TWO HITHERTO UNKNOWN BIBLE VERSIONS IN GREEK.

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I. Ben La'ana and Ben Tilga Probably Identified.

The observation of a single word in the 'Arukh, the famous and most reliable Rabbinical Dictionary written by Rabbi Nathan of Rome (11th century), helped me, so I hope, to throw some light on a problem in Rabbinical literature which until now has seemed to defy every explanation. This problem is associated with the two names בֵּן הַלְּאָנָה, בֵּן תִּילָגָא = Ben La'ana and Ben Tilga (hereafter signed B.L. and B.T. respectively).

The two names occur, as is known, in several Midrashic passages and in one passage of the Jerusalem Talmud, to the effect that their writings were banned along with those of Ben Sira. The Midrashic text (Qoheleth Rabbah) to Eccles. XII. 12

runs as follows: “And further, by these, my son, be admonished” — “for everyone who brings into his house more than twenty four books, confusion he brings into his house, for example: the Book of Ben Sira and the Book of Ben Tigla,”

“and much study is a weariness of the flesh” — “they are


2 The 24 canonical books are meant.

3 נאומי of the text was read, נאום .

4 "Ben Sira" — the well-known apocryphal book. Yerushalmi has יִשְׁרָאֵל in the plural, and the same with B.L. On the contrary, Babli Sanhedrin loob and all Midrash texts have יִשְׁרָאֵל in the singular.
destined to study, but not destined to weariness of the flesh.”

Hitherto it has been entirely overlooked that the name לולא occurs once elsewhere in our Rabbinical literature. I have in mind the quotation in ‘Arukh s.v. פַּלְקָן (ed. Kohut VI. 358, which is the best and standard edition), showing the following Midrashic text: אלבישר רומא, רב סמי אמיר פרופיר. ותניא עתיקס [פָּרַכָּם], פַּלְקָן, the translation of which will be made evident below.

From the ‘Arukh it is not clear whether the quotation concerns the Threni Rabbah or the Canticum Rabbah passage. It can be assumed that he had both passages in mind which might have had in his text the same sequence, as indeed there is no real difference between them. As by the Greek rendering the Bible word רומא is to be interpreted, Kohut rightly supplements ‘Arukh’s quotation with other Bible words which in the LXX have the same Greek rendering; this task has been more conspicuously executed in the Hexapla work of Field and in the Concordance of Hatch and Redpath.

What meaning can be claimed for the word לולא in the Midrash text as quoted in ‘Arukh? Kohut sets it in brackets and remarks (see his note 7): “Not to be found in Cant. R. and in Threni R. at the beginning, nor is it in ‘Arukh ed. Amsterdam”.

In opposition to this verdict I have remarked in my ‘Arukh Supplement that a series of reliable texts do have it: ‘Arukh ed. Venice 2, ed. Pesaro, ed. Basel, MSS. Elkan Adler 2 and 3

The meaning is not clear, see commentaries, especially that of הרטמן, printed in the Wilna edition. Roughly the meaning is: you may study these books, but not in the way of the canonical books, which alone are destined to lead to “weariness of flesh”.


Hatch and Redpath, Concordance, s.v. ποικίλα. We learn that the same Greek word serves also to render the Hebrew בּוֹשַׁה, בּוֹשַׁה. Ib. also ποικίλλαט. The occurrence of the same Greek word is registered in my Griechische und Lateinische Lehnmörter in Talmud, Midrasch und Targum II, 112 and 475. The word הֵרֵנָה ib. 162 rendered by ποικίλος turns out false, as Imm. Löw remarks. So also ib. 452, פָּרַכָּם does not belong there, a word for which I now show to Juhasin (ed. London, p. 496): פֶּתַי בֹּרָא it means: his hat (or cap).

The mere presence of this word in this passage cannot be an accident or a mistake of copyists. It is so entangled with the threat of the sentence that it cannot be separated from it. To have it crossed out would be a great philological error. By a little adjustment in the Midrash text as quoted in the 'Arukh the true meaning would be easily restored:

By way of this an important discovery is made: a Bible word interpreted by T. appears side by side with that of Akylas! From this we learn that T. was known as the author of a translation of the Bible in Greek, and as the Bible passage quoted is taken from Ezekiel, he must have translated at least as far as this chapter, because it seems unlikely that there would be attributed to him the translation of this single book only.

That the Midrash passage as quoted in the 'Arukh must indeed be divided between two authors, in addition to R. Sisi's saying, deduces from the content itself. The one Biblical word has been interpreted by Sisi¹ with a single word: purple (purplish, pertaining to purple); the same proceeding is to be expected also in respect of the "Targum" Akylas; why should it be that his interpretation is given in two words as the text runs now in our editions?² To see in them only a variant would be a very delusive argument.³ The parallel lemmata in 'Arukh, numbering three, indicate only one word, as is clearly studied by Benjamin Mussaphia, the learned interpreter of 'Arukh's intentions, who indeed glosses only one word. His reading is right, but T. does not appear in his text; it was extant in the original 'Arukh; the usual Midrashic texts and

¹ Correctly to be spelled ירמיה and transcribed Σωσσως Sosius, s. Lehnwörter, ib. 377. That is clearly demanded by the word's ending in double Jod in the Yerushalmi, as shown in Lehnwörter, ib.; cp. also Y. Ma'aseroth 48d. A Σωσσα (genitive form) occurs in Josephus, B.J. IV, 4.2 (§ 235). "Sisi" is, however, 'Arukh's spelling, while our texts have "Simai".

² See, for example, 'Arukh ed. Lemberg, 1870.

³ Jastrow, Dictionary, p. 104, writes (rendering Threni R., beginning) corr. acc. by striking out one of the two words as var. lect. that came into the text. In the main so also Kohut and before him also Mussaphia. The proceeding of Levy (l.c. IV, 57), honouring both loan-words, seems more justified.
their commentators did, however, simplify. In later times it seemed impossible to have a Bible translator named Tigla; so they let his name drop out. This was done in all our texts, even in Threni Rabbah and Cant. R., both having been quoted above, and in Pesiqta di R. Kahana (ed. Buber, p. 84b), where, however, only one Greek word is given,¹ and Tigla’s word has been preserved only in ‘Arukh’s lemma דלילס. The later writers, very little interested in Greek words, inclined, furthermore, to eliminate even such a name as that of Akylas (it is omitted in Yalqut, the big collection of all Midrashim), and it so happens, that where the name Akylas ought to be, now we find שן (= Targum Jonathan) instead,² which is altogether a great puzzle.

As T. is named first, even before Akylas, he seems the earlier, though that is not definite.

II. Doublets in Greek Bible Versions.

Both, T. and Akylas, translate and interpret this single word similarly, almost indeed by the same Greek word, as do also the LXX. This feature of interrelation can indeed be observed amongst our Greek translators, the LXX included,³ as has already been observed by scholars. This lies in the nature of the case, and we have also other examples of it. In his valuable investigation in ὁ Συρός and the Peshitta⁴ Joshua Bloch adduces many such cases, e.g. Ezekiel viii. 16, בולאא which ὁ Συρός renders by κυκλις, while the usual word would be κάγκελλον, but it is evident that the two Greek words are synonymous terms. The use of one of them by this or that author is only a matter of style or taste. So also in our case. Between ποικίλα of the LXX, ποικιλτά of T., and ποικιλτόν of Akylas there is no difference whatever, and the variety shows only that a great fashion of rendering in Greek must needs have existed.

Can it be said that there have existed Bible translations in

¹ This text is accompanied by a very learned and exhaustive note of Solomon Buber, the editor of this Midrash, where the whole Leidensgeschichtte of these Greek glosses is registered.
² In Additamenta quoted from the “short” ‘Arukh (ארוקח קצר).
³ Of course, this is true for Theodotion and Symmachus, too.
⁴ Jewish Studies in Memory of Israel Abrahams, New York, 1927, p. 68.
Greek which remained unknown to us or survived only in feeble traces? That must be admitted. The aforementioned δ Στρόφιος is clearly such an example. Dr. Alexander Sperber, a successful inquirer in the field of Greek Bible translations, asserts that the so-called “recensions” of Lucian and Hesychius are rather to be regarded as independent “translations,” thus indicating that the texts in question do not represent two recensions of one single Greek text (a meaning associated with the word recension), but two entirely different texts.\(^1\) It may have some interest for our own investigation that what is singled out by the same author (ib. p. 82) regarding ναβίμ in Mic. vii. 14, which is rendered in Cyril’s commentary ράβδοι φυλή, that is by two words, should rightly be rendered by one word, “for I suppose that originally Lucian had here φυλή and Hesychius ράβδοι, and Cyril combined both readings”. This is closely analogous to what the present writer asserts: the Greek rendering of ירמיה was contaminated by the rendering of two authors! In our case, however, by two expressions which are closely akin to each other.

Again, Joseph Reider in his “Prolegomena”\(^2\) makes the observation that in such cases “the signatures may be wrong, or the notes may have been attached to the wrong word”. “Then we meet with doublets, one element in which alone can belong to Aquila.” In a note he gives a list “which is fairly complete,” unfortunately our case is not dealt with, as Rabbinics—Græca sunt, non leguntur. “Quite another matter are parallel renderings ascribed to Aquila which go back to two editions of his work; the subject is adequately dealt with by Field in his Prolegomena” (pp. xxiv ff.). In our case the thesis of secunda editio is not needed, as we have seen that the two renderings are to be attributed to two different authors; the case is similar to that of the two renderings by Cyril.

In the category of Bible translators whose works are almost lost to us I place also this T. named in ‘Arukh’s quotation side by side with Akylas. In this quotation he is not named Ben T.,


\(^2\) Prolegomena to a Greek-Hebraic and Hebrew-Greek Index to Aquila, Philadelphia, 1916, p. 12.
as we might have expected, perhaps by reason of his name to
conform to that of Akylas, or by the fault of the copyist, or even
by that of R. Nathan himself, who shortens his texts drastically.
The name "Tigla" is so singular and is nowhere else to be met
with in the vast Rabbinic literature that it cannot be doubted
that it is the name of one and the same person.

Having found, in this way, at least evidence, however faint,
to identify T., it is to be regretted that for Ben La'ana even this
support is missing. But I don't hesitate to claim for B.L. the
same place in Jewish literature, as the two seem to be a sort of
couple and cannot be separated; it must be assumed that the
one source (Talmud Jerusalem) cites, as example, B.L., whereas
the other (Midrash) prefers, also as example and for the same
purpose, to allude to B.T. The view of one scholar that the
two are identical, I cannot share. As to the name T. itself,
reference can be made to the view of the same scholar who
proposes to read מ"שתל האל = שול - snow, which by no means
gives a plausible sense; if a light emendation might be allowed,
I would read שול חנה, known as the name of a daughter of
Zelophhad (Num. xxvi. 33, etc.), the meaning of which may
be a bird (like Zipporah, the wife of Moses); it does not matter
that this would be a feminine name, because this man, for some
reason or other, was rather associated with his mother than with
his father. The word חנה has certainly a feminine character;
it denotes, as an appellative, "wormwood," cp. the phrase "gall
and wormwood," a name which, perhaps, has been purposely
deflected towards the unpleasant Greek writer. This mood of
detraction would account also for the use of חנה, a wild bird.
But it is better not to touch the transmitted form שול "Tigla"
or חנה "Tilga"; it may be that the Rabbis derived it from
the root חנה in Pi'el, to reveal something in the Torah which
was not according to their heart.

1 S. Klein in the Hebrew periodical Our Language, I, 344.
Cp., however, Hareubeni, ib. II, 46. Both scholars have for Ben Sira the ex-
planation חנה - thorn; long years ago (see Jewish Quarterly Review, XI,
1898, pp. 150-158, "Notes on Sirach") I tried to prove that the true meaning is
חנה, prisoner. My view has been duly registered in The Wisdom of Ben
2 See my Sanhedrin-Makkot, Giessen, 1933, p. 269.
But how does it happen that these authors are named in the same breath with Ben Sira? Shall this juxtaposition not rather imply that as with Ben Sira so also T. and L. are to be taken for ethical writers and not for translators? It may be supposed that for the aggadic author who is concerned with Eccl. xii. 12 the couple T. and L. are viewed only as ethical writers, after the fashion of Ben Sira, while to the author who comments upon רְקֵמָה in Ez. xvi. 10, they are known as Bible translators, and they figure by the side of Akylas. Naturally, the one would not exclude the other.

We cannot be certain why they or their work are condemned, as in the case of Ben Sira, whose work, we know, reflects a high moral standing. Regarding T. and L. we are perplexed once more. In their capacity, however, as Bible translators they had to endure the ostracisms of Rabbinic circles on all works of this kind. It is well known that in the Rabbinic schools of those days there was a bias under which every Bible translation was condemned. Even the Aramaic "Targum" of Jonathan ben Uzziel to the Prophets was no exception. And what was said against the LXX is too well known to be repeated. Even such scientific work as Origenes' Hexapla found no mercy in the eyes of the severe Rabbis who never cite it, and it can be conjectured that they and their zeal are responsible for the work being now so mutilated. Even Akylas, the pious proselyte, must needs suffer disguise as "Onkelos" to be tolerated in the synagogue, and it has already been shown by us that in later times there existed a tendency to substitute for his name that of מ, i.e. a genuine Jewish author.

III. The Greek Glosses in Question—Genuine or Spurious?

The preceding considerations do stand or fall, consequent on the Akylas glosses contained in Talmud and Midrash, to which are attached those of B.T. too, being held genuine or spurious. Since 'Azaria de Rossi, who, four hundred years ago, first dealt


2 In his Me'or 'Enaim, ch. 45.
with the matter scientifically, nobody has doubted the genuineness of these glosses, and Jewish scholars duly collected them and transliterated them into proper Greek, and the mere fact that their work resulted in good "biblical" Greek, has been regarded as a proof of the authenticity of these glosses. It was reserved for the hypercriticism of our time to deny and reject this philological work.

Pinkas Churgin (Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, New Haven, 1907) attempted this destructive task, to the benefit—of his hero, Jonathan. In order to do him full justice, in order, too, to enable the reader to judge for himself, I am quoting his opinion in his own words: "The quotation in Yerushalmi Shabbath 6, 4 from Akylas on Is. iii. 20 is not found in the Hexapla. The case of Ez. xvi. 10 (Lam. R. 1, 1) containing a double rendering, may even be a quotation from Jonathan. The LXX might as well be meant, which here, as also in Ex. xxvii. 16, agrees with Akylas, as recorded in the Hexapla, and also disagrees, just as Akylas, with its version in the Midrash. Similarly, the citation from Akylas on Gen. xvii. 1 in Gen. R. 46, 2; in this case also there is no telling which Greek translation was meant, for the LXX contains also such a rendering (comp. Field, Hex. l.c.). The ascription again, to Akylas, of citations from other sources was demonstrated above. This might have been the case with the quotations from Akylas on Dan. v. 5 (Y. Yoma 3, 8 Gemara) and Esth. R. 6. In the former, Akylas is preserved in the LXX only."

On the preceding page (12, n.) Churgin was already keen enough to write a final judgment: . . . "and all assumptions by De Rossi . . . and Krauss . . . in this case deserve little consideration".

The present writer is constrained to meet this bold attack by the following arguments: (1) A thing not found in the Hexapla

1 In the valuable article Bibelübersetzungen, by Eb. Nestle, in Realencyklopädie für protest. Theologie und Kirche (I am using the reprint, Leipzig, 1897), the following two works are duly mentioned (p. 82): M. Friedmann, Onkelos und Akylas, Vienna, 1896—S. Krauss-Budapest (that was previous to my Vienna time), in the Jubilee Volume in honour of M. Steinschneider, Leipzig, 1896. Since all Greek glosses attributed to Akylas in Talmud and Midrash have found place in my Lehnwörter, as mentioned above.
does not cease to exist, as in Field’s *Hexapla* there have been collected remnants in Greek sources only, and later discoveries have augmented considerably the Hex. material as collected by Field (1867 ss.) (2) Soon in his next sentence Churgin is speaking of “double rendering,” and this fact alone, that is the existence of double renderings, destroys his former argument. (3) Everything granted—how can Churgin ascribe Greek quotations to Jonathan, whose “Targum” is entirely Aramaic? (4) That LXX renderings coincide with those of Akylas, or *vice versa*, nobody will deny, and “coincidence” was plainly stated concerning the glosses dealt with above. We found also that Akylas, as indeed LXX and Origenes’ Hex., have existed in a second edition. Slight differences only attest that there was already a fixed schematisation in rendering in Greek, a feature which easily could be demonstrated in the various English versions which are in public use to-day, and as a matter of fact also in the various renderings in other languages. (5) If the citation in Gen. R. 46, 2 is stated there to be from Akylas, as it is, how can Churgin say “there is no telling which Greek translation was meant”? (6) Churgin’s next two arguments have been disposed of by what I said above: quite naturally Akylas sometimes does coincide with LXX.

1 What was collected from the Syriac and other sources, see by Eb. Nestle, *l.c.*