

72. See *y. Meg* 4:1 (74d). For rabbinic interpretations of the mediated nature of Torah revelation and teaching, see my "Moses and the Commandments: Can Hermeneutics, History, and Rhetoric Be Disentangled?" in *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel* (ed. Hindy Najman and Judith H. Newman; JSJSup 83; Leiden: Brill, 2004) 399–422, with additional bibliography, 399 n. 1.

73. On the question of the multilingual basis of certain midrashic interpretations, see most recently Galit Hasan-Rokem, "The Almost Invisible Presence of the Other: Multilingual Puns in Rabbinic Literature," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature* (forthcoming) (ed. Charlotte E. Fonrobert and Martin S. Jaffee; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

having been transmitted via Moses (as *rāb*) and Aaron (as *mētūrgēmān*), across history, to the rabbinic sages and their interpreters, who in turn regard Moses as their originary master/teacher (*mōšeh rabbēnū*).