The Nuances of TRGM ("to translate") in the Rabbinic Writings[1]

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Abstract

This paper analyzes examples of the terms rooted in the word "TRGM" in rabbinic writing from the periods of Tannaim and Amoraim and clarifies the changing nuances of TRGM. The analysis of about 350 examples shows changes in the usage of the terms from Tannaitic materials to Amoraic materials, and more changes from Palestinian materials to Babylonian materials among the Amoraic materials. Most of the examples from the Tannaitic period are related to the public reading of the Hebrew Bible at synagogues. As for the Amoraic period, there are a significant number of examples of formulas quoted from Aramaic translations of the Bible, and derivatives of TRGM are found to be used for more common interpretation activities. In the Babylonian materials, the word "TRGM" was used to describe a rabbi's interpretation activity. On the contrary, the Palestinian materials imply a certain kind of scorn for TRGM, which was considered separate from a rabbi's orthodox interpretation activity, expressed by other verbs such as PTḤ ("to open, start") and PTR ("to interpret"). This analysis of TRGM usages provides evidence of a skeptical attitude by the rabbis in Palestine toward TRGM.

Keywords: Aramaic language, targum (the Aramaic translation of the Bible), rabbinic writings, interpretation of the Bible, formality

1. Introduction

1) Position of the targumim in Jewish studies

The word "targum" refers to "translation" in a broad sense and an Aramaic translation of the Hebrew Bible in a more limited sense. It is said that public readings of the Torah were given on Sabbaths in Aramaic, which was current and understandable to those with difficulty in understanding Hebrew after their return from captivity.[2] A targum (hereinafter meaning "an Aramaic translation of the Bible) goes beyond literal translation and is regarded as literature that contains various original commentaries and amplifications; however, its identity has not yet received much attention. The reason for this is the fact that prejudice has been shown toward targum study within conventional Jewish studies. Such prejudice holds that the targum literature is part of the literature of rabbinic Judaism and thus any amplification or commentary found in the targumim is no more than a copy from the concurrent interpretation activity of

rabbinic Judaism typified by Midrash.[3] According to the author's findings, however, various gaps exist between targumim and other rabbinic writings, such as Midrash, and there might be a specific group of people in charge of the targumim itself.

Therefore, this paper comprehensively examines the nuances of the derivatives from the targumic-rooted TRGM found in the rabbinic literature, in order to provide evidence of a sense of distance between the targumim and the rabbinic literature. This kind of examination has not yet been conducted, except for Smelik's analysis of TRGM usages, as no scholar has been aware of the identity of the targum literature or its difference from the rabbinic literature.[4] Furthermore, unlike Smelik's analysis, limited to the two compilations of Talmud, this paper addresses overall literature in the periods of Tannaim and Amoraim, thereby tracing the temporal and regional changes in TRGM usage in rabbinic writings. The examination in this paper will draw attention to the identity of the targumim and will promote studies on the targumim regarding its "Sitz im Leben" (or setting in life), along with its ideology, thought, and features as they pertain to interpretation activity, thereby revealing the diversity of the era of rabbinic Judaism. Additionally, it will incidentally reveal the formality of and suggest a new approach for rabbinic writings.

2) The nuance of the targumim in the writings of Rabbinic Judaism

JT Sanhedrin 2.7.c–d and the corresponding part in GR 70.1 describe the interpretation of the Bible made by a person called Yosi Maon at a synagogue. This episode starts as follows:

> Yosi Maon did *tirgam* at a synagogue in Tiberias[5] as follows:
> "'Listen, priests.' (Hose 5.1)
> In the future, the Holy One blessed be; He will make the priests stand trial and tell them,
> 'Why didn't you break your back on the Torah? You enjoy the twenty four benefits[6] from my people, don't you? [Why didn't you learn the Torah even though you have no hardships in life?]'
> They answer, 'They [the Israeli people] give us nothing.'
> 'Listen, Israel.' (idem)
> 'Why didn't you give the priests the twenty four benefits?'
> They answer, 'The Patriarch family took them all.'
> So, 'Listen, the king's family, you will face justice.'" (idem)

The above interpretation means that the Lord shifts his criticism from the priests in the phrase of Hosea 5.1 to the ordinary citizens of Israel and the Patriarch family or the king. Ultimately, it assumes a future trial where the Lord declares that the Patriarch family will face justice. This is clearly a blistering criticism of the Patriarch family in power.[7] Naturally, it

infuriated Rabbi Jehudah Neshi'a[8], the Patriarch at the time who called upon Yosi Maon immediately. A prominent rabbi of the time then intervened to ask for Rabbi Jehudah Neshi'a forgiveness, but Yosi Maon continued his interpretation only to fuel the fire and disgust the rabbi.

Levine and other scholars in the area of historical study of the era of Rabbinic Judaism have often referred to this episode as evidence of the rabbi being against the Patriarch's raising of taxes and objections from the supporting group in favor of the rabbis.[9] However, historical studies on the event in this episode have never focused on a verbal form of TRGM used for Yosi Maon's interpretation, and the term has been considered synonymous with DRŠ ("to interpret").[10] This paper addresses the reason why a verbal form of TRGM is used in that context by focusing on the way an event is conveyed. A comprehensive analysis of the usage of TRGM used in its verbal form in the rabbinic writings will show the nuance of TRGM and consequently reveal the rabbi's attitude toward Yosi Maon's behavior.

Certainly, the original meaning of TRGM, "translation," is a kind of interpretation activity. In addition to that episode, a verbal form of TRGM is also found in other two cases that Levine cited as evidence that people "who were not rabbis but close to rabbis" could preach to the audience.[11] Levine does not show the rationale for his statement that they "were not rabbis but close to rabbis," and he does not mention that the verb TRGM is found commonly in these examples. These examples also show that the interpretation activity indicated by the verb TRGM caused some kind of commotion. Then, when the verb TRGM is used for biblical interpretation activity in the rabbinic writings, it might imply some nuance.

Therefore, this paper will analyze the derivatives from TRGM used in the rabbinic writings and clarify the nuance the rabbis put into the term TRGM. At the same time, it will show that the derivatives from TRGM, which have been regarded uniformly so far, appear in different ways depending on time and region, and eventually it will reveal the changes in TRGM and the targmim as Aramaic translations of the Bible.

Regarding TRGM analyses, Smelik has already analyzed examples from the Jerusalem Talmud (JT) and the Babylonian Talmud (BT) and discussed the difference in views of the targumim between the two talmudim.[12] On the other hand, this paper collects examples from a wider extent in time and content to deal with the rabbinic writings typical of the Tannaitic and Amoraic periods, namely, Mishnah, Tosefta, Midrash Halakhah, Midrash Aggadah, Jerusalem Talmud, and Babylonian Talmud. Moreover, this paper makes a comparison between TRGM and other verbs corresponding to "to interpret." As a result, it will show changes in the nuances of TRGM shown by the rabbis from a broader and multilateral viewpoint. Additionally, it will clarify the features of other verbs relating to "interpretation."

Example analysis

1) Classification

   About 350 examples of derivatives from TRGM have been collected from the above writings and classified into the following five groups:

I．TRGM associated with the Bible

   A．Examples regarding public targum readings (targumic institutions) along with public Torah readings[13]

   Example: M Megilla 4.6

קטן קורא בתורה ומתרגם.

   qātān qôr'ē batôra um^e targm.
   Juveniles can read the Torah and do TRGM.

   B．Examples of formulas quoted from translations of the Bible[14]

   Example: JT Megilla 3.8, 41a

עלמות תירגום עקילס אתא נסייא עולם שאין בו מות.

   'almôt, tîrgûm 'aqîlas 'at'a nasiya' 'ôlam š^e'eyin bô môt.
   Aquila translated the word "almot" as "Atanasia," which means "a world without death."

   C．TRGM referring to the concept of the translation of the Bible[15]

   Example: GR 36.8

ויקראו בספר תורת האלהים [מפרש] (נחמ׳ ח, ח) זה מקרא, מפורש זה תרגום⋯

   wayyiqr^e'û basefer tôrat ha^klohîm (Nahom 8.8), ze miqr'a, mepôraš ze targûm…
   "They read [and interpreted] the books of the laws of the Lord.[16]" (Nehemiah 8.8)
   This [to read] means the Bible. "To interpret" means "translation."

II．TRGM referring to general interpretation and commentary[17]

   Example: BT Sukkah 19a

תרגמה רבא אליבא דאביי.

   tirgēma Raba' 'aliba d^e abayye.
   Rav gave commentary based on Abayye.

III. TRGM as a mediating post between rabbis/disciples and audiences[18]

At the places where rabbis—usually distinguished ones—studied and preached the Torah, there seemed to be mediators who loudly conveyed the preach. It is said that a rabbi would whisper his preach to a mediator standing nearby and the mediator would loudly convey it to the audience. This post is usually called "Amora," but is also called "(Me)turgeman" in other cases.

Example: BT Berachot 27b

היה רבן גמליאל יושב ודורש, ורבי יהושע עומד על רגליו, עד שרננו כל העם ואמרו לחוצפית

התורגמן עמוד, ועמד...

Hāyā rabān Gamlî'ēl yôšēb wᵉdôreš wᵉràbî Yᵉhôšuʻa ʻômēd ʻal raglāiw ʻad šᵉrinnû kol hāʻām wᵉʼamarû lᵉḤûṣpit hatûrgᵉmān ᵃmôd wᵉʼāmad

Raban Gamliel was seated and preaching, and Rabi Yhosua was standing at his foot. Until all the people shouted and told Turgeman Huzpit to stand up. Then, he stood up...

IV. TRGM as an interpreter in a context (Sanhedrin, in particular) different from Torah readings[19]

Example: M Makkot 1.9

עﬥ פי שנים עדים, שﬥא תהא סנהדרין שומעת מפי התרגמן.

ʻal pi šᵉnayim ʻedîm, šᵉ'lo tehē' sanhedrin šômaʻat mipî haturgᵉmān

"From two witnesses' mouths," in order to prevent Sanhedrin from being heard from Tugerman (interpreter).

V. Other usages

Example: M Yadaim 4.5

תרגום שבעזרא ושבדניאל, מטמא את הידים

targûm šᵉbe 'ezra' wᵉšᵉbedānîel, metāmē' 'et hayādaim.

Ezra soils his hands on the part of Daniel written in Aramaic.

The above classification is only for expediency, and in fact, some examples are hard to classify. For instance, it is hard to determine in which category the (Me)turgeman (mediator) should be placed. However, the above expedient classification has an important implication—the usages of those terms are greatly biased. Such a bias becomes apparent when focusing on the times and regions of the writings.

The following table shows a distribution of the numbers of examples from various rabbinic writings, divided into the above-defined groups.

2) Statistical result

Table 1: TRGM derivative distribution table[20]

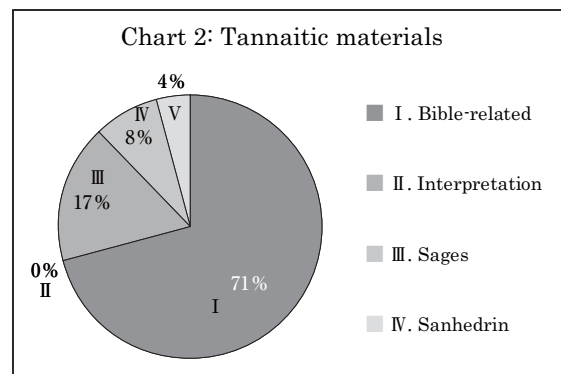| Material		Number	I Bible-related			II Interpre-tation	III Sages	IV Sanhedrin	V Other
			A	B	C				
Tannaim	Mishnah	7	4	0	1	0	0	1	1
	Tosefta	11	9	0	1	0	1	0	0
	Midrash Halakhah	6	0	0	2	0	3	1	0
Amoraim	JT	39	15	7[21]	4	7	5	1	0
	Midrash Aggadah	69	4	40[22]	2	7	10	6	0
	BT	229	17	30[23]	4	150	14	5	0

▨ Palestinian materials

3. Discussion

The above example analysis shows two major differences in the frequency of each usage of TRGM derivatives: (1) a chronogical difference between the materials from the Tannaitic period and those from the Amoraic period; and (2) a regional difference after the Amoraic period between the Palestinian materials and the Babylonian materials. These two differences are described in detail below.

1) Usages during the Tannaitic period

The materials of Mishnah, Tosefta, and Midrash Halakhaha in the Tannaitic period are basically considered to be of Palestinian origin. As shown in Chart 2, more than 70% of the derivatives from TRGM in the Tannaitic materials are used in relation to the Bible. More specifically, they might be technical terms used in the context of public readings of the translated Bible in Aramaic after public readings of the Bible.

It is particularly worthy to note that there are few examples of the usage in category II with a general meaning of "to explain" and "to interpret." In the Midrash analysis mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the scholar

Chart 2: Tannaitic materials

- ■ I. Bible-related
- ■ II. Interpretation
- ■ III. Sages
- ■ IV. Sanhedrin

4%
IV V
8%
III
17%
0%
II
71%
I

interprets TRGM to mean "to interpret or preach" as a self-evident truth. With regard to the rabbinic writings, however, it should be noted that the usage of TRGM in that meaning is never a self-evident truth and that the first usage is found in the later writings.

Even though the derivatives from TRGM appear in relation to the Bible, there is no example of usage as an introductory phrase for quoting specific Aramaic translations (IB). The first case of such a usage is found in the Amoraic materials. This implies that, in the Tannaitic period, there might be no custom of quoting specific translations of the Bible in Aramaic or in any other languages, or there might be no translations of the Bible, regardless of language, to be quoted.

2) Usages during the Amoraic period

The materials from the Amoraic period, namely, Midrash Aggadah and two kinds of Talmuds, contain every usage classified above. Specific translations of the Bible began to be quoted, and usage in general meaning "to interpret" became common. When these materials are classified into Midrash Aggadah and Jerusalem Talmud of Palestinian origin and Babylonian Talmud of Babylonian origin, the differences in the usages and features becomes apparent.

a. Preferred translation language: Aramaic or Greek?

The remarkable point regarding Palestinian Amoraic materials is that Greek translations or the so-called Aquila's version tend to be preferred to Aramaic translations for the usage IB.[24] In the formula "מתרגמינן" *metargemînan* (*"we translate like…"*), Greek translations are quoted more often than Aramaic translations. In the cases where Aramaic translations are quoted, most of them accord with Targum Onkelos, which is a somewhat literal translation, or with the Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, and there are few quotations from the Targum Yerushalmi, which contains a number of additions and amplifications.[25] This tendency is especially prominent in the Palestinian Talmud, and six out of the seven quotations are Greek translations.[26] In Midrash Aggadah, 14 out of the 40 quotations are Greek translations[27]; 18 quotations accord with the Targum Onkelos[28]; and three quotations accord with the Tàrgum Jonathan to the Prophets.[29]
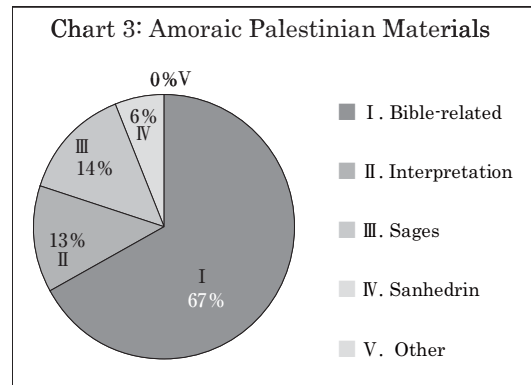
In the Babylonian Talmud, on the other hand, translations of the Bible are mainly made into Aramaic, and 24 examples out of 30 examples accord with the Targum Onkelos or the Targum Jonahtan to the Prophets, if they are prophecies. Most of the quotations are related to Rav Yoseph. There are no examples of quotations from Greek translations or from the Targum Yerushalmi.

The above findings indicate different translation languages preferred in Palestine and Babylonia. Palestine had a tendency to prefer Greek. Meanwhile, in Babylonia, on the other hand, the Aramoic tongue was overwhelmingly established as a translation language. The main translations are the Targum Onkelos and the Targum Jonahtan to the Prophets, in

which a certain school (Rav Yoseph) might be involved. In both regions, there are no quotations from the Targum Yerushalmi. There is only one exception, and it is from a Palestinian material that negatively evaluates it.[30]

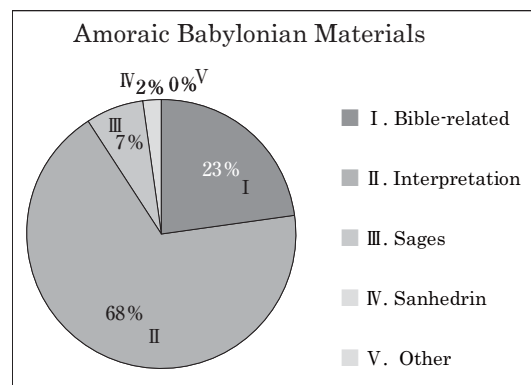b. "To interpret" in the general sense

Another major difference is the frequency in which usage II appears. As shown in Chart 3, usage II appears in Palestinian Amoraic materials less frequently. Additionally, section II in Table 1 shows that usage II is specific to the Babylonian Talmud. Moreover, Chart 4 shows that usage II in the Babylonian Talmud is the most predominant among various derivatives from TRGM.

Chart 3: Amoraic Palestinian Materials

- Ⅰ. Bible-related
- Ⅱ. Interpretation
- Ⅲ. Sages
- Ⅳ. Sanhedrin
- Ⅴ. Other

0% Ⅴ
6% Ⅳ
Ⅲ 14%
13% Ⅱ
Ⅰ 67%

Usage in Babylonian is characterized by the fact that objects of interpretation are not limited to the Bible. Rather, they are used as a verb for interpretation in general legal debates. Typical examples consist of the following formulas: 'הכא תרגימו...במערבא אמרי (hak'a tirgîmû... bemaʿᵃrābāʾ ʾamarin) ("*We do TRGM as ... here [in Babylonia], but they say ... there [in Palestine]*); and הכא תרגימו (haka' tirgîmû) ("*Here [in Babylonia] we do TRGM as ...*").[31] These formulas are found in situations where rabbis in Babylonia and rabbis in Palestine were in disagreement. In such a formula, a verb form of TRGM is used for interpretation in Babylonia, while AMR is used for interpretation in Palestine. This means that the rabbis in Babylonia might have a similar feeling for TRGM as the almost-neutral AMR ("say"). Moreover, considering that they described their interpretation activity using TRGM instead of AMR, it is thought that they viewed TRGM positively. In other words, TRGM activity was probably accepted widely.

In contrast, the usage of TRGM in the meaning "to interpret" in Palestine seems to have the following features.

First, in the Amoraic Palestinian materials, namely, Midrash Aggadah and JT, derivatives from TRGM are often mentioned in relation to the Bible, and there are few examples of the usage in the general meaning of "interpretation," which is not directly aimed at biblical phrases—

Amoraic Babylonian Materials

- Ⅰ. Bible-related
- Ⅱ. Interpretation
- Ⅲ. Sages
- Ⅳ. Sanhedrin
- Ⅴ. Other

Ⅳ 2% 0% Ⅴ
Ⅲ 7%
23% Ⅰ
68% Ⅱ

like in the BT described above. Second, the number of examples is very small. Out of the 108 examples from the Palestinian Amoraic materials, there are only 14 examples of this usage. Furthermore, there remain only seven examples if the examples from parallel articles

are excluded.

The following section will detail the usage in the general meaning of "to interpret" in the Palestinian Amoraic materials with reference to the example analysis of other verbs equivalent to "to interpret."

4. "Interpretation" in the Palestinian Amoraic materials

1) Features of TRGM in usage II

The above-mentioned seven examples can be further divided into the following three groups.

Usage II in the Palestinian Amoraic materials is limited in terms of not only quantity but in the form and names of the rabbis mentioned. The rabbis mentioned in the following group (a) only include Rabbi Haggai and Rav or Rabbi Jacob bar Abina, and the agent used in group (b) is Yosi Maon and Jacob Ish Kefar Neboraya only.

Here are the examples:

a. Rabbi X does TRGM in front of Rabbi Y.

Example: Esther R 3.12

זתר תרגם ר' יעקב בר אבינא קדם ר' יצחק זנות ראה של' אותו רשע

zetar tirgēm rabi Yaʿaqob bar ʾabîna' qodam rabi Yiṣḥaq zᵉnût rᵉ'e šᵉl 'ôtô rāšāʿa

"Zetar [name of a Persian eunuch]," (Esther 1.10) Rabbi Jacob bar Abina did TRGM in front of Rabbi Yishaq. It means "Look [rᵉ'e] at the evil man's immorality [**zenut**]."[32]

Example: JT Sukkah 5.3, 55c

מהו מפקיעין תירגם רבי חגיי קומי רבי יוסה מפשילים

mahû mapᵉqîʿîn, tirgēm rabi Hagayi qumi rabi Yose mapᵉšilîm.

What does "break"[33] mean? Rabbi Haggai did TRGM in front of Rabbi Yose. It means to deceive them.

b. A person without a rabbi's title does TRGM in public places.

Example: GR 80.1 = JT Sanhedrin, 2.7, 20c-d.

יוסי מעוניה תרגם בכנשיתא דמעונאי

Yosi mᵉʿônaya tîrgēm bᵉknisîta' dᵉmeʿône'i

Yosi Maon did TRGM at a synagogue in Maon.

Example: JT Bikkurim 3.3.11d＝Midrash Samuel 7

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תירגם יעקב איש כפר נבוריא הוי אמור לעץ הקיצה
</div>

tîrgēm Yaᶜᵃqob ʾîš kᵉpar nᵉbôrayya hôy ʾōmēr laᶜeẓ hāqyṣā (Habakkuk 2.19)

Jacob Ish Kefar Neboraya (Jacob in the village of Neboraya) did TRGM on the following biblical phrase.[34] "*It is a disaster. Say to the trees, 'Wake up.'" (Habakkuk 2.19)*

c. Exception

LR 9.5

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אוילים יליץ אשם (משלי יד, ט). אמר ר' יודן הטפש הזה מתרגם חובתו בפיו ואומר לא חטאת אני
חייב ולא אשם אני חייב.
</div>

ʾᵉwilîm yalis ʾāsām āmar rabi Yûdān, hatipēš haze mᵉtargēm hôbatô bᵉpiw
wᵉʾômēr, lʾo hatāʾt ʾᵃnî hayyāb, wᵉlʾo ʾāšām ʾᵃnî hayyāb.
"*The ignorant blame each other for their irreverence." (Proverb 14.9) Rabbi Yudan said, "This ignorant person does TRGM on his own sin for himself and says, 'I do not have to offer anything for atonement nor anything for compensation.'"*

It is worth noting that in the Palestinian materials, most examples (three out of four) in the general meaning of "to interpret" are related to biblical phrases in the Hebrew Bible. Most examples of this usage of TRGM in the Babylonian materials are found in debates on Halakhah, and they do not refer to any biblical phrases of the Bible. On the contrary, the Palestinian materials imply that TRGM is always associated with the Bible.

The above-stated category I seems to imply the historical situation of rabbi education, where Amoraim as a walking Mishnah stood in front of sages and quoted Mishnayot. Regarding debates on Halakhah, it is thought that TRGM was used only to describe the debates conducted under the control of orthodox rabbis.

The usage of TRGM in relation to the interpretation of the Bible is found in situations at synagogues. As some scholars have already interpreted these examples, the usage has a meaning close to DRŠ for public preaching. Then, why were the verb forms of TRGM used in some cases of preaching at public places, even though the number of such cases was small? Why was TRGM chosen for such situations? Is it because it has some special nuance? It should be noted that in the cases at synagogues, the agent of TRGM is a person without a rabbi title. Philological studies on rabbinic Judaism have a general understanding that neither the title of a rabbi nor a rabbi's name is significant.[35] However, is that the truth?

Now, the following is a comparison between the usage of DRŠ, PTḤ, and PTR with that of TRGM, which were all words used at the beginning of a preaching session or during interpretation at public places. In the comparison, a special emphasis is placed on just who is the agent of each verb and what the object of the action is.

2) DRŠ, PTḤ, PTR, and agents

Here, an example analysis is made as to the verbs DRŠ, PTḤ, and PTR, which were often heard at preaching sessions or during interpretations that included biblical phrases. All the examples collected for this paper take the male third-person singular imperfect form, in order to match the examples of Yosi Maon. The main points to consider are whether the verbs are followed by any biblical phrases and whether the agents of the verbs have the title "rabbi."

a. DRŠ

DRŠ is the root of Midrash and is a verb meaning "to interpret" or "to preach" in the most common sense. First, 177 verb examples of this verb were checked for the presence of an agent with the title "rabbi." 144 examples out of the 177 examples (83.2%) have an agent titled rabbi, but it is hard to conclude that those verbs always take an agent titled such. However, the DRŠ examples indicate certain forms—the verb DRS is directly connected with a summary of preaching or interpretation, instead of a biblical phrase. Here are some typical cases.

Example: GR. 1. 10

דרש ר׳ יהודה בן פזי במעשה בראשית כהדה דבר קפרא.

dārāš rabi Yᵉhûdā ben Pāzi bᵉmaᵃśē bᵉrēʾsît kᵉhādā dᵉbar Qapārāʾ
Rabbi Yᵉhuda ben Pazi did DRŠ as to the Works of the Creation in accordance with that [interpretation] by bar Qapara.

Immediately after DRŠ comes a type of direction word for interpretation or preaching. The direction word in the above example is a word summarizing the interpretation "maʿase beresit" (the Works of the Creation). Therefore, the form DRŠ does not apply to the examples of Yosi Maon, where the verbs are followed by biblical phrases, as described at the beginning of this paper. As to the presence of an agent titled as a rabbi, 144 examples out of the 177 examples (83.2%) have such an agent, and the percentage is smaller than the percentages for the other two verbs.

b. PTḤ

Actually, Yosi Maon's behaviors are closer to PTḤ than DRŠ. PTḤ primarily means "to start," and it is a formula for starting Petichta or it's an interpretation method often found in the Midrash Aggadah—the method of beginning with a quotation from the Books of the Prophets or various texts and eventually leading to the verse that is being read.[36] Our examination shows that the verb PTḤ is followed by biblical phrases in 221 examples (83.9%) out of the 265 examples of PTḤ in the meaning "to start interpretation" in all of the rabbinic writings. In this respect, Yosi Maon's act corresponding to the verb TRGM is close to

PTḤ.

Then, we analyzed the examples of PTH in the Amoraic Palestinian materials to find what agent is used for PTH. The result shows that agents titled rabbi are used in 227 examples (93.6%) out of the 235 examples.[37]

Example: LR. 20.1

אחרי מות שני בני אהרן (ויקרא טז, א) ר' שמעון בר אביי <u>פתח</u> הכל כאשר לכל מקרה אחד לצדיק ולרשע (קהלת ט, ב), צדיק זה נח, ונח איש צדיק (בראשית ו, ט).

’aḥᵃrey môt šᵉnēy bᵉnēy ’aḥᵃron (Lev.16.1), rabi Šim‘ôn bar ’abayye pātaḥ hakol ka’ ᵃšel lakol miqre ’aḥād laṣadîq wᵉlārāšā‘(Qohelet 9.2), ṣadîq ze Nôaḥ…

"After Aron's two sons died," (Leviticus 16.1) Rabbi Simeon began his story with the text as follows, "The same thing happens to a righteous person and an evil person." (Kohelet 9.2) "To a righteous person" means Noah. "Noah was a righteous person." (G 6.9)

This example indicates that the verb PTH was considered to refer to acts permitted for agents with the title "rabbi" in most cases.

c. PTR

Next, we made a similar analysis as to PTR ("to clarify"), which is another verb closely related to interpretation activity. Smelik also points to PTR as an alternative verb for TRGM.[38] The method called Patal Qriar, in particular, often takes the form where the verb is followed by a biblical phrase.

Example: JT Sotah 1. 5, 17a

כתיב אם יחטא איש לאיש וגומ' רבי חייה בר בא ורבי יהושע בן לוי רבי חייה בר בא פתר קרייה בבועל ורבי יהושע בן לוי פתר קרייה באשה.

kᵉtîb ’im yᵉheṭā’ ’îs lᵉ’îs wᵉgômer (I.Sam. 2.25), rabi Hiyya bar Ba‘a wᵉrabi Yehôs‘a ben Levî, rabi Hiyya bar Ba’ patr qᵉrîya bᵉbô‘el rabi Yehôs‘a ben Levi patr qᵉriya bᵉ’isa.

It says, "Even if one commits a crime against another one," (I. Sam. 2.25). They are Rabbi Hiyya bar Baa and Rabbi Joshua ben Levi. Rabbi Hiyya bar Baa explained this phrase as a lover. Rabbi Joshua ben Levi explained this phrase as a wife.

According to our examination, the usage of PTR in the meaning "interpretation of the Bible" or "expounding" is limited to the Jerusalem Talmud and Midrash Aggadah.[39] Additionally, we found that PTR is used with agents with the title "rabbi" in all the 134 examples of "patar qᵉriya" in Midrash Aggadah and Jerusalem Talmud, with only one exception. This indicates that it exclusively refers to an act done by an agent with the title "rabbi."

Although our analysis of the usages of DRŠ, PTḤ, and PTR is limited to the male third-

person singular imperfect form, it shows significant implications as follows.

First, the rabbinic writings are formalized documents. It is evident that technical terms are selected according to the time, region, and context. The usage of PTḤ and PTR to describe the interpretation of the scripture is only limited to the Palestinian Amoraic materials. Particularly, the form "*patar qryiah"* is specialized in Midrash. Second, our analysis shows that different verbs are selectively used within the same document. DRŠ, PTḤ, and PTR are used in their respective manners. While DRŠ has no limitation in its agents, PTḤ and PTR are generally used with agents with the title "rabbi."[40] It is thought that this method was established during the period when the appellation of a rabbi was established. The rabbinic writings are considered to have been compiled over a very long time, and thus, it seems impossible to divide those books into several periods. This paper's analysis of the interpretation-related verbs and their correlation with the title "rabbi" will indicate a possible division of multilayered periods of tradition by methods and forms of interpretation.

My observation described above suggests that PTḤ and PTR in the Palestinian Amoraic materials were regarded as the verbs permitted only for use by sages with the title "rabbi." In other words, it indicates that these acts could be performed only by sages called "rabbi." On the other hand, verbs other than PTḤ and PTR would have been used to describe the interpretation activity done by those without the title "rabbi" based on biblical phrases. I guess that TRGM is one of those other verbs, and it is my guess that TRGM used for describing the act of interpreting the sacred scripture may have had the nuance that the act was performed by persons other than orthodox rabbis. In other words, the term may have had a nuance of unofficial interpretation activity.

In fact, as Smelik points out, Meturgeman's act was negatively compared with Darshanim's orthodox act of interpreting the Bible, twice in the Kohelet Rabbah.[41] It is true that Yosi Maon's interpretation in the Genesis Rabbah 80.1 and Yacob Ish Kfer Neborayya's interpretation in JT Bikkurim 3. 3.11b and its parallel article in Midrash Samuel 17 are both extremely radical and critical[42]. The successors of these articles may have used the verb TRGM for their act of interpretation in order to make it known that the interpretation was not orthodox but rather extreme and radical.

Therefore, it is stipulated that in such a situation where a person called a rabbi performed the TRGM activity, they needed to do it in front of another rabbi, as described in the Esther Rabbah 3.12 and JT Sukkah 5.5.

For this reason, in the Palestinian Amoraic writings, interpretation and preaching activity by rabbis with the title "rabbi" may have been distinguished from similar activity by those without such a title. TRGM may have been one of the verbs for interpretation activity by the latter kind of people. In other words, the verb TRGM has a nuance that implies an unorthodox act of interpretation. In the Palestinian Amoraic materials, the term TRGM seems to have a negative nuance for the rabbis when it is used in the general meaning of "interpretation"

beyond the translation of the Bible. That nuance can be found in the Leviticus Rabbah 9.5, cited above in 4. 1) c as an exception : the agent of the verb TRGM is a "fool"! It seems that the verb TRGM has an implication that the agent mouths a speech with no definite thought.

5. Conclusion: Nuances of TRGM

We have classified various nuances of derivatives from the root TRGM by time—the Tannaitic period and the Amoraic period—and by region—Palestine and Babylonia—to find that they are not necessarily distributed with uniformity—there is significant difference in usage by time and region.

During the Amoraic period, there was a strong link between TRGM and the targum institution, where an Aramaic translation of the Bible was read aloud accompanying the Bible reading. In the Amoraic period, on the contrary, it came to be used as formulas for quoting from Aramaic translations of the Bible. Additionally, TRGM became more diverse in its nuances. Among such various nuances, however, the usage of TRGM in the general meaning of "to interpret" is almost exclusive to the Babylonian Talmud, where the usage in that meaning is the most common usage of TRGM. On the contrary, in the Palestinian Amoraic materials, TRGM rarely refers to interpretation activity in the general sense. There exist very few examples of that usage, and in those cases, it seems that the verb may have been used to convey the negative nuance that the act is not performed by any orthodox rabbi.

The insight gained from this observation concerns the degrees of acceptance and prevalence of the targum institution and Aramaic translations during the two periods in the two regions. During the Tannaitic period, the targum institution was carried out, but no Aramaic translations took hold. Later in the Amoraic period, the Aramaic translation of the Bible probably took hold, and accordingly, it may have become common to quote the Aramaic translation to interpret the Bible. In Babylonia, TRGM took on a wider meaning and came to be recognized as a verb for expressing the interpretation activities of rabbis. In Palestine, on the other hand, although it became common to quote the translated Bible, Aquila's translation rather than the Aramaic translation was used, and the use of TRGM as "to interpret" in the broad sense had the negative implication that the interpretation is made by a person who is not a rabbi—in contrast to other "to interpret" verbs.

The transition of the nuances of TRGM means that the targumim in Palestine during the Amoraic period were not necessarily well received by the rabbis. In contrast to Babylonia, where Onkelos took hold, Palestine may have been creating an Aramaic translation of the Bible called Targum Yerushalmi, which was freer and which sometimes departed from the original text of the Bible or rabbis' teachings. I guess that the negative nuance of TRGM in the Palestinian Amoraic period indicates rabbi wariness over the variety of targumim uses.

In fact, as Shinan points out, the rabbis did not necessarily take a favorable attitude toward the targum institution. No discourse praising targumim has been found, and the basic principle regarding the targum institution was prohibition and containment.[43] Moreover, wariness over the Aramaic language can be often found.[44] More than a few cases have been found where the rabbis displayed contemptuous attitudes toward the teachers (Sofer) who may have been in charge of the targum institution.[45] The descriptions on the targum institution and the attitudes toward the translated Bible found in the rabbinic writings are summed up such that the rabbis did not completely affirm the targumim, that there existed some chasm and tension between the rabbis' world and the world of the targumim, and that there existed an aversion to the Targum Yerushalmi, in particular. The observation in this paper can provide evidence of this speculation. Assuming that there existed a chasm between the targumim and the rabbinic literature, it will be necessary to reconsider the hypothesis in conventional Judaism that the targum literature is merely a copy of the rabbinic writings and to search for the targum literature's own identity.

NOTES

1) This paper uses the following abbreviations: Ms for Mishnah;T for Tosefta; BT for Babylonian Talmud; JT for Jerusalem Talmud; GR for Genesis Rabbah; ExR for Exodus Rabbah; LR for Leviticus Rabbah; NR for Numbers Rabbah; CR for Canticles Rabbah; LaR for Lamentations Rabbah; QohR for Qohelet Rabbah; and PsM for Psalms Midrash. "TRGM" in capital letters refers to the root TRGM. I translated the quoted texts in this paper and added some supplementary descriptions in brackets.

2) For the historical situation of the targum institution, see D. York, "The Targum in the Synagogue and in the School", *JSJ* 10, 1979, pp. 74–86, and R. Kasher, "The Aramaic Targumim and their Sitz im Leben", *WCJS* 9, Panel Sessions: Bible Studies and Ancient Near East, 1988, pp. 75–85. However, because of the situation stated in this paper, research has not figured out yet what group took charge of the targumim or what ideology the group had. In the current situation, no progress has been made since York's argument.

3) For an overview of the historical studies on the targumim, issues with studies on the targumim in Jewish studies, and the identity of the targumim, see the author's article, "Targum and Rabbinic Literature," in *What is Religious History?*, eds. Ichikawa et al. Lithon, 2009, pp. 177–208.

4) W. F. L. Smelik, "Language, Locus, and Translation between the Talmudim", *JAB* 3, 2001, pp. 199–224.

5) It is described as Maon in GR 70.1. Maon is said to be a town in the suburbs of Tiberias.

6) Various privileges granted to the priest class, such as Terumah (a portion of harvested farm products served for the priest class)

7) Interestingly, in rabbinic writings, there are many discourses implying internal criticism over Patriarch.

8) A Partriarch in the second or third century

9) For a brief history of the studies of this episode, see the following writings: M. D. Herr, Synagogues and Theatres (Sermons and Satiric Plays), eds., S. Elizur et.al, *Knesset Ezra; Literature and Life in the Synagogue, Studied presented to Ezra Fleischer,* Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, Jerusalem, 1994, pp.105–19 (Hebrew), p.107, n.13 in particular; I. L. Levine, "The Sages and the Synagogue in Late Antiquity: the Evidence of the Galilee," in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. I. Levine, New York, 1992, pp.201–22, p. 210 in particular. As to Neshia's tax increase policy behind this story, see idem, "The Jewish Patriarch (Nasi) in Third Century Palestine", in *ANRW*, II, 19/2, 1979, pp. 649–88, p. 673 in particular; idem, "The Sages and the Synagogue Sages," p. 210.

10) See Herr, Between Synagogues, pp. 106–07.

11) Mentioned as Jacob Ish Kuphar Neborayya in JT Bikkurim 3.3, 11d, and its parallel article, namely, Midrash Samuel 7.6; see Levine, "The Sages and the Synagogue Sages", p. 210, n. 48.

12) W. F. L. Smelik, "Language, Locus, and Translation between the Talmudim", *JAB* 3, 2001, pp.199–24.

13) M Megilla 2. 1, 4.4, 4.6, 4.10; T Megilla 3.30, 3.31(x9), 3.32(x3), 3.34, 3.35(x3), 3.36, 3.38, 3.41; T Bava Metzia 2.21; JT Berachot 5.3, 9c; JT Megilla 4.1, 74d; 4.3, 75a; 4.5, 75b; 4.7, 75c; 4.10, 75c; 4.11, 75c, et al. Tanhuma, Vayyera 5, Tanhuma, Toledot 7, Tanhuma, Tissa 34, Pesikta Rabbati 5; BT Berachot 8a, 45a; BT Rosh Hashanah 27a; BT Yoma 69b; BT Sota 39b, 41a, 29b, 22a et al.

14) JT Berachot 5.3, 9c; JT Shabbat 6.4, 8b; JT Yoma 3.8, 41a; JT Sukkah 3.5, 53d; JT Megilla 2.4, 73b; JT Moed Katan 3.7, 83b; JT Kiddushin 1.1, 59a.; GR 1.1, 8.3, 21.1, 4.3, 46.3, 61.5, 79.7, 93.2; ExR. 3; LR.11.9, 30.8, 33.1, 33:6, NR. 9, 10.9, 13.14; Esther R.2.7; CR. 4.11.2; 4.12.2; LaR. 3.1 (x2), et al. BT Berachot 28a; BT Shabbat 10b, 28a, 64a; BT Pesahim 78a; BT Rosh Hashanah 33b; BT Yoma 32b, 77b; BT Moed Katan 2a, 26a, 28b; BT Nazir 3a, 39a; BT Kiddushin 13a, 26b, 62b; BT Bava Kamma 3b, 38a, 116b; BT Bava Batra 12b, 74b, et al.

15) M Megilla 2.1; T Sanhedrin 4.7 (x2). Deuteronomy Sifre161 (x2); Sifra Shimni 1. JT Shabbat 16.1, 15b; JT Megilla 1.10, 71d; 2.1, 73d; 4.1, 74d; BT Shabbat115a-b (x5); BT Megilla 3a, 8b; BT Nedarim 37b.

16) The Japanese New Interconfessional Translation Bible says in Japanese, "They translated the books of the laws of the lord and read them aloud by clarifying the meaning. " In the original text in Hebrew, there is no word corresponding to "to translate." Thus, it is assumed that the expression מפרש "to interpret" was translated according to the context.

17) JT Kilayim 8.5, 31c; JT Bikkurim 3.3, 11b; JT Pesahim10.1, 37b; JT Sukkah 5.3, 55c; JT Sheqalim 5.1, 48d; JT Sota 2.2, 18a; JT Sanhedrin 2.6, 20d. BT Berachot 14a, 18a, 19b, 24a, 51a, 57a; BT Shabbat 12b, 43b, 52b, 53a, 60a, 90a, and many more. GR 80.1; LR 9.5; Esther R 3.12; CR 5.1.5, 6.5; Midrash Samuel 7; PsM 19. As described below, this usage is almost limited to BT.

18) T Sanhedrin7.7; Numbers Sifre 140; Deuteronomy Sifre 176, 305; JT Berachot 4.1, 7d; JT Taanit 4.1, 67d; JT Yebamot 16.7, 16a; JT Sota 7.1, 21b; JT Nedarim 10.10, 42a; GR 51.9; 65.11; LaR 2; 9; QohR 7.1; 9.1; Tanhuma Veara 7; Qohelet Zuta 7; Midrash Samuel 9; PsM 9; BT Pesachim 50b; BT Berachot 27b; BT Tannit 4b; BT Hagigah 16a; BT Moed Katan 21a; BT

Khetubot 8b; BT Sota 37b; BT Gittin 60b; BT Kiddushin 31a, 39b; BT Sanhedrin 7b; BT Hullin 142a; BT Bekhorot 36a; BT Terumah 14b.

19) M Makkot 1.9; Deuteronomy Sifre 176, JT Makkot 1.7, 30d; ExR 3; LR 26.8; CR1; Tanhuma Emor 3; Midrash Samuel 24; PM 24; BT Pesachim 117a; BT Megilla 15a; BT Sanhedrin 17a; BT Makkot 6b(x3); BT Menahot 65a.

20) The numbers of usages in this table are the numbers of pericopes that contain TRGM derivatives. More specifically, even if more than two TRGM derivatives appear in a single periscope, it is counted as one example. The actual numbers are given in the endnotes. Midrash Halakhaha includes Sifra, Mechilta De Rabbi Eliezer, Deuteronomy Sifre, and Numbers Sifre. Midrash Aggadah includes every Midrash Rabbah, Tanhuma, Pesikta Rabbati, Pesikta de-Rav Kahana, Psalms Midrash, and Midrash Samuel. The materials are divided by time and region according to the commonly accepted classification. The Tannaitic materials include Mishnah Tosefta and the Midrash Halakhah group, and the Amoraic materials include Midrash Aggadah and two types of Tamluds. The Tannaitic materials are of Palestinian origin. The Amoraic materials are divided into the Palestinian materials including the Midrash Aggadah group and the Babylonian materials mainly including the Babylonian Talmud. For details on individual rabbinic writings, see G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. M. Bockmuehl, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1996. For specific pages, see the footnotes of each example.

21) Six examples are quotations from Aquila's. Another example is a critical quotation from the translation in the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan.

22) Fourteen examples are quotations from Aquila's. Eighteen examples are almost as similar a translation as the Targum Onkelos. The three examples are quotations from the Targum Jonahtan to the Prophets.

23) Most of the quotations are related to Rav Joseph.

24) A Greek translation that is often quoted in rabbinic writings by the name of the proselyte Aquila; however, the translation is not necessarily the same as Aquila's translation contained in Hexapla. Some rabbinic writings say that the Aramaic translation of Torah was also made by the proselyte Aquila (BT Megilla 3a et al.). There seems little doubt that Onkelos and Aquila is the same name, but it is unlikely that the same person translated scriptures into two different languages, even though both the translations are similarly literal translations. I guess that the name Onkelos or Aquila may have been written on the two translations during the course of handing down the scriptures. Regarding Aquila, see Ch. Rabin ed., *Bible Translation, An Introduction*, the Biblical Encyclopedia Library, Mosad Bialik, Jerusalem, 1984, pp.110–14 (Hebrew).

25) The Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, containing a great deal of amplifications and additions, the Fragment Targum, in which only confined phrases were translated in an amplificatory manner, and the Targum Neofiti, having the features of Onkelos and Pseudo-Jonathan, are collectively called "Targum Yerushalmi" (Jerusalem Targum), in order to differentiate from the Targum Onkelos, which seems to be a word-for-word literal translation. It is believed that, while the Targum Onkelos of Palestinian origin was widely accepted and compiled in Babylonia, the Targum Yerushalmi was created and inherited in Palestine. For features of various targumim,

see Ch. Rabin, ed., *Bible Translation, An Introduction*, pp.5–48.

26) JT Shabbat 6.4, 8b; Yoma 3.8, 41a; Sukkah 3.5, 53d; Megillat 2.4, 73b; Mo'ed Katan 3.7, 83b; Kiddushin1.1, 59a. Another example is JT Berachot 5.3, 9c, which was quoted as a result of the denial of the same translation with the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan.

27) GR 21.1, 46.3, 93.2, 11.9; LR 30.8, 33.1 et al.

28) GR 8.3, 43.9; ExR 3, which coincides with the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan; LR 33.6 et al.

29) GR 1.1; Tanhuma Genesis 6 (one of the manuscripts); PsM 60 (partial)

30) JT Berachot 5.3, 9c.

31) BT Taanit 10b; BT Yebamot 77a; BT Nedarim 38d et al. Smelik, Language, Locus, p. 202.

32) A play on the words comprising "zethal" (זתר) "Look"(רָאה) at the immorality (זַן | תְּ)"

33) Controversial part of M Sukkah 5.3

34) In the parallel article in Midrash Samuel, a phrase "at the synagogue in Caesaria" is inserted.

35) For the historical aspects of rabbinic writings, see Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, pp.45–62.

36) For Patach, Petichta, see G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, pp.243–45.

37) Furthermore, the appearance and formality of PTḤ in this usage varies according to times and regions. As for Tannaitic materials, Mishna and Tosefta include only one example each. PTḤ is used in set with agents with the title "rabbi." In the Palestinian Amoraic writings, agents with the title "rabbi" appear with greater frequency. JT has seven examples, which are all used in sets with agents with the title "rabbi." In BT, on the other hand, only seven examples out of 29 examples (24.1%) are used in sets with agents with the title "rabbi."

38) Smelik Language, Locus, p. 202; however, this does not mention the features of PTR as discussed in this paper.

39) There are no examples in M T, and there are only 14 examples in BT.

40) In this respect, JT is the most formalized. In JT, all the three verbs discussed in this paper are used in sets with agents with the title "rabbi" at the highest percentage. It can safely be said that JT is a more formalized document than commonly considered. Moreover, it is necessary to consider when the title "rabbi" took hold in Jewish communities in Palestine and Babylonia. Our observation provides an implication regarding this issue. A larger proportion of the persons who appear and speak in JT have the title "rabbi." In BT, on the other hand, a variety of people with various titles speak. This implies the difference in the social structure of Jewish communities in the two regions.

41) QohR 7.5; idem. 9. 17. Smelik, Language, Locus, p. 214. Shinan, *Biblical Story as Reflected in its Aramaic Translations*, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1993, p. 25 (Hebrew)

42) In rabbinic writings, Jacob Ish Kefar X (Jacob a man from the village X,) seems to be a general term for those who incur a rabbi's displeasure. Jacob Ish Kefar Sekaniah is mentioned as a person seduced by the world of minuto (heresy and heathen) or the sorcery of Jesus in particular, as described twice in Qohelet Rabbah 1.8.3. Jacob Ish Kefar Neboraya drew a rule that infuriated Rabbi Haggai, as described in Kohelet Rabbah 7.23.3, and idem, 4. Jacob Ish Kefer Neboraya is on the list of sinners, as described in idem. 7.26.3.

43) Shinan, The Form and Content of the Aggadah in the "Palestinian" Targumim on the

Pentateuch and its Place within Rabbinic Literature (based on the Targumim on Genesis and Selected Passages from the other Four Books), a thesis put forth for a "Doctorate of Philosophy," submitted to the Senate of the Hebrew University, 1977, pp. 6–8.

44) In BT Bava Kamma 83a and BT Sota 49b, the following discourse is included: "The rabbi says, 'Why Aramaic in Israel? It should be rather the holy language (Hebrew) or Greek.' Rabbi Yosi says, 'Why Aramaic in Babylonia? It should be rather the holy language (Hebrew) or Persian.'" Smelik, Language, Locus, pp.213–16.

45) The intention of rabbis to distinguish themselves from Soferim is clearly expressed in the phrase in M Yadayim 3.2: "Do not analogize laws from Soferim's words." It is thought that a rabbi's stylized expression of "Soferim's words" implies that Soferim do not belong to any rabbi circle and that their teachings are not under the authority of rabbis. C. Schams, *Jewish Scribes in the Second-Temple Period,* JSOTsup291, 1998, p.325; J. Saldarini, *Pharisees Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society,* Edinburgh, 1988, pp.268–72.