

Edward M. Cook, *A Glossary of Targum Onkelos According to Alexander Sperber's Edition* (Studies in the Aramaic Interpretation of Scripture 6), E.J. Brill, Leiden, 2008; ISBN 978-90-04-14978-6; xxi, 310 pp. (€ 113.00 / US\$ 162.00) [Also available, for the same price, as a digital edition in pdf format.]

**DAVID G.K. TAYLOR, THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE
PUSEY LANE, OXFORD, OX1 2LE, UNITED KINGDOM**

The last twenty years have seen the publication of a number of excellent new Aramaic dictionaries, such as Michael Sokoloff's dictionaries of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (1990),¹ Jewish Babylonian Aramaic (2002),² and Judean Aramaic (2003);³ Abraham Tal's dictionary of Samaritan Aramaic (2000),⁴ and Jacob Hoftijzer and Karel Jongeling's dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions (1995),⁵ which includes Jewish epigraphic materials up to 300 CE. For linguists and other specialist scholars these dictionaries represent a revolution in our knowledge of the history and development of the Aramaic dialects, and of their regional varieties and idiosyncrasies, and provide us with tools that surpass anything previously published. But despite these advances, ordinary students and readers of texts written in Jewish Literary Aramaic, many of which were excluded from Sokoloff's dictionaries for obvious linguistic reasons (since it is considered neither a pure Babylonian nor Palestinian variety), are still required

¹ M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990; 2nd ed. 2002).

² M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).

³ M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Judean Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2003).

⁴ A. Tal, *A Dictionary of Samaritan Aramaic* (2 vols.; HdO I.50; Leiden: Brill, 2000).

⁵ J. Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions* (2nd ed., 2 vols.; HdO I.21; Leiden: Brill, 1995).

to fall back upon the dictionaries of Jastrow⁶ or Levy⁷ which are bulky, dated, and based on old editions of the texts. This new *Glossary of Targum Onkelos* by Edward Cook is thus to be warmly welcomed, as it offers the reader a handy and reliable one-volume glossary of all of the vocabulary of Onkelos—the most widely used Jewish Aramaic translation of the Pentateuch—found in the best currently available edition of the targum, that of Sperber,⁸ in an easily usable format.

The glossary was generated from the Targum Module of Accordance,⁹ for which Ed Cook was also the editor, which was itself created on the basis of files supplied by the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon.¹⁰ The data was then re-checked against Sperber's edition (and this reviewer has not yet found any errors!). The entries within the glossary are arranged according to alphabetical order, rather than by roots, and provide the lemma, the part of speech, a simple gloss, an indication of whether or not it is a loanword, a list of biblical references if the word occurs ten times or fewer, and then finally cross-references to the same or related lexemes in dictionaries of other Aramaic dialects, such as those mentioned in the first paragraph, but also the standard dictionaries of Syriac,¹¹ Mandaic,¹² and Christian Palestinian Aramaic.¹³ Personal names are not included in the glossary, but geographical names are listed on pp. 308–310. The entries are very generously and spaciouly laid out, with rarely more than nine to the page, and they are printed in a large font size. This makes the glossary very

⁶ M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (2 vols.; London: Luzac; New York: G.P. Puttnam, 1903; and many reprints).

⁷ J. Levy, *Chaldäisches Wörterbuch über die Targumim und einen grossen Theil des rabbinischen Schriftthums* (3rd ed.; 2 vols.; Leipzig: Baumgärtner, 1881).

⁸ A. Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic. Vol. I, The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos* (Leiden: Brill, 1959).

⁹ <http://www.accordancebible.com/about/articles/targ.php>

¹⁰ <http://cal1.cn.huc.edu/>

¹¹ Primarily, C. Brockelmann, *Lexicon syriacum* (2nd ed.; Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1928).

¹² E.S. Drower and R. Macuch, *A Mandaic Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).

¹³ F. Schulthess, *Lexicon syropalaestinum* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1903).

uncluttered and easy on the eye, but also of course increases the length of the book.

The lemmas of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, interjections, etc., are provided with the supralinear vocalization found in Sperber. Verbs, however, are given only in their unvocalized root form, and this seems to me to be a minor defect, given the likely users of this volume. It would have been helpful for students if the vocalized forms of the verb forms used, whether *ithpaal*, *aphel*, or just *peal*, had been provided after the bare root.

The gloss for each entry is provided in English. The corresponding Hebrew terms in the Masoretic text, where there are such equivalents, are not provided. This is quite understandable, given the amount of extra work this would have demanded, although it would have been good to see them here. For these Hebrew equivalents readers will still need to use Chaim Kasovsky's *Otsar ha-Targum* (1940),¹⁴ Emil Brederick's *Konkordanz zum Targum Onkelos* (1906),¹⁵ or the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon.¹⁶

It is useful to have references to the biblical passages where less common Aramaic words are used, but perhaps this process could have been taken a little further. For example, the provision of a simple figure in brackets to indicate the number of occurrences of words used more than ten times, or even an appendix with a listing by frequency of the most common words? It is always tempting for reviewers retrospectively to suggest more work for colleagues who have already laboured for years to produce valuable publications, and such tables are not found in other equivalent glossaries, but this is data that could be easily generated by the software that is being used, and the popularity of vocabulary frequency lists among students of Biblical Hebrew and New Testament Greek suggests that this might be a valued feature in any similar glossaries in the future. (There is no mention in the introduction of any planned glossary of, for example, Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, but given the usefulness of this volume,

¹⁴ C.J. Kasovsky, *אוצר התרגום: קונקורדנציא* (Jerusalem: Mosad Ha-Rav Kook, 1940).

¹⁵ E. Brederick, *Konkordanz zum Targum Onkelos* (BZAW 9; Giessen: Töpelmann, 1906).

¹⁶ <http://cal1.cn.huc.edu/targumstartpage.html>

perhaps Ed Cook or one of his graduates might be encouraged to produce one?)

The cross-referencing to related lexemes in other Aramaic dialects is perhaps a little unexpected in a glossary such as this. I know that I, and many colleagues, will find this a very convenient and labour-saving index to common Aramaic terms in the various dictionaries we use, but I wonder whether our students will ever make use of this data? Perhaps I am not doing them justice, and the best of them will go look up the entries in Sokoloff's dictionaries to see how the terms are used in other Jewish texts, but I suspect I may have to wait a while before they make use of Drower and Macuch's Mandaic dictionary (more's the pity!). So this cross-referencing is a useful addition to the tools available to scholars, but perhaps the provision of Hebrew equivalents would have been a better use of the considerable effort that must have been required for this work?

In reviews of books published by Brill (and indeed of many other well-known publishers) it has become something of a cliché to grumble about the price, and I am reluctant to repeat the same old groans, but in this particular case I see no way of avoiding it. Ed Cook's *Glossary of Targum Onkelos* is an absolutely essential purchase for all libraries with an interest in Jewish, Biblical, or Theological studies, and it is clearly going to become a standard tool for many of our students. However, whilst many of our libraries will find a means of paying, the price means that it is completely unaffordable for its main target user group, our students. And the digital copy, in pdf format, costs exactly the same as the paper copy. You do not have to be a prophet to see that unless Brill soon publishes a cheaper paperback student edition, or reprices its digital version, this volume is destined to be illegally reproduced by students in every library that owns a copy,¹⁷ thus depriving the author of well-deserved royalties, and the publishing house of due profits, for a beautifully produced and extremely useful book.

¹⁷ This reviewer clearly neither encourages nor endorses such illegal behaviour.