TREATMENT OF ANTHROPOMORPHISM IN TARGUM ONKELOS

THE TREATMENT OF ANTHROPOMORPHISM

IN THE

TARGUM ONKELOS

By

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A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

October — 1966

FOREWORD

In the study of religion an analysis of the written documents
is one of the most important and most enlightening undertakings. An
investigation of ancient texts reveals original trends of thought, ideas
and beliefs which tend to become lost or assimilated in oral traditions.
Even when the scripts no longer can reveal the full story of the origins,
because of being committed to writing at a late date, they still reveal
significant information about their own times. Such information is all-
important in and by itself, and from that information much can be deduced
that will prove extremely relevant to a study of the pre-recorded history
as well.

A study of the Targum Onkelos (the Aramaic translation of the
Pentateuch, dating to the beginning of the common era[1]) will, therefore,
prove to be a very rewarding experience with respect to a study of Western
religious traditions in general and of Judaism in particular. The date
of the Targum is interesting and of significance because the commitment
to writing of the Targum Onkelos, in the first few centuries of the common
era,[2] falls into an important period: normative Judaism was already a

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[1]Onkelos lived in the first century of the common era. For the
dating and background of his Targum see A. E. Silverstone, Aquila and
Onkelos, (Manchester University Press, 1931). Cf. infra, Chapter VII
note 8.

[2]Ibid.

fairly deeply entrenched and formulated religion, Christianity had arisen
and begun to establish itself drawing from its Judaic roots and spreading
its religious and philosophical ideas over a vast area of the globe, and
last, but by far not least, at the same time, both Judaism and Christianity
encountered the influence and challenge of Greek metaphysics and mental
conditioning.

An important work and tradition committed to writing in the midst
of such tumultous times must reveal something of the inner thoughts and
beliefs of that age, and certainly so when that work is a translation of
a (if not the) most basic text of one or more of these groups mentioned.
A translation is simultaneously an interpretative commentary which acts
not only as an impersonal amplifier to the original but also as a teacher
who seeks to impress certain facts and facets upon his pupils and listeners.

An interpretative translation may very well be regarded as being
of purely parochial character, of importance only to a certain group or
individual sect. When, however, there appear notions of general philoso-
phical significance, relevant to a study and analysis of religion and
human thought (and especially so when these notions are symptomatic of
their times), then even the most particular script of the most particular
sect or denomination becomes an object for general study and analysis.

The Targum Onkelos falls precisely into such a category of general
significance. Many of the medieaval theologians and philosophers who
sought to bring about a working synthesis between reason and faith, be-
tween Biblical faith based on revelation and the metaphysical reasoning

of Greek thought, refer to Onkelos as a prime example and authoritative
source of verification for a pure, non-anthropomorphic conception of
the Divine Being. Onkelos himself may very well have been influenced
by philosophical trends current in his days and in the period immediately
preceding him.[3] Maimonides in particular dedicates much space in his
foremost philosophical treatise (Guide for the Perplexed) to draw
attention to Onkelos' alleged anti-anthropomorphism in support of his
(Maimonides') own view. Maimonides cites one example upon the other
from the Targum Onkelos, and when faced with exceptions to his rule he
immediately sets out to explain them away.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the assertion that the
Targum Onkelos is based on philosophical premises and consciously and
consistently anti-anthropomorphic. This problem has come up frequently.[4]
No one, however, has yet undertaken to examine the problem on the basis
of a thorough and systematic analysis of the complete text of the Targum
Onkelos. The scholars that dealt with this subject based their respective
theories on a very limited number of select proof-texts.[5] The medieaval

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[3] Many scholars hold that the anti-anthropomorphic tendency in
Targum Onkelos, the other Targumim and translations of the Bible of those
early times, is due to contemporary Greek influence. See, C. T. Fritsch,
The Anti-Anthropomorphisms of the Greek Pentateuch (Princeton University
Press, 1943), p. 63; though cf. infra, p. 68, note 13.

[4] See the works cited infra, in Chapter V note 22, and in the
text and notes of chapters VI and VII.

[5] S. Maybaum's brief essay Die Anthropomorphien und Anthropopathien
bei Onkelos, (Breslau 1879), part I, is a notable exception. Maybaum
quotes a greater number of passages than all his predecessors, and his
study comes closest to the contents of this thesis. Nevertheless, Maybaum's
work is also very limited, by far not as exhaustive as this thesis, and
he appears more concerned with the retention, rather than the avoidance,
of anthropomorphisms in Targum Onkelos. Maybaum's essay is critically
considered infra, Chapter V note 22, and Chapter VII notes 3 and 9.

scholars dealt with the subject only in passing, in the context of their discussions of the general problem of anthropomorphism. The modern scholars were more concerned with historical and philological questions and did not spend too much thought or time with the problem on hand; mostly they took it for granted that Onkelos is anti-anthropomorphic and were content with noting this as a fact and seeking a reason for it.

This thesis is the first attempt at an exhaustive analysis of the complete text of the Targum Onkelos. Though working towards the conclusion that Onkelos was governed by a motive of anti-anthropomorphism, the thesis will commit itself to this conclusion only after all the evidence (based on all relevant passages) has been presented. The conclusions of this study are discussed in the light of, and on the basis of the principal philosophical treatises which deal with this subject. The examination proceeds according to the following plan:

1. Some brief comments on anthropomorphism in general, with special reference to its occurence in the Pentateuch (Chapter I);

2. A detailed examination of the Targum Onkelos with respect to how the Pentateuchal anthropomorphisms are treated in it (Chapters II-V); [6]

3. A discussion and analysis of the most important opinions expressed by the medieaval scholars (and the more important modern scholars) about the theological aspects of Onkelos' treatment of anthropomorphisms (Chapter VI); and

4. The conclusions (Chapter VII).

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[6] Where passages are found to be merely non-anthropomorphic, but not necessarily anti-anthropomorphic, the text of the thesis remains objective and notes it accordingly.

ON THE MEANING AND LEGITIMACY OF ANTHROPOMORPHISM, WITH SPECIAL

REFERENCE TO ITS OCCURENCE IN THE PENTATEUCH

Every conception concerning the Deity is, in its final

application, dependent upon a posteriori evidence, that is, upon an

inference from events and effects, or from things as they occur and

exist, to their absolute ground or reason.[1] Hence, if any more pre-

cise definition of the Absolute can be derived only from the conscious

contents of soul-experience and world-knowledge, then the origin of

anthropomorphism finds an easy explanation. In his search for and

discovery of the author of all things, man attributes to the Author

of All the most valuable traits of which he is aware, and nothing is

so important to man as his conscious possessions, his own faculties of

thought, emotion, will, and action. While man recognizes himself to

possess these most valuable traits in a mere incomplete state only, he

attributes them to the Deity in their full measure of completeness and

perfection but still somewhat analogous to himself.

Simple-minded man, the man of a most unsophisticated and truly

naive mode of thinking and reasoning, can easily be understood to have

the most crudely anthropomorphic conception of those supreme powers he

accepts as superior to himself. There is a school of thought which goes

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[1]L. Ginzberg, 'Anthropomorphism and Anthropopathism', Jewish
Encyclopedia (New York: Funk and Wagnall, 1901-6), based on Zeller's
Philosophie der Griechen, 2nd edition, iii: 306.

so far as to c‗‗‗ ‗‗ ‗‗‗ ‗‗ a survey of the history of man, from
the most primitive to the more 'rational' and 'scientific' stages, a
gradual corresponding evolution from an extreme theriomorphism to a
more sophisticated anthropomorphism-anthropopathism, and finally to the
opposite extreme of a wholly abstract, spiritualized conception of the
Divine as essentially unknowable and undefinable.[2]

Anthropomorphism cannot, however, be attributed to primitive
modes of thought and naiveness only. Everyday experience shows even
the emotionally and rationally more 'emancipated' man of the more
'rational' and 'scientific' stages in history -- who in the confines
of his thought and convictions cannot accept anthropomorphism in any
form and rejects it as no more than a blatant self-contradiction --
still uses anthropomorphic vocabulary without sensing any inherent
contradiction between this, his action, and his true convictions. More-
over, this 'emancipated' man may be found to use and reject anthro-
pomorphic terms at one and the same time (using anthropomorphism in his
very argument for rejecting it) and he will still be regarded by others
as consistent.

A sharp distinction must, therefore, be drawn between (a) a
belief in anthropomorphism, that is, a literal representation or con-
ception of Deity with human attributes, and a literal ascription of
human form and characteristics to Deity, and (b) a merely symbolic

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[2]Cf. F. B. Jevons, 'Anthropomorphism', Encyclopedia of Religion
and Ethics, ed. J. Hastings (London: 1935).

anthropomorphism, that is, an allegorical or analogical use of
anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms when speaking of the Being and
Nature of Deity. The former is due to naiveness, to a primitive and
artless simplemindedness which is restricted to the immediate self-
consciousness and is mentally and emotionally unable to transcend the
limitations of an empirical area. Man, in this primitive stage, may
at best ascend to notions of an all-permeating Divine immanence (a
notion of _pantheism_), but hardly to the more sophisticated idea of
coupling this immanence with an abstract idea of transcendence (the
notion of _panentheism_).

The use of symbolic anthropomorphism is due not so much to
man's _relative_ experimental limitations, as to the innate spatial-
temporal restrictions super-imposed upon man and his mind. That is,
whereas man is physically and mentally confined to the categories of
space and time, which he cannot transcend except by way of negation,
his experimental explorations and empirical probings are also limited
to these same categories. Meaningful sounds and words, which are the
prime matter (_hyle_) of thought and speech, and depend upon experience
for their meaningfulness, are, therefore, also limited to these
immediate categories of space and time. Without entering into the
general problem of universals it is necessary to say that the terms
which signify universals, abstractions, or otherwise non-empirical
terms derived, and arrived at, from (and comprehended by means of)
the more limited notions of our immediate experience. On their own,

as independent entities (that is, non-related to empirical notions that are grounded in concrete objects or experiences), such abstract terms are meaningless. The limitation of language for self-expression necessitates the use of explicit or implicit anthropomorphism, even when, and while recognizing (again, by way of negation, rather than by means of a positive attribution) that strictly speaking anthropomorphism is invalid and illegitimate. Where an attempt is made to avoid anthropomorphism at all costs, one is factually left with a futile exchange of meaningless sounds or combinations of letters.[3]

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[3]This 'sophisticated position' is obviously more akin to the view of the so-called agnostic philosophers who deny the possibility of attaching any positive attributes to God, and limit our knowledge of God to negative attributes (via negativa). It would be unjust to ignore, at this point, the opposing view of Thomas Aquinas, who counters this agnosticism with his thesis of analogy. While a comparative and critical examination of the Thomistic position is not in place here, it should be mentioned at least in outline, inasmuch as it has a great bearing upon the general philosophical problem and consideration of anthropomorphism.

The basis for Aquinas' theory is a certain logical principle that 'no cause can confer any perfection which it does not in some manner possess itself.' That is, any conferred perfection is the result of the cause's action. An agent must, thus, possess a perfection before its action can be of such a kind as to confer it. From this premise it follows that, admitted that God is the cause of created perfections, we must of necessity agree that these perfections must be found in Him as well, in one way or another. Some mode of these perfections must be in Him actually and intrinsically.

To say 'in one way or another', is important and necessary because it does not necessarily follow from our argument that these perfections need be in Him in the same manner as they are in His creatures; rather, they need be in God in a much higher, a much more sublime and superior manner. A distinction must also be drawn between so-called 'pure', and 'mixed' perfections. 'Pure' perfections are those which do not contain any imperfection whatever (though the entity of the 'pure

It is, therefore, little surprising that canonical writings are found to contain anthropomorphisms, regardless of whether the basic tenets and beliefs of that faith affirm or reject the literalness of

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perfection' may exist in an imperfect way, in imperfect creatures). 'Mixed' perfections are such as imply in their very notion some imperfection; they contain some 'pure perfection', that is, there is an underlying principle involved, a general idea (as opposed to a particular appearance) which serves a good (a pure) purpose. (Anger, for example, contains an element of goodness, though the instances of anger, as man understands and experiences it under most conditions, are imperfect, 'mixed' perfections).

'Pure' perfections, says Thomas Aquinas, may be affirmed of God in strict and literal truth as really being found in Him in a most sublime fashion, superior to the way they are found in man (with whom they are of necessity in a mode of imperfection). 'Mixed' perfections can be applied to God only in a metaphorical sense, that is, that which is found in them of goodness (the pure aspect) belongs to God in some sublime way. One can, thus, speak of God, in a metaphorical snese, as 'angry with sinners', meaning thereby that His action is comparable to the instance of a just person moved by a righteous indignation with crime.

Attention must be drawn not only to the important distinction between 'pure' and 'mixed' perfections, but also to an equally important distinction between univocal and analogous meaning. When these distinctions are kept in mind, it can be concluded that the perfections that are present in creatures are in God

1. really only as they are pure perfections, and metaphorically as they are mixed perfections; and

2. only in analogous manner (meaning mainly that in God these attributes have none of the limitations which adhere to them necessarily, as they belong to creatures).

St. Thomas Aquinas, thus, admits a positive knowledge of God, though emphasizing that it is but an analogous knowledge. This theory is then shown to solve all apparent contradictions, and the objections to what the agnostics would call the 'illegitimate transfer of dependent or limited perfections as they appear in creatures to the independent and unlimited Absolute, God', for now it is quite irrelevant how imperfect the creatures' attributes may be in them. It is not the particular mode of an attribute as it appears in the creatures, which we affirm of God,

sucy terms. At best, these anthropomorphisms are qualified one way or another (that is, they are affirmed to be taken in the literal sense, or that they are said to be merely symbolic and allegorical).

The Pentateuch is certainly no exception to that rule. It is not within the scope of this study to decide whether the original anthropomorphism in the Pentateuch is due to naive, primitive conceptions and was originally taken in a quite literal sense, or whether there has always been a more sublime and pure conception of the Deity as a transcendent Being.[4] For the purposes of this thesis it is important to observe that

1. the Pentateuch abounds with more and less stark anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms; and

2. the Pentateuch has always been the basic code of the Jewish Faith, thus, per force, a book of and for the masses (scholars and laity alike), taught to, and studied by all.

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but a mode which is merely analogous to that. When we affirm of God some perfection which is found in creatures, we do so by what Aquinas calls: analogy of perfection, in a real (with respect to pure perfections), or metaphorical sense (with respect to mixed perfections).

A thorough exposition of the Agnostic and Thomistic positions is presented by G. H. Joyce in his Principles of Natural Theology, (London: B. Herder Book Co., 1949), and G. Wergel and A. G. Madden, Religion and the Knowledge of God, (Englewood N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961).

[4]The former position is taken by scholars like Driver, Pfeiffer, et al., who suggest a temporal development in the alleged inter-Pentateuchal codes and the various Biblical writings, from a crude, literal anthropomorphism to a non-, and possibly anti-anthropomorphism. (Cf. C.T. Fritsch, The Anti-Anthropomorphisms of the Greek Pentateuch, (Princeton University Press, 1943), p. 5. Other scholars regard this hypothesis as untenable in view of finding drastic anthropomorphisms even in the temporally later Scriptures, without there being any consistency in either the use or the avoidance of such terms. Cf. M. Zobel, 'Anthropomorphismus', Encyclopaedia Judaica, (Berlin: Eshkol, 1928-34), p. 889; cf. also Y. Kaufman, Toledoth ha-Emunah ha Yisraelith, (Tel Aviv:Dvir, 1937-56).

The universal character of the Pentateuch needs to be considered most seriously when observing the anthropomorphic content of the Pentateuch. This universality is no doubt interrelated with the anthropomorphism of the Pentateuch in a most intimate way, and will be shown to have most relevant bearing upon the considerations of this thesis.

Leaving aside the problem of Bible-criticism and the allegation of the Pentateuch being composed of several interpolated codes, it is obvious and clear that next to the apparently very naive anthropomorphisms in the Pentateuch, there are also many instances of the Pentateuch itself expressing non-, if not outright anti-anthropomorphic conceptions. Passages are found expressing an indubitable aversion to bringing the Creator into an anthropomorphic relation with His creatures. The following quotations illustrate this point:

Exodus 16:7:

'and in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the Lord.'[5]

Ibid., verse 10:

'and behold the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.'

The 'glory of the Lord', as opposed to the Lord, also appears as subject in Exodus 40:34f., Leviticus 9:23, Numbers 14:10 and 16:19. Furthermore, in Deuteronomy, when speaking of the Divine Indwelling (Shechinah) in the Tabernacle, it is not the very Being of God that

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[5]The expression 'glory of the Lord', as opposed to 'the Lord', is clearly an avoidance of anthropomorphism.

dwells there but His Name.[6] An explicit apprehension to the cruder

forms of anthropomorphism, however, makes itself felt only in the post-

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[6]Cf. Deuteronomy 12:5, 11; ibid., 16:2, 6, 11, and 26:2.
Quite significant to the idea of avoiding anthropomorphism, may also be
the notion of intermediaries (as angels), frequently appearing in the
Pentateuch. Anti-anthropomorphism may be detected most strongly in the
prohibitions against graven images in general, and of Deity in particular,
and in verses as 'for man cannot see Me and live' (Exodus 33:30). Of
the theophany of Sinai it is emphasized that 'ye heard the voice of
words but ye saw no form . . . ye saw no manner of form on the day that
the Lord spoke unto you.' (Deuteronomy 4:12, 15) Cf. Zobel, op. cit.,
p. 890.

An important observation (which, surprisingly, is not mentioned
in any of the studies on Biblical anthropomorphism) is made by the famed
philosopher and commentator Saadiah Gaon (882-942), in his monumental
opus Kitabh al-Amanath w'al Itikadat (translated from the Arabic and
Hebrew under the title The Book of Beliefs and Opinions by S. Rosenblatt,
Yale University Press, 4th ed. 1958). In presenting a case to show that
the anthropomorphisms of the Bible are not, and never were meant to be
taken literally, Saadiah Gaon notes that the very terms used in relation
to Divinity are attributed not only to man but even to the vegetative
and inorganic species, in which context they are most obviously a mere
metaphor and allegory. Scripture thus speaks of the head of the world
(Proverbs 8:26); the eye, ear, mouth, face, wing, navel, and thighs, of
the earth (Exodus 10:5; Numbers 11:31, and 16:32; Isaiah 1:2, and 24:16;
Ezekiel 38:12; Jeremiah 31:8). There is also reference to the hand, and
the lip, of the river (Exodus 2:3; Daniel 10:4); the heart, and the womb,
of the sea (Exodus 2:3; Daniel 10:4); the belly of the netherworld
(Johan 2:3). See Book of Beliefs and Opinions, op. cit., II:10.

Scripture, thus, employs anthropomorphic expressions in speaking
of things which according to the testimony of our senses possess none of
these organs, on which account these phrases must all be construed as
mere figures of speech.

Finally, considering the preoccupation of ancient man with the
notion of nomen est omen, nothing could possibly signify the transcendence
of God any more than the proper names given to Him in the Pentateuch,
whether it be the Tetragrammaton or the Self-proclaimed Ehyeh asher Ehyeh:
for the etymological meaning of both contains the notion of absolute trans-
cendence, of timelessness and of undefinable Being.

On the general theme of anthropomorphism in the Pentateuch much
can be found in any standard textbook on Old Testament theology; cf. also
T. Boman, Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek, (London: SCM, 1969), esp.
pp. 101ff.

biblical period of the Talmudic teachers who emphasized the metaphysical character of the anthropomorphic themes, or sought to circumscribe them.[7]

The early translations of the Pentateuch into the Greek and Aramaic languages contain ample evidence of this apprehension and concern in their times. At the same time, however, a disturbing amount of apparent inconsistencies to this rule of avoiding or circumscribing anthropomorphisms is to be found in these translations. There are numerous passages where the original anthropomorphism was retained without qualification. This fact raises the question whether these translations were, or were not governed by distinct rules and philosophical-theological premises, when it is found that in one place they reject and in another place they retain anthropomorphisms.[8]

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[7]Phrases as 'the Torah speaks the language of man'; 'Scripture paraphrases'; 'the Torah speaks to appease the ear'; etc., are frequent in the rabbinic texts. -- Fritsch, op. cit. pp. 6ff., (apparently on the authority of Ginsburg, op. cit.), claims that the anti-anthropomorphic trend expresses itself in as radical an act as the emendation of the Scriptural texts for that purpose, by what is known as the Tikune Soferim. M. Zobel, however, (op. cit., p. 890) already pointed out that of the 18 emendations known as Tikune Soferim there is at most one which might possibly be construed as avoiding anthropomorphism, and even that one is subject to argument.

[8]A study of the anti-anthropomorphisms in the Septuaginta was already undertaken by C. T. Fritsch (op. cit., supra).

CHAPTER II

ON THE CONTENTS OF THE TARGUM ONKELOS, AND ONKELOS' TREATMENT

OF THE PENTATEUCH'S SOMATIC ANTHROPOMORPHISMS

I. Targum Onkelos

The Targum Onkelos is generally regarded as the most outstanding
of the ancient translations of the Pentateuch because of its rigid ad-
herence to the original text. A cursory glance at this work, however,
will already detect many deviations from the original. This Targum
contains three principal classes of non-literal translations:

1.   Exegetical Translations;

2.   Traditional Interpretations;

3.   Circumlocutions of Biblical Anthropomorphisms.

Exegetical Translations. 'Exegetical translations' are to be
understood as passages with which Onkelos took the liberty to translate
in emended fashion by means of inserting an additional word or phrase,
or by means of circumlocuting a word or phrase. This type of deviation
applies to the passages where the original text is obviously not to be
taken in a strictly literal sense but uses picturesque or symbolic
language. The following quotations are a few typical examples of this
class of translation:

The Hebrew text of Genesis 4:21, literally translated, reads:

'And his brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all
such as handle the harp.'

For this text, Onkelos changes the phrase 'he was the father' into
'he was the master'.

While the Hebrew word <u>abh</u> does indeed have the dual connotation
of father and master, it is nevertheless significant to note how
Onkelos seeks to give the precise meaning, even when this would seem
to be done at the expense of the precise letter.

Likewise, for Genesis 8:21, Onkelos replaces-paraphrases

'I will not again curse the ground <u>for man's sake</u>'

by

'I will not again curse the ground on account of the guilt of
man.'

<u>Numbers</u> 15:39-

'that ye go not about after your heart and after your eyes'

is translated by Onkelos by

'that ye go not about after the inclination of your heart and
the sight of your eyes.'

<u>Deuteronomy</u> 30:6

'and the Lord will circumcise your heart and the heart of
your children'

is rendered by Onkelos as

'and the Lord will remove the foolishness of your heart, and
the foolishness of the heart of your children.'

<u>Traditional Interpretations</u>. The term traditional interpretations
stands for all those instances where Onkelos deviates radically from the
original text and inserts a statement which is either purely legalistic

(a Halachic ruling or interpretation), or offers some Aggadic-Medrashic type of hermeneutical exegesis. Neither of these two are necessarily implicit in the text, and are certainly not explicitly so, but derive from an oral tradition, and traditional interpretation of the Scriptures.

Some classical examples of Halachic interpretations would be Genesis 9:6; Exodus 23:19 (and the parallel passages in Exodus 34:23, and Deuteronomy 12:21); and Leviticus 23:15: Genesis 9:6 reads in the original

'whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.'

Onkelos states for this:

'whoso sheddeth man's blood before witnesses, his blood shall be shed by the decree of the court (or: judges).'

Exodus 23:19-

'thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk'

is rendered by Onkelos as

'ye shall not eat meat with milk.'

Leviticus 23:15-

'and ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath'

is rendered by Onkelos as

'and ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the day of the festival' (as opposed to the day of the Sabbath in the literal sense of the word).

Aggadic-Medrashic material is found in numerous places in the Targum Onkelos, and especially so in his translations of the poetical parts of the Pentateuch. The poetical passages of the Pentateuch are

generally cryptic, often ambiguous and difficult to understand, and,
thus, very much in need of interpretation. Onkelos translates and
paraphrases them in language and content often far removed from the
explicit sense of the verses as is especially evident from the passages
of Jacob's blessings on the deathbed, the Bile'am episode, and the
final admonitions and blessings of Moses.

Circumlocutions of Biblical Anthropomorphisms. The third
class of translations typical of Onkelos is the frequent circumlocution
of the anthropomorphic passages of the Pentateuch. The second part of
this chapter, and the chapters following, will present a detailed
examination and analysis of the occurence of such circumlocutions as well
as the apparent inconsistencies of Onkelos' failing to avoid the anthro-
pomorphism.

II. Onkelos' Treatment of the Pentateuch's
Somatic Anthropomorphisms

This first section on Onkelos' treatment of anthropomorphism
and anthropopathism will deal with the Scriptural representations which
appear to invest the Deity with human form form and organs. The relevant
passages are quoted in the Hebrew original, accompanied by a literal
translation, and then systematically contrasted with the Aramaic para-
phrases (coupled with their English translations).[1]

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[1]In all the quotations following, the Tetragrammaton will be
represented by its initial letter (’ in Hebrew or Aramaic, and J in
English). Elohim, when appearing as a name of God, will be rendered as
’א in Hebrew and Aramaic, and as 'God' in English.

The very idea of ascribing form to God is carefully avoided in the Targum. For Numbers 12:8, where such an idea presents itself ——

$$(\text{ייי} \quad \text{ותמנת})$$

'and the form of J shall he behold,'

Onkelos rendered

$$(\text{הסמדי} \quad \text{ייי} \quad \text{יקרי} \quad \text{ודמות})$$

'and the likeness of the glory of J shall he behold.'

For Exodus 15:3, where God is called a man ——

$$(\text{מלחמה} \quad \text{איש} \quad \text{ייי})$$

'J is a man of war',

Onkelos translated

$$(\text{קרביא} \quad \text{נצחן} \quad \text{מרי} \quad \text{ייי})$$

'J is the Lord of victory in battles'.[2]

The numerous occurence of the Hebrew word   (face; etymologically also _before_) as applied to God, is practically every-

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[2]_Cf_. Onkelos on Deuteronomy 10:17, where he used the same word (איש), rendering מלכין אלי (Lord of Kings) for the Hebrew האדנים אדני (Lord of the Lords).

It is interesting to note that even where the Pentateuch makes the negative statement

$$(\text{ויתנחם} \quad \text{אדם} \quad \text{ובן} \quad \text{ויכזב} \quad \text{אל} \quad \text{איש} \quad \text{לא})$$

'God is not a man that He should be false; neither the son of man that He should repent', (Numbers 23:19)

Onkelos found it necessary to speak yet more abstractly and reverently by translating this verse

$$(\text{ויכדבון} \quad \text{אנשא} \quad \text{בני} \quad \text{כמימר} \quad \text{אלהא} \quad \text{מימר} \quad \text{לא})$$
$$(\text{ויתובון} \quad \text{גזרין} \qud \text{דאנון} \quad \text{בשרא} \quad \text{בני} \quad \text{כעובדי} \quad \text{ואף})$$

'the word of God is not like the word of the sons of men —— the sons of men speak and they lie; nor like the acts of the beings of flesh —— who decree to do (yet) they repent and change counsels.'

where translated by a variant of the Aramaic word 𐡐 𐡓 𐡒 (before).
This is not a far-fetched translation or paraphrase, inasmuch the
Hebrew word for face is identical with the Hebrew word for before
(obviously meaning the face-side), and normally it designates an
appearance of the Deity. There are, however, three exceptions to this
rule, that is, three other variants which Onkelos used in his trans-
lation for instances of פנים . In a few places he rendered it by a
more direct and forceful expression of an Erscheinungsform of God,
namely the word שכינתא (the term denoting the Divine Indwelling).[3]
For Deuteronomy 5:4—

> פנים בפנים דבר י' עמכון
> 'face to face did J speak with you',

Onkelos rendered

> ממלל עם ממלל מליל י' עמכון
> 'word with word did J speak with you';[4]

and in at least five places[5] he rendered רוגזי (My anger; wrath)[6]
for פנים .[7]

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[3]See Exodus 33:14, 15; Deuteronomy 31:17, 18, and 32:20.

[4]Cf. Numbers 12:8, where Onkelos renders mouth to mouth also
by word with word.

[5]Leviticus 17:10; ibid. 20:3, 5f., and 26:17.

[6]The same word Onkelos used for the Hebrew אפי (My anger);
see e.g. Exodus 22:23, et passim. Cf. infra, s.v. אף (nostril).

[7]This circumlocution, however, need not necessarily be taken
as an anti-anthropomorphism, but may belong to the exegetical trans-
lations, whereas it may be found in non-anthropomorphic context as well;
cf. Onkelos on Genesis 32:21.

In any case, the non-(and possibly anti-) anthropomorphic notion emerges quite clearly in all these instances.[8]

The bodily organs that are attached to Deity mostly are the eyes, the nose, mouth, ears, hands, fingers, and feet. With all these we find in Onkelos a distinct pattern of circumlocution as will presently be shown.

The phrase ＇ ﬡﬢﬡ (in the eyes of J), or ﬡﬢﬡ (in My eyes), in which the pronominal element refers to God, is consistently translated into the Aramaic by a variant of the word ﬡﬤﬡ (before).[9] This word manages to retain the full meaning of the original even while avoiding the anthropomorphism. There is but one notable exception, namely Deuteronomy 11:12—

$$\text{ﬡﬢ ＇ﬣ ＇ ﬡﬢﬡ ﬡﬣﬤ}$$

'the eyes of J, thy God, are always upon it'.[10]

The Hebrew term 'in the eyes of' is not necessarily overly anthropomorphic, certainly not so when seen in its normal usage; nevertheless, Onkelos did find it necessary to avoid this term as much as possible, thus eradicating even the unintended underlying anthropomorphic motive.

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[8] Though cf. Numbers 6:26, where the anthropomorphism is retained in Onkelos!

[9] Cf. supra, s.v. ﬡﬢﬤ (face)

[10] The context of this verse could not possibly allow Onkelos to use a variant of ﬡﬤﬡ, whereas the 'eyes of J' here refer to the Divine Providence. Consequently, Onkelos may be said to remain consistent.

'Ears of God' is never translated literally. For these organs, too, Onkelos used a variant of קֳדָם . Thus, Numbers 11:1 (also, ibid., verse 18) —

קֳדָם יי

'in the ears of J'

is rendered as

קֳדָם יי

'before J.'

Numbers 14:28

כְּמָא דְמַלֵּלְתּוּן קֳדָמַי

'as ye have spoken in Mine ears'

is rendered as

כְּמָא דְמַלֵּלְתּוּן קֳדָמַי

'as ye have spoken before Me'.[11]

The word פֶּה (mouth), when used of God, is consistently changed into מֵימַר (word). As this word came to mean in Hebrew command (as 'that which from the mouth'), Onkelos sometimes adds the stronger form of גְּזֵרַת מֵימַר (the decree of the word). Leviticus 24:12 is thus paraphrased, from

עַל מֵימַר יי

'at the command (lit.: mouth) of J'

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[11]Here, too, it should be noted that this type of circumlocution (for ears) appears also in non-anthropomorphic instances, that is, where the pronominal element does not refer to God, but to man. Cf. Genesis 23:10, 13, 16; Exodus 10:2; et passim.

to

ל‍ע צלי'‍ת א'ני'‍א ‍3'

'at the decree of the word of J'.[12]

In other instances, as for Exodus 17:1 (where the same phrase appears), and for Numbers 27:14—

א'ני'‍ע (פ'

'ye rebelled against My command' (lit. mouth), the Hebrew פ‍ה is translated simply by א'ני'‍א or א'ני'י (word).[13]

The word א‍ף (nostril), in Hebrew came to mean anger as well, probably by the association of heavy breathing, or snorting, in connection with this emotion. Onkelos used this secondary meaning and translated א‍ף by רג‍ז , or רוג‍זא (anger; wrath), thus obscuring the physical connotation. Onkelos is very consistent with this circumlocution, and applied it in reference to God and to man. The only exceptions to this rule are where the context demands a more literal sense of א‍ף . In

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[12]The same applies also to Numbers 14:41 and 22:18.

[13]See also Numbers 3:16, and 39; Deuteronomy 1:26, and 8:3; et passim.

Here again, it should be noted that this circumlocution is used in non-anthropomorphic context as well; e.g. Exodus 38:21:

על פ‍י משה

'at the command (lit. mouth) of Moses' is rendered by

על מ'ני'‍א דמשה

'by the word of Moses'.

Onkelos used the circumlocution of מ'ני'י even for the prepositional use of פ‍ה ; thus, Genesis 43:17, and Exodus 34:27 — על הדברים האלה — (according to these words), are translated על מ'ני'‍א פתגמ'‍א האלין.

Another instance of פ‍ה , that should be mentioned here, is the passage cited supra, note 3.

stretched arm) -- are translated literally.[15] Anthropomorphism is avoided only in the instances where the context itself indicates a secondary meaning, especially in the sense of a display of strength. Thus,

Exodus 9:3

$$/. \quad 3\iota$$

'the hand of J'

is rendered

$$/. \quad \rho 3\uparrow \quad |\mathit{N} \quad |c\land\mathit{N}$$
'a plague from before J';[16]

Exodus 16:3

$$/. \quad 3\uparrow \quad |\jmath\land|\mathit{N}$$
'that we die by the hand of J'

is rendered

$$/. \quad \rho 3\uparrow \quad |c\jmath\land'\land 3$$
'that we die before J.'

Exodus 6:8

$$'3' \quad \land|c \quad '\land|c\jmath \quad 7\partial|c$$
'concerning which I lifted up My hand' (an oath-form)

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[15]See Exodus 13:3, 9, 14, and 16; Deuteronomy 5: 15, 7:19, and 26:8; et passim.

[16]Likewise also for Exodus 3:20, 7:4f, and 9:15; and Deuteronomy 2:15.

is rendered

$$\text{די ק״ים ג א״מ אוד״ר}$$

'which I have established (<u>sworn</u>) in My word'.[17]

There are two more interesting passages in which Onkelos avoided

the anthropomorphic hand:

Exodus 24:11

$$\text{ואל אציל בני ישראל לא שלח ידי}$$

'and upon the nobles of the children of Israel, He laid not
His Hand',

which is rendered as

$$\text{ולרברבי בני ישראל לא הוה נזקא}$$

'and unto the leaders of the children of Israel there
came no harm.'

Numbers 11:23

$$\text{היד ד׳ תקצר}$$

'is the hand of J waxed short?'

is translated

$$\text{המימר ד׳ מתעכב}$$

'is the word of J restrained?'

There are two more somatic attributions, the avoidance and

circumlocution of which by Onkelos ought to be mentioned:

Exodus 8:15

$$\text{אצבע א׳ הוא}$$

'it is the finger of God',

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[17]See also Onkelos on Numbers 14:30, and <u>cf</u>. <u>ibid</u>. on Exodus
17:16.

which Onkelos rendered as

מחא אן קדם י ודין

'it is a plague from before J';[18]

and Exodus 24:16

ותחת רגלי

'and below His feet',

which is rendered as

ותחת כרסי יקריה

'and below the throne of His glory'.

The quoted instances of anthropomorphisms in the Pentateuch, and the manner in which they are dealt with by Onkelos, indicate quite clearly that the translator was governed by a desire to produce as faithful a rendering of the original as possible, but also avoided the literal meaning of the Hebrew original where it appears obnoxious for being irreverent, or otherwise disturbing to theological or philosophical sensitivity.[19]

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[18]The phrase כתיבין באצבעא די 'written by the finger of God', (Exodus 31:18; Deuteronomy 9:10) however, is translated literally, both times!

[19]It is interesting to note that a comparative study of the quoted passages as they are rendered in the Septuaginta and in Targum Onkelos, yields the conclusion that while there is surprisingly much similarity in their respective renditions, Onkelos is, however, much more consistent in his anti-anthropomorphism. Cf. Fritsch's study of the Septuaginta, opus citat. supra, especially chapter 1. See also Leo Prijs, Juedische Tradition in der Septuaginta, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1948).

CHAPTER III

ONKELOS' TREATMENT OF THE
PENTATEUCH'S ANTHROPOPATHIES

The Pentateuch attributes to God not only human form and organs but also human actions and feelings. God is said to love and rejoice, to hate and to be jealous; He walks, stands, carries, and rests; He comes, descends, passes by, and meets.

Onkelos, in his Aramaic translation, avoided most of these anthropopathic conceptions because they are considered objectionable in relation to God. There are, however, some anthropopathies which one would expect to be avoided for that very reason, and yet they were retained in pretty much their literal sense. Among these retained anthropopathies, the one that comes to mind foremostly is the notion of repentance which is attributed to God several times in the Pentateuch, even though that it is philosophically at variance with the omniscience of God. Genesis 6:6

פהנל ו

'and J repented'

is but slightly softened in Targum Onkelos:

ואי ה קדיוהי

'and it repented J in His word'.[1]

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[1]The same applies also to Genesis 6:7.

Where the same phrase appears in Exodus 32:14, Onkelos does not even use this softening, but renders it literally.[2]

Other emotive attributes are retained as well. Onkelos did not hesitate to ascribe to God emotions as love and compassion,[3] hate and anger,[4] and jealousy.[5] An interesting and noteworthy observation is that in such constructions where God appears not as subject, but as object of the sentence, or where it is man speaking of the emotions of God, Onkelos softens the anthropopathic effect by interjecting the word קדם before mentioning God's name (e.g. anger before God). This interjection of a buffer-word is successfully effective in creating a conception of the Deity as personally unaffected by human actions and may doubtlessly be regarded as an anti-anthropopathism.[6]

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[2]Cf. also Exodus 32:12. -- On the other hand, where the Pentateuch itself rejects the notion of repentance in association with God, Onkelos goes still further than the Pentateuch in his rendition; see supra, Chapter II note 2.

[3]See Genesis 19:16 and 32:11.

[4]With respect to hate, see Deuteronomy 12:31, and 16:22; with respect to anger, see supra, ch. II, s.v. אף , and the numerous instances throughout the Pentateuch of the phrase חרה אף (Genesis 18:30; Exodus 22:23; Numbers 11:1; Deuteronomy 7:4; et passim). See also Leviticus 20:23, and 26:11, and 30, with respect to loathing (קוץ ; געל).

[5]Exodus 20:5; et passim.

[6]For examples, see Genesis 32:11; Numbers 14:11; ibid. 15:30, and 16:30; Deuteronomy 1:37, 3:26, 4:21 and 25, 9:7 and 18, and 32:15.

Onkelos did change at least one emotion attributed to God:

Genesis 6:6

וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֶל לִבּוֹ

'and it grieved Him at His heart'

is rendered by Onkelos as

וַאֲמַר בְּמֵימְרֵיהּ לְמִתְבַּר תֻּקְפְהוֹן כִּרְעוּתֵיהּ

'and He said in His word that He would break their strength according to His will.'[7]

Verbs implying a direct, active involvement, and with connotations of space or motion (which implies a certain measure of corporeality), are treated differently than the emotive attributes.

When the verb הלך (to walk; go) is refered to God Onkelos interjected the term שְׁכִינָא (the Divine Indwelling, or Abiding), thus toning down the anthropomorphism:

Leviticus 26:12

וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם

'and I will walk among you'

became

וַאֲשַׁרֵי שְׁכִינְתִּי בֵּינֵיכוֹן

'and I will make My Shechinah dwell among you'.

Deuteronomy 23:15

כִּי י' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֶךָ

'for J, thy God, walketh in the midst of thy camp'

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[7]Ed. Sabioneta, 1557, and many other versions, omit 'in His word'.

became

אלי י' אלהך (שכנתה) מהלך (מהלך) בקרב מחניך

'for J, thy God, His Shechinah walketh in the midst
of thy camp.'[8]

Even where the action is indirectly and by implication only
associated with God, Onkelos felt it necessary to circumscribe the
original:

Genesis 5:22 (and _ibid._, 24)

ויתהלך חנוך את (ה) וגו'

'and Enoch walked with God'

is changed to

והלך חנוך בדחלתא (ד) י'

'and Enoch walked in the fear of J.'

Likewise, Genesis 6:9

את (ה) התהלך נח

'Noah walked with God'

is changed to

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[8]_Cf._ also Exodus 34:9:

ילך נא י' בקרבנו

'let J, I pray Thee, go in the midst of us'

became

תהל כען שכנתא די' ביננא

Genesis 3:8 is not included among these quotations, because there the
Pentateuch cites the _voice of God_ (and not God Himself) as the subject.

קדם ךלא נח גו רחלתא דיי

'Noah walked in the fear of J'.[9]

This verb, הלך , is thus found to be consistently circumlocuted throughout Targum Onkelos.

ירד (to descend) appears quite frequently in association with God, and this word, too, is consistently circumscribed, Onkelos always paraphrases this word by the Aramaic equivalent for to become revealed, or manifested:

Genesis 11:5

וירד ה'

'and J came down'

is rendered as

ואתגלי ה'

'and J became manifest';

Exodus 19:11

ירד ה'

'J will come down'

is rendered as

יתגלי ה'

'J will manifest Himself';

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[9]Cf. also the following verses:

Genesis 17:1

התהלך לפני

'walk before Me'

became

פלח קדמי,

'worship before Me';

Ibid., 24:40

יי אשר התהלכתי לפני

'before Whom I walk'

became

דפלחית קדמוהי,

'before Whom I worship.

Numbers 11:17

וארד

'and I came down'

is rendered as

ואתגלי [10]

'and I became revealed'. [10]

There is one eye-catching exception, though, namely

Genesis 46:4:

אנכי ארד עמך מצרימה

'I will descend with you to Egypt'.

In the rendition of this verse, Onkelos gives a literal translation.

This exception was noted already by Maimonides, and he suggests that

this but proves the ingenuity of Onkelos,

> the perfection of this distinguished man, as well as
> the fine quality of his interpretation, and his under-
> standing of things as they really are . . . In view of
> the fact that the beginning of the passage includes
> the statement that this happened in the visions of the
> night.[11] Onkelos did not think that it would be unseemly
> to conform wholly to the text in his rendering of what
> was said in the visions of the night.[12]

Maimonides, thus, drew a fine distinction with respect to prophecy

between what is said to happen in a dream, or in the visions (apparitions)

See also Genesis 12:21; Exodus 19:18, and 20, and 34:5;
Numbers 11:25, and 12:5.

[11]See Genesis 46:2.

[12]Moreh Nebuchim, (Vilna: I. Funk, 1914), part I: ch. 27.
(English translations, under the title Guide for the Perplexed, by
M. Friedländer, London: 1881-5, and by S. Pines, Chicago: University of
Chicago Press, 1963).

of the night, and prophecies that are mentioned without qualification

(as 'and the word of J came unto me, saying', or 'and J said unto me').[13]

Other verbs implying motion and associated with God, are ק ב
(to come), עבר (to pass by), יצא (to go out), and קרה (to meet).

All these verbs are clearly circumlocuted in Targum Onkelos:

Genesis 20:3

> ויבא א' אל אבימלך
> 'and God came to Abimelech'

became

> ואתא מימר מן קדם ' לות אבימלך
> 'and the word came from before J to Abimelech'.[14]

Exodus 19:9

> הנה אנכי בא אליך
> 'behold, I come unto you'

became

[13]Maimonides (ibid., ad loc. cit.) suggests an alternative
explanation for this exception, viz. that the subject here is not God,
but an angel of God (and as we find frequently that an angel is called
by God's name), and, therefore, no circumlocution or paraphrase is
necessary. The original explanation of Maimonides is strongly criticised
by Nachmanides, in his commentary on the Pentateuch (on Gen. 46:4), who
points out that there are other passages relating Divine revelations in
dreams or visions of the night, and yet Onkelos paraphrases those
passages, toning down the anthropomorphic connotations. (Cf. Genesis
20:3; ibid. 28:13, and 31:24). — Maimonides' views on the Targum Onkelos,
and Nachmanides' critique thereon, will still be dealt with further on,
in a later chapter.

[14]Similar instances are Genesis 31:24, and Numbers 22:9.

רֲ רֶאָנֵה לכֶיִ כֹה
'behold, I manifest Myself to you';

Exodus 20:21

רֲ בֶּרַכְתִּיךָ אֵלֶיךָ אָבוֹא
'I shall come to you and bless you'

became

וֲבֵרַכְתִּיךָ אֵלֶיךָ בִּרְכָתִי אֶשְׁלַח
'I shall send My blessing to you, and I shall bless you';

Deuteronomy 33:2

בָא מִסִּינַי
'J came from Sinai'

became

אִתְאֲלִי מִסִּינַי
'J manifested Himself from Sinai';

Exodus 12:12

מִצְרַיִם בְּאֶרֶץ וְעָבַרְתִּי
'and I shall pass through the land of Egypt'

became

מִצְרַיִם בְּאַרְעָא וְאִתְגְּלִי
'and I shall manifest Myself in the land of Egypt';[15]

Exodus 11:4

מִצְרַיִם בְּתוֹךְ יוֹצֵא אֲנִי
'I will go out in the midst of Egypt'

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[15] A similar instance is Exodus 12:23.

became

אתגלי בגו מצרים

'I will manifest Myself in the midst of Egypt';

Exodus 3:18

נקרה עלינו

'has met with us'

became

אתגלי עלנא

'has manifested Himself to us';[16]

Numbers 23:3

אקרה י הכא

'J will come to meet with me'

became

יתאמר מן קדם י פתגם ויקראנא

'the word from before J shall be proclaimed before me'.[17]

There are four more verbs the examination of which is relevant,

namely: שכן (to dwell), ריח (to smell), ראה (to see), and ירא

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[16]A similar instance is Exodus 5:3.

[17]The Aramaic ערע is also equivalent to the Hebrew קרה
(to meet), but the sense of to proclaim was preferred in order to retain
the literal meaning of the word אקרא ; cf. M. Jastrow, Dictionary of
the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature,
(Berlin: Choreb, 1926), s.v. ערע . -- The same paraphrase appears also
for Numbers 23:4 and 6. The distinction drawn by Bible-commentators
between the revelations to a Hebrew prophet, and to a heathen (cf. Rashi,
on Leviticus 1:1), may explain the difference in the paraphrases for
Exodus 3:18, and Numbers 23:3, the latter being toned down in such a way
as rendering that revelation inferior to the former.

(<u>to hear</u>). All these verbs have some physical connotation, and some of them imply a subjectivity of the Divine Being.

The anthropopathic connotation of the word פֿן is consistently avoided by changing the subject from <u>God</u> to <u>Shechinah</u>:

Exodus 25:8

> בתוכם ושכנתי

'and I will dwell amongst them'

is changed to

> ביניהון שכינתי ואשרי

'and I will make My Shechinah dwell amongst them'.[18]

Exodus 29:46

> לשכני

'that I may dwell'

is changed to

> שכינתי לאשראה

'to make dwell My Shechinah'.

Numbers 5:3

> בתוכם שכן אני

'I dwelleth amongst them'

is changed to

> ביניהון שריא שכינתי

'My Shechinah dwelleth amongst them'.[19]

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[18]See also Exodus 29:45.

[19]Cf. also Deuteronomy 12:11, (<u>et passim</u>) on the phrase שם שמו לשכן (<u>to make His Name dwell there</u>), which Onkelos circumscribed in like manner by תמן שכינתה לאשראה (to make His Shechinah dwell there).

The verb _to smell_, as related to God, is avoided completely by
Onkelos:

Genesis 8:21

וירח י' את ריח הניחוח

'and J smelled the sweet savour'

is changed to

וקבל י' ברעוא ית קרבנא

'and J accepted (or _received_) in favour the sacrifice'.

Leviticus 26:31

ולא אריח בריח ניחוחכם

'and I will not smell your sweet savours'

is changed to

ולא אקבל ברעוא קרבן כנשתכון

'and I will not accept in favour the sacrifice of
your assembly'.[20]

The words _seeing_ and _hearing_, appearing in the Pentateuch with
reference to God, are treated more intricately in Targum Onkelos.
Maimonides found it necessary to give a long chapter dealing with
Onkelos' treatment of these two words.[21]

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[20]Into the same category falls also the phrase ריח ניחח
אשה לי' _it is a sweet savour, a fire-offering unto J_, (Exodus 29:18),
which Onkelos rendered as לאתקבלא קרבנא ברעוא קדם י' -- _to accept
in favour a sacrifice before J_. It is likewise with the frequent
phrase of אשה ריח ניחח (_a fire-offering, a sweet savour_), which
Onkelos rendered as קרבן דמתקבל ברעוא (_a sacrifice which is
accepted in favour_).

[21]_Moreh Nebuchim_, _op. cit._, part I: ch. 48.

ﻉﻠﻊ (to hear) is dealt with simply in the Targum. Whenever the notion of hearing occurs with reference to God, Onkelos avoided the word and interpreted its meaning as signifying that the matter in question (i.e. the matter 'heard' by God) reached God, or was apprehended by God, or, with respect to prayers, was accepted by God. The phrase God heard, in general context, is always translated by Onkelos as ﻉﻤﻊ ﻗﺩﻡ ' (it was heard before J),[22] and when this phrase appears in the context of prayer he translated that (the prayer) was received (or accepted).[23] These circumlocutions appear consistently throughout the Targum Onkelos and Onkelos did not deviate from them.

The consistency in the treatment of the word ﻉﻤﻊ is not apparent in the treatment of ﻩﺍﻩ (to see). The occurences of this word with reference to God Onkelos translated mostly literally (God saw), and only occasionally by substituting ﻗﺩﻡ ﻝﺍ (it was revealed before God). It is difficult to determine any rule for this variation and even Maimonides admits to being puzzled by it. Maimonides does forward a hypothesis that 'in the cases in which the word seeing is found in conjunction with wrong-doing or harming, and committing an act of aggression, (Onkelos) interprets it as it was revealed before J. There is no doubt that the word to behold has in (Aramaic) the meaning to apprehend, and

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[22]See Genesis 21:17, and 29:33; Exodus 3:7, 6:5, and 16:8; Numbers 14:27; and Deuteronomy 5:25.

[23]For that purpose, Onkelos often translated voice, or affliction, as prayer. -- See Genesis 16:11, and 30:6; Exodus 22:22, and 26; Deuteronomy 1:45, and 3:26.

to establish the thing apprehended as it is apprehended. Therefore,
when _seeing_ is mentioned in connection with wrong-doing, (Onkelos)
did not say _and He beheld_, but _and it was revealed before J.'_ Maimonides
cites many proof-texts, 'all the verses in which Onkelos avoids the literal
meaning of seeing', namely: Genesis 29:32 and 31:12; Exodus 2:25, 3:7,
and 9, 4:31, and 32:9; Deuteronomy 32:19, and 36. A study of these
instances seems to bear out his thesis.[24] Maimonides then adds, however,
that this theory is spoilt for him by three passages which, if the analogy
held good, ought to have been translated by Onkelos by _and it was revealed_
before J, while all standard editions have _and J beheld_. These passages
are Genesis 6:5 and 12, and 29:31. In view of these obvious exceptions,
Maimonides wrote that 'the explanation that seems to me the most probable
is that those are mistakes that have crept into the copies of the trans-
lation; for we do not have Onkelos' autograph of these passages; if we
had, we should have said that perhaps he had in mind some interpretation
with regard to this . . . . As far as these (three) passages are concerned,
a careful investigation should be made with a view to correcting the
copies of the translation.[25] If, however, the passages are found to have

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[24] Maimonides purposedly did not include in this list Genesis 22:8,
showing cause why he does not regard it to be an exception to this thesis.
He also did not include Genesis 18:21 and Exodus 5:21, probably because
these are not disturbing as exceptions. whereas the context there demands
the type of translation which Onkelos offers. It is strange, though
that he did not include Genesis 31:42; Exodus 33:13; Deuteronomy 9:13,
26:7, and 32:20.

[25] An examination of the recently published edition of Targum
Onkelos 'based on old manuscripts and printed texts', The Bible in Aramaic,
ed. A. Sperber, (Leiden: Brill, 1959), yielded the interesting result
of showing the version which Maimonides' theory demands, for Genesis 6:5
and 29:31!

the text we cited, I do not know for him a purpose in this.[26]

Two more verbs need to be considered in this chapter on anthropopathies, ‎זכר and ‎פקד (to remember),[27] as they appear in relation to God. These two verbs appear often in the Pentateuch (related to God) in the tenses of the *futurum* and *perfectum*. This usage gives the impression of being at variance with the notion of God's omniscience and unchangeableness. In all those cases Onkelos, while retaining the literal meaning of the root-word, changed the tense to the present. This change appears so often and is so obvious, that it cannot be said to be accidental and must serve the purpose of safeguarding the omniscience and unchangeableness of God.[28]

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[26]Moreh Nebuchim, opus cit., part I: ch. 48. -- Nachmanides, in his critique of Maimonides, (ad loc. cit., supra, note 13), suggests, that while Onkelos was not governed by a motive to avoid all anthropomorphism (as Maimonides claims), he paraphrases some instances of seeing because they do not refer to actual sight, but imply a notion of apprehension of a matter or condition, rather than a physical object.

[27] ‎פקד can also mean to remember, in the sense of to visit upon, to punish, in which instances Onkelos translated it literally, with the Aramaic equivalent to this sense of the word.

[28]See Genesis 8:1, 9:15, 19:29, 21:1, 50:24f.; Exodus 2:24, 3:16, 4:31, 6:5, 13:19; Leviticus 26:42, and 45. Cf. also Genesis 30:22, and Numbers 10:9, where Onkelos inserted a nomen (the memory of . . . . ascended before J). -- This last observation is already made by S. D. Luzzatto, in the introduction to his Philoxenus, (Cracoviae: I. Graeber, 1895), par. 3, who took it from the anonymous author of Pathshegen, (a mediaeval commentary on Targum Onkelos, published by N. Adler, in the Vilna edition of the Pentateuch, of 1912).

CHAPTER IV

ONKELOS' TREATMENT OF GENITIVE ASSOCIATIONS,
AND OF GOD'S NAMES

I. Genitive Associations

The genitive associations of corporeal substances with God
are many and of varied types in the Pentateuch. Some of these —
those which attribute human organs to God — were already dealt
with earlier.[1] The others, which divide up into the three classes
of personal, anthropomorphic-minded factors, impersonal, physical
factors, and miscellaneous factors, are discussed in this chapter.
Genesis 1:2

אלֹ רוח

'the spirit of God'

is toned down by Onkelos to

ורוחא מן קדם יי

'and a spirit from before J'.[2]

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[1] Supra, Chapter II.

[2] Cf. also Exodus 35:31, and Numbers 42:2. Another anthropomorphic-minded association circumlocuted by Onkelos, is Numbers 24:4.

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Genesis 28:17

> קִיֵת אֵ '

'House of God'

is changed to

> אֲתַר דִּבְרָאֵל בֵּהּ רַעֲוָה מִן קֳדָם '

'the place where there is favour from before J'.[3]

Exodus 3:1

> טוּר הָ אֵ '

'the mountain of God'

is changed to

> טוּרָא דְּאִתְגְּלִי עֲלוֹהִי יְקָרָא דַּיָי '

'the mountain upon which the glory of J manifested itself'.[4]

Exodus 4:20

> חוּטְרָא אֵ '

'the staff of God'

is changed to

> חוּטְרָא דְּאִתְעֲבִידוּ בֵּהּ נִסִּין '

'the staff wherewith miracles were performed.'[5]

Numbers 11:3

> אֵשׁ '

'the fire of J'

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[3] See also Genesis 28:22 (relating the same term to the worship of God).

[4] See also Exodus 18:5, and cf. Numbers 10:33.

[5] Cf. Exodus 17:9.

is changed to

> אש מן קדם ה׳

'a fire from before J'.

Genesis 18:19

> דרך ה׳

'the way of J'

is changed to

> אורח תקין קדם ה׳

'the way established before J'.

Genesis 32:3

> מחנה א׳

'the camp of God'

is changed to

> משירין מן קדם ה׳

' a camp from before J'.

Numbers 21:14

> בספר מלחמת ה׳

'in the book of wars of J'

is changed to

> בספרא קרבין דעבד ה׳

'in the book of the wars which J made'.

Numbers 31:3

> נקמת נקמת ה׳

'to execute the vengeance of J'

is changed to

$$\text{אֵרָׁת} \mid \text{ פֻרֵענוּת } \mid \text{ דָּ } \mid \text{ אַמָּא } \mid \text{ בְּ׳}$$

'to execute the vengeance of this people of J'.

Deuteronomy 33:21

$$\text{ צִדְקָת } \text{ ׳}$$

'the righteousness of J'

is changed to

$$\text{ מִן } \mid \text{ קֳדָם } \text{ ׳}$$

'the righteousness from before J'.

Deuteronomy 33:23

$$\text{ בִּרְכָת } \text{ ׳}$$

'the blessing of J'

is changed to

$$\text{ בִּרְכָן } \mid \text{ דְּ } \mid \text{ קֳדָם } \text{ ׳}$$

'the blessing from before J'.

Onkelos' treatment of the genetive associations quoted above
reaffirms his apprehension over anthropomorphic and any other type of
expressions or terms which appear to belittle the wholly spiritual and
transcendent character of Deity. All instances of genitive associations,
of the type discussed in this chapter, again demonstrate a distinct
pattern of circumlocution, the sole explanation for which is that the
Targum Onkelos consciously avoids anthropomorphism. In no instance of
such genitive associations did Onkelos retain the anthropomorphism of
the original.

II. God's Names

Fritsch, in his examination of the Greek translation of the
Pentateuch, found that the names of God are often, though inconsistently
changed in the Septuaginta from the way they appear in the original
Hebrew text.[6] It is, thus, worthwhile to consider how the Targum
Onkelos deals with these.

The Tetragrammaton is always carried over into the Aramaic,
without any change. The name ′‑3ℓ(Almighty),[7] which appears in the
Pentateuch nine times,[8] is also carried over unchanged.[9] The name
El is rendered either unchanged, or by its derivative of ﻟﺪﺷ.
Onkelos' renditions for Elohim are more complicated.

In most cases, Onkelos substituted the Tetragrammaton for the
Pentateuchal occurences of Elohim.[10] The most obvious exception to

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[6]Fritsch, op. cit., ch. 3.

[7]For the etymology of this word, see Albright, The Names Shaddai
and Abram, JBL, LIV (1935), pp. 173ff.; see also F. Zorell, Der
Gottesname 'Saddai' in den alten Uebersetzungen, Biblica, VIII (1927),
pp. 215ff.

[8]Genesis 17:1, 28:2, 35:11, 43:14, 48:3, 49:25; Exodus 6:3;
and Numbers 24:4 and 16.

[9]Extremely interesting is that the Divine proclamation of
′ﻟﺪﺷ ﻟﺪﺷ ′ﻟﺪﺷ (Exodus 3:14), is retained in the Targum, in the original
Hebrew, as if the whole phrase is to be regarded as a name of God.

[10]The sole explanation that lends itself to this treatment, is
that Onkelos sought to emphasize the unity of God (J=E, and E=J;
anticipating Bible-criticism?)

this rule is when the text has both names adjoined.[11]   A few more

exceptions to the rule, are not, at first glance, definable as clearly.

Onkelos gives a more literal rendition of Elohim, in passages as

Genesis 17:7f., and 28:21; Exodus 6:7, and 29:45; Leviticus 11:45,

22:33, 25:38, 26:12 and 45; Numbers 15:41; Deuteronomy 4:7, 26:17,

and 29:12. A closer examination of all these passages, however,

quickly reveals that in all these verses Elohim is spoken of as object,

and not as subject, of the sentence, that is, referring to J being God.

This intended sense could not have been expressed if the Tetragrammaton

had been used instead.[12]

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[11]E.g. Genesis 2:4f. and 7ff.; et passim.

[12]Onkelos also retained Elohim whenever it is modified in the
text by a personal suffix (my, your, our, etc. God). For these
instances the Tetragrammaton would also not lend itself, besides that
it cannot be modified (because it is a nomen proprium).

The word Elohim, as appearing in various contexts in the
Pentateuch, has several different meanings. It may stand for God in
the literal sense, or in a strictly metaphorical sense. When it refers
to God, Onkelos retains its literal sense (by substituting J, or by
carrying it over into the Aramaic). When elohim acquires a secular
connotation (as in Genesis 3:5, 6:2 and 4, 33:10; Exodus 4:16, 7:1,
21:6, 22:7f. and 27), Onkelos substituted what he felt to be the
intended meaning of the word (e.g. judge, prince, chief, or leader);
likewise, Onkelos inserted ‭כאלמ‬ (angel) in his translations of
Genesis 32:31 and Exodus 4:24. (On the 'secular' meaning of elohim,
cf. C. Gordon, Elohim in its Reputed Meaning of 'Rulers, Judges',
JBL, LIV (1935), pp. 139ff.)

The related topic of Onkelos' treatment of the word elohim as
it appears in the Pentateuch with reference to idols or idolatry, is also
noteworthy. In all such contexts, Onkelos invariably translated the
word elohim by ‭אתלחד‬ (fear, in a religious sense), as in Genesis 31:30
and 32; Exodus 20:20, 32: passim, 34:17; Leviticus 19:4; Deuteronomy
29:25, 32:17 and 37; or by ‭לילאט‬ (idol; etymologically related to

There are two more appelations of God which Onkelos changed in his translation. For ‏צור‎ (Rock), which appears in Deuteronomy 32:4, Onkelos rendered ‏תקיפא‎ (Might; Strength), and for Genesis 15:1, where God is referred to as a shield,[13]

‏אנכי מגן לך‎

'I am a shield unto you'

Onkelos paraphrased

‏מימרי תקיף לך‎

'My word is strength unto you'.

The evidence cited in this chapter has shown again that Onkelos was extremely careful and apprehensive in his translation of the Pentateuch to avoid most of the Biblical anthropomorphisms and anthropopathies. A distinct pattern is, thus, found throughout the Targum Onkelos. This pattern can only be explained by a conscious attempt of de-anthropomorphisation.

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going astray, error, deception; cf. Jastrow, op. cit., s.v. ‏טעו‎), often joined to ‏פלחן‎ (worship and ‏טעות‎ (‏טעות עממיא‎ -- the idols of the nations), as in Genesis 35:2 and 4; Exodus 22:19, 23: passim; 34:14ff.; Numbers 25:2; Deuteronomy 4:28, 6:14, 7: passim, 8:19, et passim. Cf. also Deuteronomy 32:16.

The term God, in the Targum Onkelos, thus remains reserved for the God of the Pentateuch only, which is very significant to a determination of the character of this Targum.

[13] See also Deuteronomy 33:29.

CHAPTER V

PECULIAR TERMS IN TARGUM ONKELOS

An examination and discussion of the Targum Onkelos would be
incomplete without drawing attention to the special terms which
Onkelos interjected in his renditions of Biblical passages as inter-
mediary elements or buffer-words. These buffer-words, peculiar to
Onkelos, serve as a direct avoidance, or a softening and toning down,
of the Pentateuchal anthropomorphisms, and include the following
terms: קדם (or: מן קדם); אימרא; יקרא; and שכינתא.[1]

קדם (before; מן קדם – from before) is the most recurring
modifying term in Targum Onkelos appearing hundreds of times prefixing
God's name.[2] Many of the passages quoted in the previous chapters of
this thesis show how this word קדם is used in various contexts and
how it effects a more abstract conception of the Deity. This term
safeguards the essential unaffectedness of God by the acts and doings
of His creatures; it expresses essential distance of, and reverence

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[1]The frequently appearing word גלי (to reveal) need not be
included in this list, because it appears always in translation of a
Hebrew word (albeit of many words, like seeing, hearing, descending,
etc.).

[2] קדם appears also in literal translation of לפני, and as
a circumlocution of anthropomorphic words (cf. supra, ch. 2).

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for God, an elevation of the Godhead from too intimate a contact with creation. פֿק֒ן may be said to impress the otherness of God and is often more effective as an expression of anti-anthropomorphism than an actual circumlocution by retaining the original phraseology of the Pentateuch and detaching it from the Godhead per se.

ן ריממ (word; saving) too, is used very frequently by Onkelos and appears as either a translation, circumlocution, or as a buffer-word. Some occurences of this word were seen in the quotations cited in the previous chapters. Like פֿק֒ , ן ריממ appears many times as an interjection, but to assist in the understanding of its connotation (as an interjection) all its instances need to be mentioned and considered. They are:

Genesis 9; 16; 17:7; 20:3; 21:20; 26:3 and 28; 28:20; 31:3, 24, and 49f.;

35:3; 39:2f. and 21; 48:21; and 49:25;

Exodus 3:12; 10:10; 16:8; 18:19; 19:17; 25:22; 29:42f.; 30:36;

Leviticus 26:9;

Numbers 14:9 and 43; 22:9 and 20; 23:3f., 16 and 21;

Deuteronomy 2:7; 4:24; 5:5; 7:3; 20:1; and 23:15.[3]

Practically all these sources lend to ן ריממ a notion as if it is some intermediary, and in practically every case it appears in the context of some connection, or association, between God and

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[3]These references do not include interpretary circumlocutions as Genesis 15:6; Exodus 14:31; Leviticus 26:14; etc., though the conclusion that ן ריממ is tied to some God-man bond, holds true in those cases as well.

man.[4]

 יקר (glory) is a less frequent buffer-word, usually adjoined to God (the glory of God), and is interjected by Onkelos in his renditions of

Genesis 17:22; 18:33; 28:13 and 16; and 35:13;

Exodus 3:1 and 6; 4:27; 17:16; 18:5; 20:17f.; 24:10f. and 13; and 40:38;

Leviticus 9:4;

Numbers 10:33f.; 12:8; 14:14; and

Deuteronomy 33:2.

In all these passages יקר is associated with a Divine revelation (as that which appears, or had appeared and withdrew), denoting a manifestation of the glory of God rather than (the anthropomorphic notion of) a revelation of God Himself.

The fourth term peculiar to Onkelos is שכינה. This word, which later appears so often in Talmudic-Medrashic literature, is somewhat unique and usually left untranslated in English (or other languages) as Shechinah (or Shekinah). A derivative of שכן (to dwell), Shechinah is usually defined as the Indwelling or the earthly presence of God, or is theologically understood as the Divine manifestation through which God's presence is felt by man.[5] This word and term is first found, and

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[4]That is, some form of God came to . . .; God is (or will be) with you; and the like, with either God or man as subject of the passage. Earlier scholars (especially (Christologists') sought to identify this term with the logos in Philo, (see infra, especially note 16).

[5]Cf. J. Abelson, The Immanence of God in Rabbinical Literature, (London: 1912); and R. A. Stewart, Rabbinic Theology, (London: 1961), s.v. Shekhinah.

frequently so, in the Targumim. In Onkelos it appears in one of four
contexts:

1. in translation or circumlocution of the verb ܫܪܐ
    (when this verb refers to God);[6]

2. as a circumlocution for the Face of God,[7]
    the Hand of God,[8] and the Name of God;[9]

3. as an interjection, in the context of
    exegetical translations;[10] and

4. as a buffer-word, either in association with
    the Name of God, or where God is said to be in
    the midst of the people (or some other earthly
    manifestation; thus, an implicit sense of ܫܪܐ).[11]

There is no doubt whatever, that these terms (קדם , אפין ,
ידא , and שכינתא), as appearing in the contexts mentioned above,

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[6] See Genesis 9:27; Exodus 25:8, and 29:45f.; Numbers 5:3, and
35:34; Deuteronomy 12:5, and 33:12. Cf. also Exodus 15:17.

[7] See Exodus 33:14f. and 20; Deuteronomy 31:17f., and 32:20.

[8] See Deuteronomy 32:40. Cf. Exodus 17:15.

[9] See Exodus 20:21; Deuteronomy 12:5, 11, and 21; 14:23f.;
16:2, 6, and 11; and 26:2. (In most of these instances, an indwelling
is already implied in the text of the Pentateuch.)

[10] See Genesis 49:27; Numbers 23:21; Deuteronomy 3:24, 4:39, and
32:10.

[11] See Exodus 17:7; 33:3, 5, and 16; 34:6, and 9; Leviticus
26:12; Numbers 11:20; 14:14, and 42; and 16:3; Deuteronomy 1:42; 6:15;
7:21; 23:15; and 31:17.

serve an anti-anthropomorphic purpose.[12] These terms cannot possibly
be held to serve any other purpose; they are in no way related to the
original text and are themselves too much in need for explanation to
be said to have been motivated by a desire for clarity. |ᴐⱴ'ⱴ , ⟨ᴐⱦ' ,
and ⟨ᴐⱦⱼ ᴗℓ, have, however, something most peculiar about them,
because they give the impression of representing intermediaries
(possibly hierarchical intermediaries). Maimonides, indeed, seems to
regard them as such, as he calls them 'created lights',[13] and a number
of scholars (especially of the nineteenth century) sought to identify
these notions (above all |ᴐⱴ'ⱴ) with the logos in Philo, (who was
an approximate contemporary of Onkelos),[14] which serves the idea of
sort of a manifest and active Deity mediating between God (the 'pure
Being' and 'abstract, static unit' and 'pure immaterial intellect'),

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[12]A fifth possible buffer-word is ⟨ᴄⱦⱦⱦ3 (fear), which
appears also frequently to avoid anthropomorphic situations, (see
Genesis 5:22, and 24; 6:9; 20:13; Exodus 32:26; Numbers 32:12;
Deuteronomy 1:36; 4:4, 20, 29f.; 6:12; 8:11, 14, and 19; 10:20;
11:22; 13:5, and 11; 29:17; 30:2, 10, and 20; cf. also Genesis 50:19,
and Deuteronomy 32:18). This term, though, is less peculiar, and
less abstract, than the four which were typified supra.

[13]See Moreh Nebuchim, op. cit., I:28; cf. also ibid., ch. 21,
and beginning of ch. 27. -- This interpretation is a fitting link in
Aristotelian systems like that of Maimonides (and Aquinas), which see
the world-order as a hierarchy in which even the spheres are regarded
as intelligent creatures which serve to bridge the gap between the
infinite Creator and His finite creatures. -- Nachmanides (ad loc. cit.)
rejects Maimonides' view outright as close to heretical, soundly
refuting the idea that these terms denote separate entities.

[14]And, thus, correlative to the idea of logos in the New
Testament.

and the finite, pluralistic, material creation.[15] Despite the apparent
similarity, however, essential differences have been shown to exist
between the _logos_-idea and the buffer-words of Onkelos. These differences
render the comparison invalid and there is hardly a scholar nowadays who
will entertain the view that ‌ןו‌א‌ש‌ is either a real being or an
intermediary.[16]

Isaac ibn Arama, the fifteenth century scholar and philosopher,
in his commentary on the Pentateuch,[17] interpreted the usage of these
different terms by stating that

ן‌קו‌' is used in reference to God's 'coming', 'appearing',
'standing', or 'ascending', out of respect and reverence for God, just
as in addressing the nobility men use terms like 'your honour', 'your
highness', _etc._;

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[15]See A. F. Gfroerer, _Kritische Geschichte des Urchristenthums_,
(Stuttgart: 1835); _idem._, _Das Jahrhundert des Heils_, (Stuttgart: 1838).
Cf. G. F. Moore, _Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era_,
(Harvard University Press: 8th ed., 1958), vol. I, part ii: chapter 4.

[16]See Moore, _ad loc. cit._; _idem._, _Intermediaries in Jewish
Theology_, Harvard Theol. Review, XV (1922); Strack-Billerbeck, _Kommentar
zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash_, (1924) on John I:1 (con-
cluding that memra is but '_ein inhaltsloser rein formelhafter Ersatz
fuer das Tetragrammaton_, 'totally unrelated to the _logos_); H. A. Wolfson,
_Philo-Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and
Islam_, (Harvard University Press: 3rd edition, 1962), chapter IV
(especially section vii, on 'The Fiction of Intermediaries', and the
extensive notes _ad loc._). _Cf._ also G. H. Box, 'The Idea of Inter-
mediation in Jewish Theology', _JQR_ XXIII (1932 - 3).

[17]_Akedath Yitzchak_, (Polack: 2nd edition, Jerusalem, 1961);
the relevant passage is Gate XXXI, in comment on Genesis 46:3.

⟨∩ℵ⟩ is used to denote God's Providence, in general, while
⟨∩⟩ᵕᵉ is employed for the steady continuance of Providence.

S. D. Luzzatto quotes Arama with warm approval,[18] but an
analysis of the Targum Onkelos would seem to uphold at most the first
suggestion of Arama (re ⟨∩⟩) and defeat his explanation for ⟨∩ℵ⟩
and ⟨∩⟩ᵕᵉ . If it were indeed as Arama claimed, then Onkelos
should have used ⟨∩⟩ᵕᵉ , rather than ⟨∩ℵ⟩ , in some of the
very examples cited by Arama![19] Moreover, there are verses where such
an explanation of ⟨∩ℵ⟩ is not possible even in forced inter-
pretation.[20] Finally, Onkelos should then have substituted the retained
anthropomorphism of Deuteronomy 11:12 by a phrase involving ⟨∩⟩ᵕᵉ .[21]
The difficult task of a thorough and determinative critical examination
of these terms is, however, outside the scope of this thesis.[22] For
the purposes of this study it is sufficient to have noted their existence
as a peculiar part of the Targum Onkelos, in general, and as a means to
avoid anthropomorphism, in particular.

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[18]Luzzatto, Philoxenus – sive de Onkelosi, chaldaica Pentateuchi
versione – Dissertatio hermeneutico critica, (Cracoviae 1895), Intro-
duction.

[19]E.g. Genesis 28:15 and 20.

[20]E.g. Leviticus 26:14 and 18.

[21]Cf. supra, chapter 2 note 9.

[22]A brief, and rather superficial study of these terms was
attempted by G. F. Moore, Judaism etc., op. cit., ad loc. cit., and
M. Kadushin, The Rabbinic Mind, (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary,
1952), chapter 7.

See also Maybaum, op. cit., part II. (Maybaum's comments are
less superficial than the others, but they are also more single-minded,
aimed at contradicting the writings of Groerer; cit. supra, note 15).

CHAPTER VI

AN EXCURSUS OF THE OPINIONS OF THE EARLY SCHOLARS

ON THE CONTENTS OF THE TARGUM ONKELOS

Onkelos' circumlocution of anthropomorphic passages was noted
already by the early Jewish theologians and philosophers, and especially
by those who dealt with the problem of anthropomorphism in general, and
its occurence in the Bible in particular.

Saadiah Gaon is probably the first who expressed himself on
this topic. In the second treatise of his Kitabh al-Amanath w'al
Itikadat (op. cit.) Saadiah discusses how all anthropomorphic epithets
attributed to God in the Bible, whether they be of a substantial or of
an accidental character, are applied only by way of approximation or
as figures of speech; categories of substance and quantity, quality and
relation, place and time, possession and position, and action and
passion, are totally inapplicable to God. Saadiah offers proofs
(ibid., end of ch. 9) based on reason, Scripture, and tradition; of
the latter he says:

> As for the proof from tradition, again we find that wherever
> our sages, who were considered trustworthy authorities in
> regard to our religion, encountered any such comparisons of
> God to physical beings, they did not translate them in an
> anthropomorphic sense, but rendered them in such a way as to
> correspond to the previously established principle. Now
> they were the disciples of the prophets and better acquainted
> than others with the speech of the prophets. If, therefore,

it had seemed to them that these expressions were meant
to be taken in their material sense, they would have
translated them literally. However, they knew for
certain from the prophets, aside from what their reason
dictated to them, that by means of these anthropomorphic
expressions they meant to designate lofty, exalted ideas.
They therefore translated them in accordance with their
understanding of the underlying thoughts.

No doubt that Saadiah had in mind specifically the Targum Onkelos,[1] because he proceeded to quote four verses of the Pentateuch with their Aramaic translations taken from the Targum Onkelos, as proof-texts.[2]

Saadiah Gaon is thus the first to declare the anti-anthropomorphic character of the Targum Onkelos. He is followed by Bachya ibn Pakuda, the 11th century author of Kitabh al-Hidaya Ila Faraid al-Qulub,[3] who saw and leaned on the opinion of Saadiah:

Our rabbis, when expounding the Scriptures, paraphrased
the expressions used for this class of attributes
(which indicate form, bodily likeness, and bodily movements
and actions), and were careful to interpret them as well as

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[1] Saadiah, when saying our sages, probably had in mind the Talmudic statement that 'the Targum of the Pentateuch was composed by Onkelos the Proselyte under the direction of R. Eleazar and R. Joshua', (Babyl. Talmud, Tractate Megilah: folio 3a). See also A. Marmorstein, The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God, vol. II: Essays in Anthropomorphism, (London: Oxford University Press, 1937).

[2] Exodus 9:3, 17:1, and 24:10; and Numbers 11:18.

[3] Translated into English by M. Hyamson: Duties of the Heart, (New York: 1925-47). The relevant passage is in the first volume (Treatise on the Unity of God), ch. 10. Cf. also Husik, A History of Medieaval Jewish Philosophy, (New York: Meridian, 1954), s.v. Bahya ibn Pakuda.

they could in a dignified way, and ascribed them all to the Glory of the Creator. For example (Gen. 28:13) and the Lord stood beside him is paraphrased in the Targum the glory of God was present with him, . . . these expressions were translated in a reverential manner, and were not applied to the Creator Himself, so as to avoid imputing to Him any corporeality or accidental property.

Bachya then refers to Saadiah's elaborate treatment, directing the readers of his work to study Saadiah's lengthy analysis. Bachya himself, whose work is concerned not only with the philosophical but also with the psychological aspects of religion, then adds a psychological argument on anthropomorphism which bears striking resemblance to modern works:[4]

> What we are all agreed upon is that necessity forced us to ascribe corporeal attributes to God and to describe Him by properties belonging to His creatures so as to obtain some conception by which the thought of God's existence should be fixed in the minds of men. The books of the prophets expressed this in corporeal terms which were more easily understood by their contemporaries. Had they limited themselves to abstract terms and concepts appropriate to God, we would have understood neither the terms nor the concepts, and it would have been impossible for us to worship a Being whom we did not know, since the worship of that which is unknown is impossible. The words and ideas used had accordingly to be such as were adapted to the hearer's mental capacity, so that the subject would first sink into his mind in the corporeal sense in which the concrete terms are understood. We will then deal discreetly with him and strive to make him understand that his presentation is only approximate and metaphorical, and that the

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[4]Cf. W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, (transl. by J. A. Baker; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), pp. 210ff. and 349ff.; F. Michaeli, Dieu à l'Image de l'Homme, (Paris: 1949), p. 147; E. Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), pp. 39ff.

reality is too fine, too exalted and remote for us
to comprehend its subtlety. The wise thinker will
endeavour to strip the husk of the terms -- their
materialistic meaning -- from the kernel, and will
raise his conception, step by step, till he will at
last attain to as much knowledge of the truth as his
intellect is capable of apprehending . . . Had
Scripture, when expounding this theme, employed a
terminology appropriate in its exactness but only
intelligible to the profound thinker, the majority
of mankind, because of this intellectual deficiency
and weak perception in things spiritual, would have
been left without a religion. But the word which may
be understood in a material sense will not hurt the
intelligent person, since he recognizes its real
meaning. And it will help the simple, as its use will
result in fixing in his heart and mind the conception
that he has a Creator whom he is bound to serve.[5]

The next major statement, explicitly referring to the Targum

Onkelos, is made by Maimonides who expressed himself quite radically

about this Targum:

> (Onkelos') translation of the Bible . . . in every
> case in which it finds that a thing is ascribed to God
> to which the doctrine of corporeality or some con-
> comitants of this doctrine are attached, it assumes that
> the nomen regens has been omitted and considers that the
> ascription concerns something expressed by a term that
> is the nomen regens of the genitive God and that has
> been omitted.[6]

In a later chapter Maimonides reiterated his opinion just as

explicitly:

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[5]Cf. supra, Chapter I, and see also C. D. Broad, Religion,
Philosophy, and Psychical Research, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul
1953), esp. pp. 159ff.; H. Randall, Philosophy and Religion, (London:
1914), p. 56; C. C. J. Webb, God and Personality, (London: Allen and
Unwin, 1918).

[6]Moreh Nebuchim, part I: ch. 21.

Onkelos the Proselyte was very perfect in the Hebrew and
Syrian languages and directed his effort toward the
abolition of the belief in God's corporeality. Hence
he interprets in accordance with its meaning every
attribute that Scripture predicates of God and that might
lead toward the belief in corporeality. Thus whenever he
encounters one of the terms indicative of some of the
kinds of motion, he makes motion to mean the manifestation
and appearance of a created light, ...[7]

It is clear that Maimonides used Onkelos as an anchor to his own

strict and unrelenting anti-anthropomorphism which he expressed not

only in his philosophical treatises but also in his legal code[8] where

he included in his classification of heretics 'he who says that He is

a body and has form'.[9] It was already shown, above,[10] how Maimonides

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[7]Ibid., beg. of ch. 27; see also ibid., ch. 28.

[8]See Mishne Torah-Yad Hachasaka, (Amsterdam: Athias, 1702),
Book One: Treatise Five (Hilchoth Teshubah), ch. 3: sect. 7; see
also ibid., Treatise One (Hilchoth Yessode Hatorah), ch. 1: sect. 7ff.

[9]Maimonides' great critic Abraham ibn Daud (Rabad), makes an
interesting comment on this ruling. Alluding to the Scriptural sanction
of the use of anthropomorphism, and the intensified use of anthropomorphic
descriptions by some of the rabbis, Rabad polemices: 'why has he called
such a person an heretic? There are many people who adhere to such a
belief on the basis of what they have seen in verses of Scripture and
even more in the words of those aggadoth which corrupt right opinion
about religious matters.' Hasagoth Rabad, on Hilchoth Teshubah 3:7
(glossary notes in Mishne Torah, op. cit.). See on this I. Twersky,
Rabad of Posquieres, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962),
pp. 282ff., and cf. Moreh Nebuchim (op. cit.), part I: ch. 36, and
J. Albo, Sefer Haikkarim, (ed. Husik; Phila.: J.P.S., 1946), part I:
ch. 2. See also L. Jacobs, Principles of the Jewish Faith -- An Analytical
Study, (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1964), pp. 118ff., and Husik, op.cit.
s.v. Maimonides, esp. pp. 260ff.

[10]Supra, pp. 31, and 36ff. See also Moreh Nebuchim, op. cit.,
part I: ch. 46, on Onkelos' literal translation of Exodus 31:18 (cf.
supra, ch. 2 note 17).

dealt with apparent inconsistencies (that is, with anthropomorphic passages in Targum Onkelos) which would seem to contradict his theory.

Maimonides thus not only stressed the anti-anthropomorphic character of Onkelos' translation of the Pentateuch but went a step further to declare that anti-anthropomorphism was a central _Leitmotif_ of this Targum. While the first part of this allegation (that the Targum Onkelos generally de-anthropomorphises) is generally agreed upon, Maimonides was criticised for the latter part of his theory (that Onkelos intentionally and consistently sought to avoid all Biblical anthropomorphisms). Nachmanides, in his commentary on the Pentateuch,[11] castigates Maimonides for his view on several counts, the principal charges being:

1. If Maimonides' theory would be true then Onkelos should have circumlocuted the numerous instances of אמר (to say), דבר (to speak), and קרא (to call), when referring to God, while, in fact, Onkelos translated _all_ these instances literally.

2. If, as Maimonides claims, ראה (to see) is legitimately carried over into Aramaic in its literal sense because in Aramaic, as in Hebrew, this word means also _to comprehend_, or _to apprehend_, and to establish the thing apprehended as it is apprehended, then שמע (to hear),

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[11]In comment on Genesis 46:4; see also his commentary on Exodus 20:16.

which also has a dual connotation (of <u>to hear</u> and <u>to apprehend</u>), could (and should) also have been translated literally without fear of compromising any inti-anthropomorphic motive.

3.   There are quite a number of Biblical anthropomorphisms which were retained in the Targum Onkelos for which Maimonides did not account or offer an appropriate explanation, as for example many instances of   ʒ' (hand),[12] and of |'ɖ' (right hand),[13] and |'ɤ (eye).[14]

Nachmanides concluded his critique with a cryptic note that the principles which guided Onkelos in these matters 'are known by tradition, and their secret (is known) to those familiar with the esoteric science'. Nachmanides left it at that without revealing any of these secrets.

Most of the later literature on this topic pivots around this argument between Maimonides and Nachmanides. Maimonides does not lack in defenders against the severe criticism of Nachmanides. Yom Tobh ibn Abraham (Rytba), a famed scholar from the school of Nachmanides, wrote an intriguing book[15] in which he undertook to defend Maimonides against

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[12]Cf. <u>supra</u>, p. 22

[13]Deuteronomy 33:2; Exodus 15:6 and 12.

[14]Deuteronomy 11:12 (cf. <u>supra</u>, p. 19). -- See also <u>supra</u>, ch. 3 notes 13 and 26, and ch. 5 note 13, for further points in Nachmanides' critique.

[15]Sefer Hazikaron, (included in M. Y. Blau, Kithvey Rytba: New York, 1955); the relevant passages are on pp. 30ff. (sections Vayigash and Yithro).

the criticisms which Nachmanides expressed in his commentary on the Pentateuch against many comments in the Moreh Nebuchim.

In a lengthy discussion of the controversy between Maimonides and Nachmanides, Rytba stated that when Maimonides is found to stress the many circumlocutions he noted in the Targum Onkelos effecting an avoidance of anthropomorphism, it is because (Maimonides) 'set all his efforts to remove anthropomorphism even from the masses (the plain people', and he said that Onkelos did the same.'

Yom Tobh ibn Abraham, even while allaying some of Nachmanides' detailed objections, drew a distinction between potentially misleading, obnoxious anthropomorphisms, and innocent ones, of which he said that the former were circumlocuted and the latter were retained. The implication of drawing such a distinction seems to be that Onkelos was concerned more with the general conception of Biblical anthropomorphism than with the philosophical problem of anthropomorphism.

Isaac Arama[16] sought to reconcile the view of Maimonides with the critique of Nachmanides by stating that Onkelos with all these circumlocutions 'did not base himself on one principle only, but was governed by many different motives: there are instances which serve to avoid anthropomorphism, and there are instances which serve to avoid active involvements (expressions implying a change in God), and there are instances of expressions out of reverence for God, ' etc. Arama's

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[16] Akedath Yitzchak, op. cit., vol. I, section Vavigash-Gate 31, in comment on Genesis 46:4 (pp. 250b ff.).

thesis is that when Onkelos departs from the literal sense of a verse, 'he does so for one of several reasons, and not because of an inclusive, general principle.'

Arama's younger contemporary, Don Isaac Abarbanel, takes a similar position as Arama did. In his elaborate commentary on Maimonides' Moreh Nebuchim,[17] Abarbanel works out a detailed 20-point defense of Maimonides against all the charges of Nachmanides, the principal arguments of which are:

1. The verbs אמר, נקב, and קום, do indeed imply an action, but only an impersonal action, that is, an action which does not per se imply a change in God, and therefore need not be circumlocuted (point 1);

2. שמע is a verb which does imply a change in God, and therefore it was circumlocuted by Onkelos; also, in Aramaic this verb does not have the same dual meaning of hearing and apprehending as it has in Hebrew (points 1 and 2);

3. Onkelos is not governed by one all-inclusive principle of anti-anthropomorphism only but circumlocuted (or avoided circumlocution) for any one of several reasons (point 12).[18]

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[17]Published alongside the text in the cited edition of the Moreh Nebuchim. The relevant passage is his commentary on part 1: ch. 27. (Cf. also the other commentaries on this same chapter).

[18]See also points 13, 14, 17, and 19. — In his argument under point 12, Abarbanel noted that 'hence you will know that the Master (Maimonides) did not say that it was Onkelos' intention to avoid anthropomorphism and nothing else . . . Nachmanides thought that the Master said that all the words of Onkelos were directed towards that end only, and not towards any other end, but that is a wrong opinion, and I showed you the truth, and many of Nachmanides' arguments against the Master will be solved thereby.'

Abarbanel, like Arama, enlarged the philosophical structure provided by Maimonides. Other commentators on the Moreh Nebuchim take generally the same position as that of Arama and Abarbanel, and, historically, matters were left at that without much further discussion of the subject or addition to what was said already, even into modern times.[19]

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[19]The principal modern scholars dealing with the Targum Onkelos, are N. Adler (Nethinah Lager, published in the five-volume Vilna Pentateuch, cited earlier, alongside the Targum Onkelos), A. Berliner (Targum Onkelos -- Herausgegeben und Erlaeutert; Berlin, 1884), Z. Frankel (Vorstudien zur Septuaginta: Leipzig, 1841), and Luzzatto (Philoxenus, op. cit.); see also the extensive bibliographies in Berliner, op. cit., and in O. Eissfeldt, The Old Testament, (New York: Harper & Row, 1965) part V section 119. Two relevant studies, published very recently, are M. McNamara, Targumic Studies, Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XXVIII:1 (1966), pp. 1-19, and idem., Some Early Rabbinic Citations and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch, Rivista Degli Studi Orientali, XLI (1966), pp. 1-15.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Above, in chapter II, it was shown that the Targum Onkelos
is composed of a strictly literal translation of most of the
Pentateuchal text, and three general types of non-literal translations
of the remaining verses of the Pentateuch. The analysis of the Targum
Onkelos in the second part of chapter II and in the chapters following
was concerned with one of these three types of non-literal translations,
namely the type classified as circumlocutions of Biblical anthro-
pomorphisms. That analysis offered conclusive proof that there is an
undubitable tendency in Onkelos to avoid anthropomorphism. This
tendency has generally been recognised and acknowledged since early
times. At the same time, however, it was shown that there is a good
measure of apparent inconsistency in the Targum Onkelos with respect
to the avoidance of anthropomorphisms: some words and phrases which
belong to the class of anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms are re-
tained by Onkelos and carried over into the aramaic in their fully
literal sense, and other words belonging to the same class sometimes
are, and sometimes are not avoided.

This apparent inconsistency, when viewed in the light of the
obvious and explicit care evidenced by Onkelos in his endeavour to

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render as faithful and instructive an Aramaic version of the Pentateuch as possible, raises the question of what were the motives which guided Onkelos in avoiding some anthropomorphisms and retaining others. The exceptions to a rule of strict anti-anthropomorphism are too many to be mere accidents and oversights.

It was shown[1] that this question troubled already the minds of many medieaval scholars, and these scholars suggested several solutions. While Maimonides stressed only the anti-anthropomorphic character of the Targum Onkelos, the scholars that came after him felt compelled to qualify the scope of this anti-anthropomorphic character and to introduce other motives as well. Without speculating on the mystery of the meaning of the 'esoteric motives' suggested by Nachmanides, it is interesting and significant to note that a close look at the various opinions cited reveals that these opinions are by no means mutually exclusive; each of the opinions cited has sufficient intrinsic value and objective substantiation that they may be regarded as complementing one another. There are two notions, however, which need to be considered above the others; they are both intricately related and to great extent implicit in the brief but pithy comments of Rytba:

1. the popular character of Targum Onkelos, that is, its special application to the laity and the general masses; and

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[1]See _supra_, ch. VI.

2.   the distinction between potentially misleading anthropo-
morphisms and innocuous ones.[2]

Some modern scholars emphasized only the first of these two
notions and concluded that there are no intricate philosophical
considerations behind the general avoidance and occasional retention
of anthropomorphisms by Onkelos; rather, they claim, the Targum Onkelos
was simply written for the people, for the masses, to guide and instruct
the unlearned folks, and for this simple and practical reason Onkelos
translated as he did. According to these scholars this 'popular notion'
is the sole motive of Onkelos and for the lack of any other, more exacting
guideline, it would be wrong to seek in Onkelos a precise, and constantly
consistent system.[3]

Though none of these modern scholars even attempted to sub-
stantiate their view, there is much to be said for it on historical
grounds in relation to the introduction and use of the Aramaic language
by the Hebrews. The Aramaic language is first mentioned in relation
to the Hebrews in the second book of Kings[4] in the context of an event

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[2] See supra, p. 59

[3] Luzzatto, op. cit., p. 1: אלא פלום לא דיבר המתרגם אל ההמון הבער ולא אל המשכילים 'the Targum was composed for the ignorant masses, and not for
the knowledgeable'; Fraenkel, op. cit., esp. pp. 174ff. See also
S. Maybaum's short but enlightening essay op. cit., in which he
developed a highly intricate and deeply involved system along the lines
of the thesis of Luzzatto and Fraenkel, but his system is too sophisticated
and involved to be plausible (as already noted by Ginzberg, op. cit.).

[4] Chapter 18: verse 26; also, Isaiah 36:11.

occuring in the eighth century before the common era. At that time
Aramaic was an international Verkehrssprache, the medium of commercial
and diplomatic intercourse in Western Asia. From the passage cited
(II-Kings) it appears that Aramaic was then well understood by the
officials of the royal court at Jerusalem but it was unfamiliar to the
Jerusalem populace. The subsequent exile of the Hebrews in the sixth
century B.C.E. led to an assimilation of the people to the captors and
a gradual replacement of Hebrew by the tongues of the neighbouring
nations.[5] When Ezra reestablished the practises and observances of the
faith and read the teachings of Scripture (the Pentateuch) unto the
people, the reading of the Hebrew text was insufficient and he was
assisted by others 'to cause the people to understand the Torah:'[6]
'And they read in the Book, in the Torah of God, distinctly; and they
gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading.'[7] The sages
of the Talmud interpreted this verse as referring to the Targum,
that is, that each verse was translated for the people into the

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[5]Cf. Nehemiah 13:23f: '. . . and their children spoke half
in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak Hebrew, but according to
the language of each people.'

[6]See Nehemiah, ch. 8.

[7]Ibid., verse 8.

Aramaic vernacular.[8]

Aramaic translations of the Pentateuch were, thus, necessitated by the conditions of ignorance and assimilation prevalent among the masses. On historical and traditional grounds there is, therefore, much to be said in support of the thesis of Luzzatto, Fraenkel, et al., that the Targum Onkelos was composed for the ignorant people. Such a theory can help to explain why certain anthropomorphisms were retained by Onkelos, especially those which seek to imbibe ethico-moral principles by speaking of God's love and compassion towards the good and benevolent, and the Divine wrath and anger towards the evil and wicked;[9] when this Targum is aiming at the ignorant masses, it would have been folly, impractical and ineffective, to present too abstract a conception of

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[8] Babylonian Talmud, tractate Megillah, folio 3a, and tractate Nedarim, folio 37b, and the commentaries ad loc. Cf. also ibid., tractate Sanhedrin, folio 21b: 'The Torah was given again at the time of Ezra, in Assyrian script and in Aramaic tongue.' -- The sages identified the Targum Onkelos with the Targum of Ezra, adding that the Targum of Ezra was forgotten in the course of time (because it was not committed to writing, and probably because efforts were made to reestablish Hebrew as the vernacular), and was then recomposed and reestablished by Onkelos on the authority of the Talmudic sages, (see tract. Megillah, ad loc. cit.). Tradition traces the very origin of the Targum on the Torah to a still earlier period, namely Mosaic times, asserting that it was forgotten afterwards and reestablished by Ezra, (cf. tractate Kidushin, folio 49a, and the commentary of Rashi ad loc.) Cf. also Adler, opus citat., Introduction p. 4, and M. Munk, Esra Hasofer - Ein Lebensbild nach der Ueberlieferung dargestellt, (Frankfurt a. M.: Hermon, 1933), ch. 10, especially the extensive notes ad loc.

[9] Cf. supra, pp. 26f. -- Maybaum's essay is essentially based on this notion, but, as already noted above, his thesis is carried too far into improbable intricacy.

the Divine Being,[10] and a distinction must be drawn, as suggested by Rytba, between obnoxious anthropomorphisms, and onnocuous (and, practically speaking, _useful_) anthropomorphisms.

On the other hand, however, much of the content and the manner of presentation of the Targum Onkelos, precludes the assumption that it was composed for the illiterate only. The often subtle manner in which Onkelos circumlocuted many anthropomorphisms is philosophically reasonable and sound, and will be understood by the knowledgeable as an avoidance of anthropomorphism, but can hardly be expected to be noted and recognised as such by the unschooled masses. To the un-schooled and illiterate, the insertion of subtle buffer-words which Onkelos was shown to use excessively, makes hardly a difference as far as philosophical considerations are concerned; to them 'heard before God' in no way differs from the more direct 'heard by God', and a paraphrase as ⲕⲓ (to become manifest) does not yet spiritualize the the Divine Being.[11]

Adler[12] also attacked the theory of Luzzatto, Fraenkel, et al. , and refuted it on the evidence of Halachic and Aggadic material contained

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[10] Cf. _supra_, pp. 54f.

[11] The only effective circumlocution would be the avoidance of the crassly anthropomorphic somatic attributions, but, as was shown, some somatic attributes are retained by Onkelos.

[12] Opus citat., Introduction, p. 20.

in Targum Onkelos.

It is, thus, clear that no single motive can explain and solve all apparent difficulties and inconsistencies in the Targum Onkelos but only an interplay of several considerations.

Onkelos clearly appears to have been aware and apprehensive of the philosophical problem of anthropomorphism. In a way indicative of such an awareness and apprehension he skilfully avoided anthropomorphisms by philosophically acceptable circumlocutions, including the subtle and ingenious device of using buffer-words. In that sense the Targum Onkelos is anti-anthropomorphic.[13] Onkelos, however, was also aware and apprehensive of the fact that the Pentateuch is the basic

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[13]The anti-anthropomorphism of the Targum Onkelos, which, thus, remains a principal motive of Onkelos, tends to support the views of Fraenkel (op. cit., ad loc.), J. Freudenthal ('Are there Traces of Greek Philosophy in the Septuagint?' Jewish Quarterly Review, II (1890), pp. 205ff.), P. Wendland (Die Hellenistisch-Roemische Kultur in ihren Beziehungen zu Judentum und Christentum, (Tuebingen 1912), Bd. I:2, p. 203), et al., that the anti-anthropomorphic tendency of the Septuaginta is inherent in Judaism itself, as opposed to the view of A. F. Daehne (Geschichtliche Darstellung der juedisch-alexandrinischen Religions-Philosophie, (Halle 1834), part II, pp. 1ff.), Fritsch (opus cit., pp. 63f.), Gfroerer (Kritische Geschichte, II, pp. 1ff.), et al., who claim that it is chiefly due to Greek influence. Though, even so, it is not only possible but also probable, that contemporary Greek thought exerted some influence on the rabbis of old which expresses itself in more carefully philosophical-minded attitudes and considerations than were customary originally (cf. Marmorstein, op. cit.).

code of the Hebrew faith, applying to and to be studied and observed by the laity as much as by the schooled. For a _practical_ reason Onkelos, therefore, retained anthropomorphic vocabulary when he felt that this was necessary for a meaningful understanding of the text and instructions of the Torah.

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