The Hebrew Bible

Volume 1C Writings

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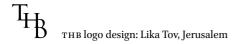
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tions, e.g., both v-PsG and PsH translate וְּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה "and on the name of the Lord I call" in Ps 115:8 (MT-Ps 116:17), where LXX omits the entire phrase. In general, however, PsH faithfully represents the consonantal text of MT.

10.3.7.5.3 Vocalization and Ketiv/Qere

Jerome typically follows the vocalization reflected in MT (\rightarrow 10.2.2). But there are many examples of variant vocalizations, especially when Jerome had precedents in previous translations (\rightarrow 10.3.5), e.g., the perfect יַדעוּ "they know" is read as an imperfect יֵדְעוּר/cognoscent "they will know" as in Symmachus (Ps 13:4 [MT-Ps 14:4]); the imperative לֹג' "roll!" (i.e., "commit yourself") is read as a perfect גָל/confugit "took refuge" as in LXX (Ps 21:9 [MT-Ps 22:9]); and the perfects וְנָהַרוּ "they looked" and וְנָהַרוּ "and they were radiant" are read as imperatives ונהרו /respicite "look!" and ונהרו/et confluite "and come together!" as in Aquila (Ps 33:6 [MT-Ps 34:6]). Jerome sometimes rejects the judgment of his predecessors, e.g., at Ps 48:14 (MT-Ps 49:14) where LXX and v-PsG read ירצו "they are pleased with" as being from the root רצה but PsH assumes it is from רוץ "run" (PsH: current). As it turns out, LXX $(\rightarrow 10.3.1)$ here matches MT.

Jerome often matches either the Ketiv or the *Qere* (\rightarrow 10–20.1) in agreement with the previous reading of LXX. Examples of the *Qere* rather than Ketiv include: דָרָכִיו "his ways" (Ketiv = בָּרָבּוֹ "his way"; Ps 9:26 [MT-Ps 10:5]), which is translated viae eius "his ways"; and <u>וענ</u>ני "and hear me!" (Ketiv: וְעֵנֵנוּ "and hear us"; Ps 59:7 [MT-Ps 60:7]), which is rendered et exaudi me "and hear me!" Instances of the Ketiv rather than Qere include: יסבבוני "they have surrounded me" (Qere: סָבבוני "they have surrounded us"; Ps 16:11 [MT-Ps 17:11]), which Jerome rendered circumdederunt me "they have surrounded me"; and gard "and not" (Qere: וְלוֹ "and not") "and to him"; Ps 138:16 [MT-Ps 139:16]), translated by Jerome as et nemo "and no one" in v-PsG and et non est "and there is not" in PsH. Jerome, however, can break with the judgment of LXX, e.g., Ps 99:3 (MT-Ps 100:3), where *ipsius* "his" (PsH) follows the *Qere* וְלוֹ "and to him" (Ketiv: יולא "and not") against LXX and v-PsG; and Ps 144:6 (MT-Ps 145:6), where et magnitudines tuas "and your magnitudes" follows the Ketiv וְגְדוּלְתְּוּ "and your great deeds" (Qere: וּגְדוּלְתְּוּ "and your greatness") against LXX and V-PsG.

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Justin Rogers

10.3.8 Arabic Translations

10.3.8.1 Saadia's Translation

Very¹ few translations of the book of Psalms into Judeo-Arabic have been identified. Among those that were identified, no pre-Saadian translations, namely, early and often popular Jewish versions dating from the ninth century C.E., have been found as yet. The most widespread translation by Saadia (Gaon) b. Joseph al-Fayyumi (882–942 C.E.) is that of the Pentateuch (known as the $tafs\bar{i}r$; \rightarrow 2.4.9.1.2). This translation is believed to have disseminated standardized Judeo-Arabic orthography, which reflected the spelling system of Clas-

¹The writing of this article was supported by the Israel Science Foundation, grant no. 410/10.

sical Arabic (\rightarrow 1.3.6).² The main features of Saadia's spelling system include using matres lectionis to indicate long vowels according to Arabic spelling, and the representation of phonemes according to their cognates instead of following phonetic similarities. Regarding the Pentateuch and several other books he translated, Saadia's versions are less literal than early Jewish translations and Karaite versions, and they are oriented towards the Arabic target language in their syntax and style.³ Other features of his translation include a tendency to succinctness, theological alterations, shortening and expanding the text for stylistic purposes, and avoidance of repetitions. In some instances, his rendition echoes the Aramaic Targum Onqelos (\rightarrow 2.4.3.3), especially with regard to his avoidance of anthropomorphism. Saadia's intention was to produce a translation that remains faithful to the literal sense of the biblical text, yet takes into account the rules of the Arabic target language. Nonetheless, the rationalistic theology of his time was occasionally at odds with this goal. The end result was an interpretive translation of the Pentateuch that he called tafsīr.4

Extant manuscripts of Saadia's translation of Psalms include Saadia's commentary, which follows the translation of a verse or cluster of verses, and his extensive introduction to this book. Saadia's Arabic title of his work on Psalms is Kitāb al-Tasābīḥ "The Book of Praise." A unique feature of Saadia's work on Psalms is the existence of three separate introductions. In light of these introductions, Yoseph Qafih suggests that the work was prepared in three stages.⁵ At first, Saadia wrote a translation of the entire book that he prefaced with a short introduction. In this introduction, Saadia suggests that the purpose of the book of Psalms is to discipline people in the obedience of the Lord. At a later stage, perhaps as a response to a request by his students, Saadia wrote a commentary, in

which he explains, among other things, the rationale behind his translation. He prefaced this commentary with an even shorter and separate introduction, in which he briefly states the reason for writing the commentary. Later, Saadia wrote a third introduction that was much more detailed and expansive than the previous two. A major aspect of the last introduction is the polemical arguments concerning the purpose of the book of Psalms. It seems that Saadia's third introduction was written as a polemic against the Karaite approach and use of the book of Psalms. A modern scholarly edition of Saadia's translation and commentary on the book of Psalms was published by Qafiḥ.6

10.3.8.2 Karaite Translations

Karaite Judaism, which emerged in the ninth century C.E., was motivated by the rejection of Jewish oral law and rabbinic authority, and an ethos of return to Scripture. Hence the Karaites inaugurated a translation enterprise of their own. Most Karaite translations were written in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the golden age of Karaite literary activity. Karaites used the same orthographical standards as Saadia. However, their translation system is different, and seems to be more akin to the literal characteristics of the pre-Saadian Jewish translation tradition (\rightarrow 1.3.6).⁷

Salmon ben Yeruḥam, another Karaite exegete and contemporary of Saadia, also appears to have translated the Bible into Judeo-Arabic, with an added commentary. Unfortunately, not all of Salmon's work survived. However, his translation and commentary on Psalms is extant. Eleven manuscripts attributed to Salmon's work on Psalms are listed in the catalogue of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts. Ten of them are housed in the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg and one is housed in the Oxford Bodleian Library. In the introduction to his work on Psalms, Salmon engages in polemics with Saadia concerning the purpose of Psalms. While Saadia insists that the Psalms were intended for recitation as prayers

² Polliack, "Cairo Genizah"; Polliack, "Types."

³ Polliack, "Cairo Genizah"; Polliack, Karaite.

⁴ See Polliack, *Karaite*; Polliack, "Concept"; Polliack, "Cairo Genizah"; Sasson, "Arabic"; Steiner, *Biblical Translation*.

⁵ Qafih, Psalms with the Translation and Commentary.

⁶ Qafih, Psalms with the Translation and Commentary.

⁷ Polliack, Karaite.

only at the time of the temple and only by the Levites while accompanied by their musical instruments, Salmon argues that some of the Psalms were David's prayers, which he recited before the building of the temple. Salmon's argument aims to justify the Karaites' acceptance of the book of Psalms as the basis for the daily prayer. Parts of Salmon's work on Psalms were published in scholarly editions by Shunary (1982–1983) and Vajda (1979). 10

The Karaite Yefet ben 'Elī, Saadia's younger contemporary, translated and commented on the entire Bible in Judeo-Arabic, a translation that has survived in numerous manuscript sources (\rightarrow 1.3.6). Yefet, whose family originated from Başra, Iraq, lived and wrote in Jerusalem. His translation and a complementary commentary appear to have been meant to be studied together. An attestation to the popularity and dissemination of Yefet's translation and commentary on the book of Psalms is the list of sixty-eight manuscripts of his work on Psalms in the catalogue of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts at the Israel National Library. Like Saadia and Salmon, Yefet prefaced his work on each book of the Bible with an introduction. in which he specified the nature of the book and his goals as a translator and exegete. In his introduction to the book of Psalms, Yefet divides the Psalms into twelve different categories that represent the different stages in the history of the people as portrayed in the Bible. He then identifies several categories within the Psalms such as psalms of thanksgiving, psalms of song, psalms of petition, and psalms of praise. Modern scholarly editions of Yefet's work on Psalms were published by Bargès (1846), Hofmann (1880), Marwick (1956), Qafiḥ (1966), Alobaidi (1996), and Eissler (2002). 11

10.3.8.3 Other Rabbanite and Karaite Translations

Several scores of anonymous translation fragments of the Psalms have been identified in the Cairo Genizah Arabic and Judeo-Arabic collections.¹² It is possible that more exist but have not yet been identified. Usually, these Genizah fragments represent ad hoc translations, sometimes in popular style and sometimes more akin to Saadia's translation methodology.¹³

A translation of the Psalms is also attested in the sixteenth-century *sharh* by the Rabbanite commentator Rabbi Issāchār ben-Sūsān ha-Maʻarāvī, who was born in the city of Fez in Morocco and moved to Safed at a young age. Ben-Sūsān proclaimed the necessity of updating Saadia's Bible version in the comprehensible Arabic of his time $(\rightarrow 1.3.6; \rightarrow 3-5.1.8; \rightarrow 6-9.1.8)$.

David Sklare of the Israel National Library has graciously shared the following as-yet unpublished information: Tanhum ben Yosef Ha-Yerushalmi, the fourteenth-century grammarian and exegete, included a commentary and perhaps also translation of Psalms in his book *Kitāb al-Bayyān*. Sklare also relays that the undated manuscript SP RNL EVR ARAB I 3675 has the beginning of a summary commentary including a translation by Ali ibn Sulayman, the twelfth-century Karaite exegete. Ali writes that he based his epitome on the commentary of Abu Sa'id David ibn Boaz al-Da'udi (David ben Boaz ha-Nasi) and the commentary of Abu al-Tayyib al-Tinnisi. There is no further information about the last two commentaries; however, it is possible that they too included translations. In addition, Sklare points to SP RNL EVR ARAB I 1430, an anonymous manuscript dated to the thirteenth century, possibly Rabbanite, containing a

⁸ Shunary, "Salmon."

 $^{^{9}\,\}mathrm{Shunary},$ "Salmon ben Yeruham's Commentary on the Book of Psalms."

 $^{^{10}}$ Vajda, "Le Psaume VIII commenté par Salmōn b. Yerū-hīm."

¹¹ Alobaidi, Le commentaire des Psaumes par le qaraïte Salmon ben Yeruham; Bargès, Rabbi Yapheth ben Heli Bassorensis Karaïtae in Librum Psalmorum commentarii arabici; Eissler, Königspsalmen und karäische Messiaserwartung; Hofmann, Der XXII. Psalm in das Arabische übersetzt und erklärt;

Marwick, The Arabic Commentary of Salmon ben Yeruham the Karaite on the Book of Psalms; Qafih, Psalms with the Translation and Commentary of Rabbi Saadia ben Joseph Fayyumi. For a detailed discussion of Yefet's commentary on Psalms, see Simon, Four Approaches.

¹² See indices in Baker and Polliack, *Catalogue*; Shivtiel and Niessen, *Catalogue*.

¹³ See the indices in Baker and Polliack, *Catalogue*; Shivtiel and Niessen, *Catalogue*.

commentary on Psalms written in Spanish-style script. This manuscript includes a translation into Judeo-Arabic. One other anonymous Rabbanite commentary on Psalms, in which the author quotes from a number of authorities such as Saadia and early Spanish commentators and grammarians, appears in several copies. One of the larger manuscripts of this commentary is SP RNL EVR ARAB I 1409, dated to the fourteenth century. This one includes a translation of the text into Judeo-Arabic.

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