

Spanish Biblical Foundation
Complutensian University of Madrid

ANNEX
to the
Facsimile Edition
of the
Complutensian Polyglot Bible

Valencia
1987

Translated from the Original Spanish, ISBN 84-86067-15-4
by Richard Easton
for the Apostolic Press
c 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Prologue to the Facsimile Edition</i>	3
The Polyglot of Alcalá in Spanish Humanism (Dr. Luis Alonso Schokel)	7
The Complutensian Hebraists and Hellenists (Dr. Angel Saenz-Badillos)	15
The Work of the Cardinal (Dr. Julio Trebolle Barrera)	21
The Hebrew Text (Dr. Emilia Fernandes Tejero)	25
The Greek Text (Dr. Natalio Fernandez Marcos)	33
The Aramaic Text (Dr. Emiliano Martinez Barobio)	43
The Latin Text (Dr. Javier Fernandez Vallera and Dr. Luis Vegas Montaner)	53

Prologue for the Facsimile Edition of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible

During the summer of 1983 there was celebrated in Salamanca a Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament. It was like a public embodiment of contemporary Spanish biblical science, actualized in the space of the real world; like an entrance into a common market of biblical ideas and studies.

Logically, this seminal body convened when there had been a preceding process of scientific maturation, and the studies of the specialty had reached a sufficient development. The Congress was organized by a Commission in which there were represented various universities and the Superior Council of Scientific Investigations. Among the organizers there arose the idea to commemorate the success with a permanent offer, something that the Spanish biblical culture could offer to the Bible specialists of every country. A volume that collected the collaboration of today's Spanish biblicists could reach to any library; once it was installed in its bookshelves it would not easily be removed. Would it also be consulted and cited? Paradoxically, a recent volume is less current than a consecrated work of the past. The contemporary collaborations, brief articles have an ephemeral life, they are rapidly surpassed.

In contrast, an ancient and consecrated work is perpetual and contemporary, because it has survived the challenge of time. They thought of reprinting some important biblical work of the past. Thinking with imagination and audacity, they would present a candidate both ideal and difficult. One of the most important biblical works realized in Spain in the modern age. A work that used studies of many countries during more than one century, especially the last volume, and that because of its influence in the biblical science of Europe. A work that inaugurates a genera, and that for the first time puts to the use of some biblical texts a relatively recent invention, the printing press.

This work was the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. Conceived under the auspices of Jimenez de Cisneros, Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo and Regent of Castille, to honor the birth of Carlos V (1500-1588), without regard for forces nor economic means to produce a pioneer and typographically ambitious scientific work. In it collaborated distinguished humanists like Nebuja, el Pinciano, Lopez de Zuniga, Juan de Vergara, Demetrio Ducas, Alfonso de Zamora, Pablo Coronel and Alfonso de Alcala. It was printed in the workshops of the typographer Arnaldo Guillermo de Brocario in Alcala de Henares between 1514 and 1517.

In this magnificent work they imprinted 600 examples or some more. But by only the middle of the following century the copies were so rare, that Felipe II decided to charge Arias Montano with a new corrected and amplified edition of the Complutensian, which would be named Poliglota de Amberes or Biblia Regia. By letter of Felipe II to the Duke of Alba, we know that many examples of the Complutensian Polyglot had been lost in the sea traveling on the way to Italy.

Today it is calculated that the number of examples existing does not exceed one hundred and that some of them are not complete by the lack of the sixth volume. Geographically the examples conserved are found in libraries of the ancient Spanish Empire and the United States.

To publish a facsimile edition of the six magnificent volumes was an enterprise that was economically risky and typographically necessary. It required a solid backing and an efficient direction. The backing was to offer it in conjunction with the Spanish Biblical Foundation and the University of Madrid.

Initiating the preparatory conversations and putting in motion the first works were, on the part of the Complutensian University, the Vice Rector of Academic Ordination, Prof. Francisco Javier Fernandez Vallina, and on the part of the Spanish Biblical Foundation, the Vice President of the same, Prof. Julio Treballo Barrera, and the Secretary, Professor Vicente Collado Bertomeu. The then Rector of the Complutensian University, Prof. Francisco Bustelo Garcia del Real, welcomed the project with enthusiasm and decided to give it the impulse necessary for its realization. His successor in the Rectorate of the Complutensian University, Prof. Amador Schuller, together with the Vice Rector of University Extension, Prof. Alberto de Hera, recognized and assumed the project, that very quickly was seen through to be made real.

A work of the category of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible could not be produced in a modest edition in order to leave out this step. It merited the best of the modern graphic arts, as a follower of the original of 1521.

The director of Polyglot Typography of the Gregorian University of Rome, D. Jose Antonio Esquivel, took in charge to realize a work of traditional artisanship, no less than of advanced technique. It was necessary to clean all the impurities accumulated over the time since its cradle to the length of more than 450 years. The edition in anastatic reproduction has been of thousands of exemplars numbered and signed before a notary. It has been realized in paper of smooth manuncia, marble color, with binding in natural kid skin tanned by hand, titles in old gold, exterior cover paneled, dry pressed and based on special cardboard with fabric borders. The first volumes to the fifth reproduce original exemplars conserved in the library of the Curia Generalicia de la Compania de Jesus in Rome. For the sixth volume, the most rare and necessary, it was necessary to transport to Rome the exemplar conserved in the Library of the Complutensian University of Madrid. Charged with this mission was the then Vicerector of the University Extension of the Complutensian University, Prof. Nicolas Ortega.

The exemplar number one of the facsimile edition was submitted to His Majesty the King Don Carlos in audience granted in the Royal Palace of Madril the seventh day of November of one thousand, nine hundred eighty-four to a representation of the Complutensian University of Madrid and of the Spanish Biblical Foundation, presided by the Rector, Prof. Amador Schuller, and in it there figured the Prof. Francisco Bustelo Garcia del Real, the Vicepresident of the Spanish Biblical Foundation, Prof. Julio Trebolle Barrera, the Vicerector of the University Extension, Prof. Alberto de la Hera, the Secretary General of the Complutensian University, Prof. Jose Antonio Tomas Ortiz de la Torre, and the Secretary of the Spanish Biblical Foundation, Prof. Vicente Collado Bertomeu.

The day the Fifth of March, of one thousand, nine hundred eighty and six was submitted the exemplar number zero of the facsimile edition to His Holiness the Pope John Paul II in the course of a special audience, at which assisted the Rector of the Complutensian University, Prof. Amador Schuller, Monsigneur Antonio Maria Javierre in representation of the Pontific Counselor for Culture, the Ambassador of Spain before the Holy Seat, the Most Excellent Sr. D. Gonzalo Puente Ojea, the President of the Spanish Biblical Foundation, Prof. Luis Alonso Schokel, and the director of the Polyglot Press of the Gregorian University of Rome, P. Puca.

In this way a work both glorious and almost inaccessible recovered its life and was put at the reach of libraries, professors and bibliophiles. An important link in the historic chain of Spanish and universal biblical science is recovered.

RECTOR OF THE
COMPLUTENSIAN UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT OF THE
SPANISH BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

Amador Schuller

Luis Alonso Schokel, S.J.

THE POLYGLOT OF ALCALA IN SPANISH HUMANISM

Dr. Luis Alonso Schokel
Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome

Polyglot signifies many languages, and some would think that many languages signifies the Babel of confusion. In such an event, the Complutensian Polyglot Bible would be a good example, beginning with the title with which it is known. Bible is a word of Phoenician origin, Polyglot is a Greek compound, Complutum is the Latin name of a city that in Arabic is called Alcala and is surnamed with the Hispano-Latino Henares. And by within, Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Latin... A confusion?

