Handout: Rabbinic Literature and Targums
Noah Kelley
BBG9600: Ancient Jewish and Greco-Roman Literature
Fall 2015

Basic Outline:

I. Rabbinic Literature
   1. Introduction
   2. Historical Location
   3. Rabbinic Hermeneutics
   4. The literature
   5. Their Use in Biblical Studies

II. Targums
   1. Definition
   2. Historical Location
   3. Characteristics of Targum Translations
   4. The Targums
   5. Their Use in Biblical Studies

PART 1: RABBINIC LITERATURE

Rabbinic Literature: Introduction

- Definition of Rabbinic Judaism
- Definition of Rabbinic Literature
- Comparison to Christian literature
- Contents:
  - *Talmudic Literature* includes predominantly legal works which are topically/thematically arranged
  - *Midrashim* are various exegetical works arranged according to scripture (like a commentary)

Rabbinic Literature: Historical Background

Jacob Neusner’s Four Judaic Systems:
1. The age of diversity (586 BC – AD 70)
2. The formative age of Judaism (AD 70-640)
3. The classical period of Judaism (AD 640-1787)
4. The modern age—the second age of diversity (AD 1787-present)
• The historical framework for the rabbinic literature itself is from around AD 70 to around AD 1040.  
• Rabbinic Judaism as a descendent of Pharisaic Judaism  
• Early Rabbinic Judaism  
• The traditional division of Rabbinic history:  
  ▪ The Tannaitic period (approximately 50 BC to AD 200)  
  ▪ The Amoraic period (AD 220 to AD 500)  
  ▪ The Saboraic period (AD 500 to AD 650)  
  ▪ The Geonic period (AD 650 to AD 1050)  
• Most important/noteworthy Rabbis

Rabbinic Literature: Rabbinic Hermeneutics

• Hermeneutics in the Second Temple Period  
• Midrash  
• Peshat  
• Pesher  
• Hillel’s Seven Rules  
• Thirteen Middot of R. Iashmael  
• The Thirty-two Middot

Rabbinic Literature:

Talmudic Literature:  
  Mishna  
  Tosefta  
  Jerusalem Talmud  
  Babylonian Talmud  
  Minor Tractates

Midrash:  
  Tannaic Midrash  
  Amoraic Midrash  
  Later Midrash and Commentary

The Mishnah

• Definition  
• The Structuring Principle

---

• Structure and Contents
  ▪ First Order: Zera’im, ‘Seeds’
  ▪ Second Order: Mo‘ed, ‘Festival Days’
  ▪ Third Order: Nashim, ‘Women’
  ▪ Fourth Order: Neziqin, ‘Damages’
  ▪ Fifth Order: Qodashim, ‘Holy Things’
  ▪ Sixth Order: Toharot, ‘Purities’
• Date and Origin
• Relationship of Mishnah to Scripture

The Tosefta

• Definition
• Date and Origin
• Relationship between Tosefta and Mishna
• Relationship between Tosefta and Talmuds

The Palestinian Talmud

• Definition
• Date and Origin
• Sources

The Babylonian Talmud

• Definition
• Date and Origin
• Character

The Extracanonical Tractates

• Definition

Midrashic Literature:

• Definition

Tannaic Midrashim
• Mekilta (on Exodus)
• Sipra (or Sifra)
• Sipre on Numbers
• Sipre on Deuteronomy
• Seder ‘Olam Rabbah (“The Long Order of the World”)
• Megillat Ta’anit (“Scroll of Fasts”)

Amoraic Midrashim

• Midrash Rabbah (“The Long Midrash”)
  ▪ Beresit [Genesis] Rabbah (ca. AD 425-450)
  ▪ Semot [Exodus] Rabbah (ca. AD 1000)
  ▪ Vayyiqra’ [Leviticus] Rabbah (ca. AD 550)
  ▪ Bemidbar [Numbers] Rabbah (ca. AD 1100)
  ▪ Debarim [Deuteronomy] Rabbah (ca. AD 900)
  ▪ Sir haSir [Song of Songs] Rabbah (ca. AD 600-650)
  ▪ Ruth Rabbah (ca. AD 750)
  ▪ ‘Ekah [Lamentations] Rabbah (ca. AD 450)
  ▪ Qohelet [Ecclesiastes] Rabbah (ca. AD 650)
  ▪ Esther Rabbah (ca. AD 500-900)
• Seder Eliyahu Rabbah (“the Major Work of Elijah”)
• Pesiqta de Rab Kahana (“Lessons of Rab Kahana”)
• Pesiqta Rabbati (“The Long Lessons”)
• Midrash Tanhuma - Yelamdenu
• Midrash Tehillin
• Pirqe Rabbi Eliezar (“Chapters of Rabbi Eliezar”)
• Seder ‘Olam Zuta (“The Short Order of the World”)
• Midrash Shemuel (“Midrash on Samuel”)
• Midrash Mishle (on Proverbs)
• Chronicle of Jerahmeel

Later Midrashim and Commentators

• Most important

Rabbinic Literature: Its Use in Biblical Studies

• A Caution
• Particular points of contact
PART 2: TARGUMS

Targums: Definitions

Targums: Historical Location

- Aramaic Among the Jews:
  1. Old Aramaic (ca. 950-700 BCE)
  2. Official Aramaic (ca. 700-300 BCE)
  3. Middle Aramaic (ca. 300 BCE-200 CE?)
  4. Later Aramaic (ca. 200-700 CE)

- History of Targum

Targums: Characteristics of Targumic Translations

1. Paraphrase Must Adhere to Biblical Text
2. Close Attention to Details of the Hebrew Text
   a. Multiple Sense
   b. Gematria
   c. Targumic Doublets
   d. Stylized Translation
   e. Associative and Complementary Translations
3. Interpretation and Concern for the Unlearned
4. Explanation of Difficulties and Contradictions
5. Converse Translation
6. Reverential Manner in Speaking of God and Anti-anthropomorphisms
   a. “in the eyes of the Lord (byny YHWH)”
   b. “the hand of the Lord”
   c. “the mouth of the Lord”
   d. “the face of the Lord”
   e. Avoiding Making God the Direct Subject or Object of Actions Relating to Creation
   f. Actions Done before God
7. Respect for the Elders of Israel: Euphemistic Translation
8. Derogatory Translation
9. Later Doctrine Read into the Interpretation
10. Homiletic Nature of Certain Passages
11. Updating of Geographical and Patronymic Terms
12. Updating of Biblical Coins and Weights

Specific Targums:
• Introduction
• Targums to the Pentateuch
  o Targum Onqelos
  o Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
  o Fragmentary Targum
  o Targum Neofiti
  o Cairo Genizah Fragments
  o 6QGen?ar (= 6Q19 Targum of Genesis?)
  o 4QtgLev (= 4Q156)
  o Samaritan Targum
• Targums of the Prophets
  o The Former Prophets (Joshua – Kings)
  o Targum Isaiah
  o Targum Jeremiah
  o Targum Ezekiel
  o Targum of the Minor Prophets
• Targums of the Writings
  o Psalms
  o Proverbs
  o Job
  o 11QTgJob (11Q10)
  o 4QTgJob (4Q157)
  o Song of Songs
  o Ruth
  o Lamentations
  o Qohelet
  o Targum Esther
  o Chronicles

Targums: Their Use in Biblical Studies

• Caution
• Points of Contact

Helps for the Use of Rabbinic Sources

1. Citing Rabbinic Sources

---

2 Much of this is from pp. 472-488 of Chapman and Köstenberger, “Bibliographic Resource (Part 2).”
Craig A. Evans has instructions for how to cite each work. Look under the discussion of the work being cited, toward the end before the bibliography. The SBL Handbook of Style has a list of abbreviations in the appendix.

2. Scripture Index

Works with a Scripture index are marked with an asterisk (*) below.

Midrashim are organized scripturally, so simply locate the Midrash based on the biblical book to find rabbinic discussion.


3. Works with Topical Index

Works with topical indexes are marked with a plus (+) below.

3. NT Commentary


---

5 BS1186 .H95 1979 V.1-3 (Sailhamer Library). This work is in Hebrew. It is three volumes, according to the Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim. It contains small passages (about a verse) of Hebrew text followed by references to Talmudid, Midrashic, and early Rabbinic literature.
6 BS2310 .G53 1983 (Sailhamer Library). This work is divided into two parts: the first lists parallels to Mishnah according to NT reference; the second lists them according to Mishnah reference. For example, on p. 13, under Matt 2:4, it lists Sotah 9:15 (among others); under Matt 2:15, it lists Aboth 1:15 (among others).
7 BS2344.2 .S77 1969 V.1-6 (Sailhamer Library for 1969 version; 1922 version is on the 2nd floor: BS2344 .S77 1922 INDEX-V.4.2). This is a commentary on the NT with references to rabbinic literature. Vol. 5 consists of an index which is organized according to rabbinic literature. It is in German. This work is generally recognized to have some weaknesses (McNamara, *Targum and Testament*, 24). One criticism is that it fails to distinguish the dates of the traditions it cites. Rightly criticized for not properly dating its NT ‘background’ material, but still a very useful tool for locating potential rabbinic parallels” (Chapman and Köstenberger, “Bibliographic Resource [Part 2],” 472. It is presently being translated into English: (https://blog.logos.com/2013/04/strack-and-billerbecks-works-in-english/).
4. Talmudic Literature: English Translation


5. Talmudic Literature: Hebrew


---


⁹ BM497.5 .E5 N488 1988 I (2nd floor)

¹⁰ BM508.13 .E5 1977 DIV. 1-6 (2nd floor)

¹¹ BM498.5 .E5 V.1-35 (2nd floor)

¹² BM504 .N44 1994 V.1-36 (2nd floor)

¹³ BM500 .E57 INDEX 1-V.6.2 (2nd floor); contains a topical index and Scripture index.

¹⁴ BM497 1964 V.1-7 (2nd floor); this text contains both Hebrew text and English translation. Vol. 7 contains Scripture and topic indexes.

¹⁵ BM497 1975 V.1-6 (Sailhamer Library; vol. 2-5 of older version are on the second floor)

¹⁶ BM508 .L54 1955 Vol. 1-10 (2nd floor); this work contains only the first three orders, and some of the fourth (Chapman and Köstenberger, “Bibliographic Resource [Part 2],” 476).

¹⁷ BM498.5 .E5 G8 2000 V.1.1-4.3 (2nd floor). This includes both (pointed Hebrew) text and translation, along with footnotes.
6. Midrashim: English Translations


7. Midrashim: Hebrew


---

18 BM499.5 1959 Vol. 1:1-6:2 (2nd floor); English and Hebrew; Index 1 is a Scripture and rabbinic index; Index 2 is a topical index.
19 BM517.M4 E5 V.1-2 (2nd floor)
20 BM517.S6 E5 V.1-3 (2nd floor)
21 BM517.S74 A3 1986 V.1-2 (2nd floor)
22 BM517.S75 A3 1987 V.1-2 (2nd floor)
23 BM517.M6 E5 1983 V.1-10 (Reference); Vol. 10 consists of an index of topics, Scripture references, and Talmud references.
24 BM517.P34 E5 1987 V.1-2 (2nd floor)
25 BM518.T5 .E5 V.1-2 (2nd floor); Vol. 2 contains an index of Scripture references and Mishnah references, as well as topics and authorities cited.
26 BM517 .M4 1970 (Sailhamer Library)
27 BM517.S63 G53 1999 l (2nd floor); Hebrew and English with footnotes.
28 BM517 .S74 S65 1966 (Sailhamer Library)


Buber, Salomon. Pessikta: This Is Aggadah From the Land of Israel Attributed to Rabbi Kahana ... Published ... With Comments ... and Corrections ... With Comment and Glosses ... Also Shows Places ... and the Notes ... Foreign Words .. and Introduction. [Jerusalem: [?], 1980.  


Helps for the Use of Targums  

1. Citing Targums  

Craig A. Evans has instructions for how to cite each Targum. Look under the discussion of the Targum being cited, toward the end before the bibliography. The SBL Handbook of Style has a list of abbreviations in the appendix.  

2. English Translation  

Pentateuch:  

Onqelos:  

Grossfeld, Bernard. Targum Onqelos to Genesis: Translated, With a Critical Introduction,  

29 BM517 .S75 F56 1969 (Sailhamer Library)  
30 BM517 .M63 I88 1950 V.1-5 (Sailhamer Library)  
31 BM517 .P36 P36 1980Z (Sailhamer). The library catalogue says that this is a Hebrew text, but I have not seen it myself.  
32 BM517.T5 G3 1892 (Sailhamer Library)  
33 BM517 .T5 M5 1968 (Sailhamer Library)  
34 Evans, Ancient Texts, 185-215.  
Apparatus, and Notes. Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1988.36


Grossfeld, Bernard. The Targum Onqelos to Leviticus and the Targum Onqelos to Numbers. Wilmington, Del.: M. Glazier, 1988.38

Grossfeld, Bernard. The Targum Onqelos to Deuteronomy. Wilmington, Del.: M. Glazier, 1988.39

Neofiti:


McNamara, Martin., Ernest G Clarke, and Shirley Magder. Targum Neofiti 1, Numbers. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1995.43


Pseudo-Jonathan:


36 BS1235.2 .T37 1 (2nd floor)
37 BS709.2 .B5 1987 V.7 (2nd floor)
38 BS1255.2 .T37 1 (2nd floor)
39 BS1275.2 .T37 1 (2nd floor)
40 BS1233.A2 B5 1 (2nd floor)
41 BS1243 .B5 1 (2nd floor)
42 BS1253 .B5 1 (2nd floor)
43 BS1263 .B5 1995 1 (2nd floor)
44 BS1273 .B5 1997 1 (2nd floor)
45 BS1233 .A2 B55 1 (2nd floor)
46 BS1273 .B5 1998 1 (2nd floor)
The Prophets:

Chilton, Bruce. *The Isaiah Targum*. Wilmington, Del.: M. Glazier, 1987.47


Alexander, Philip S. *The Targum of Lamentations*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2008.49


The Writings:


3. Aramaic

Sperber, Alexander. *The Bible in Aramaic: Based On Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts*. Leiden: Brill, 1959.55 Vol. 1: Pentateuch according to Targum Onqelos; Vol. 2-3: Former and Latter Prophets according to Targum Jonathan (note that both of these represent Babylonian Judaism); Vol. 4: some of the Writings: Tg. Cant, Tg. Lam, Tg. Eccl, and Tg. Esth.56


47 BS1513 .A72 1987 1 (2nd floor)
48 BS1523 .A72 1987 1 (2nd floor)
49 BS1533 .A44 2008 (2nd floor)
50 BS1543 .A72 1987 (2nd floor)
51 BS1560.A3 B5 1989 1 (2nd floor)
52 BS1413 .B5 1991 1 (2nd floor)
53 BS1424 .S74 2004 (2nd floor)
54 BS1483 .A44 200 (2nd floor)
55 BS708 .S632 1959 V.1-4B (Reference; Sailhamer Library [2004 edition also in Sailhamer Library]).
56 Esther in this collection is a mixed type (David W. Chapman and Andreas J. Köstenberger, “Jewish Intertestamental and Early Rabbinic Literature: An Annotated Bibliographic Resource Updated [Part 1],” *JETS* 55/2 [2012], 250).
57 BS1224 .A74 1984 1 (2nd floor)
Biblioteca apostolica vaticana. *The Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch: Codex Vatican (Neofiti 1)*. Jerusalem: Makor, 1979.\(^{58}\)


\(^{58}\) BS1224 .A76 1979 V.1-2 (Reference: SEBTS catalogue says this is Arabic.)

\(^{59}\) BS1425 .A73 1982 (Reference)