CHAPTER TWO

TOSEFTA TARGUMS AND OTHER TARGUMIC TRADITIONS TO THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL

Within Targum research the so-called Tosefta Targums (TTs) occupy a special place. They are, generally speaking, additions to the Targums Onkelos and Jonathan, hence the name ‘tosefta’ which is Aramaic for addition. The designations ‘Tosefta Targum’ and ‘targumic Tosefta’ are somewhat misleading because we do not know whether in all cases they refer to additions, but since these designations are commonly used in scholarly literature on the subject, we decided to adopt the usage for the time being. At the end of this chapter we shall recapitulate and decide whether the name can be maintained for all the traditions it is generally used for, or that we have to look for more appropriate designations for some of them.

The TTs preserve alternative targumic readings, which apparently circulated widely. They are often more elaborate than the official targum traditions that have been preserved in the official Targums Onkelos and Jonathan. Their provenance and date vary considerably and there is no apparent system in the sources in which they occur, although there are certain TTs that only occur in some specific geographic areas. Moreover, the TTs do not occur in the Babylonian redaction. This absence in the Babylonian tradition may well explain the designation Tosefta, since in relation to this authoritative redaction they can be considered additions.

In this chapter we will first survey some previous work on the TTs (A). Then we make a short excursus on the genre of piyyut in order to sketch a framework for some of the Aramaic poems that are also

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1 Notwithstanding our decision to write ‘Targum’ with a capital letter when it refers to extant written targumic works and ‘targum’ in lower case when it concerns the genre, the act, or particular instances of rendering into Aramaic (see above, p. 7, n. 1), we write here Tosefta Targum(s) with capital letters because it is such a central theme in this book, even though in most of the cases it concerns particular instances.


3 Kasher, предмет, 60–62.
sometimes included in the field of TTs (b). After that we will describe
the corpus that is used for this study (c), followed by an attempt to
characterise the material according to the main sources (d). Finally,
we will try to come to some conclusions (e).

A. SURVEY OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON THE TOSEFTA TARGUMS

The seemingly random occurrences of the TTs and their diverse char-
acter caught scholarly attention as early as in the nineteenth century.
Because the TTs are sometimes designated in the sources as 'תוספתא
דארעא דישראל', 'Tosefta of the Land of Israel', or the like, the study of
the TTs to the Targum of the Prophets has in the history of research
often been combined with the question of whether or not there ever
existed a complete Palestinian Targum of the Prophets comparable to
the Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch.⁴

Leopold Zunz, one of the founders of the critical study of rabbinic
literature, the so-called Wissenschaft des Judentums, suggested that
the TTs were remnants of a once complete Palestinian Targum of the
Prophets. He based this on the above-mentioned designation of the
TTs as Palestinian, but also on the reference of several medieval Jewish
authors to a 'Targum jeruschalmi' on certain parts of the Prophets.⁵

Samuel David Luzzatto refuted Zunz' suggestion on linguistic
grounds.⁶ He used for his arguments the additions of David Kimhi
in his commentary on the Prophets, and furthermore some pieces
of a fifteenth century manuscript — known today as ms H. 116.⁷ Ac-
cording to Luzzatto, the language of these toseftan additions, which
he considered to be marginal notes, resembles that of the Babylonian
Talmud and they can, therefore, hardly be considered remnants of a
Palestinian Targum.⁸

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⁵ L. Zunz, Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden historisch entwickelt, Frank-
furt am Main 1892, 80–83.
⁶ S.D. Luzzatto, 'Nachträgliches über die Thargumim', WZJT 5 (1844), 124–37, at 132.
⁷ Presently part of the Montefiore Endowment, Lauderdale Rd synagogue, Lon-
don. See on ms H 116 of Jew’s College, A. Sperber, The Bible in Aramaic: Based on
Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts, Leiden 1968, IVB.139; D.M. Stec, The Text of the
⁸ Luzzatto, 'Nachträgliches', 132: ‘… die Sprache dieser Zusätze stimmt mit der des
babylonischen Thalm. überein, und ich sehe keinen Grund, sie als Stücke eines je-
rusalemischen Thargums zu betrachten, wie Zunz thut, vielmehr scheinen sie mir
gleichfalls babylonischen Ursprungs, nur um einige Jahrhunderte jünger als das
ursprüngliche Thargum.’