TOWARD THE PUBLICATION OF THE EXTANT TEXTS OF THE PALESTINIAN TARGUM(S)

BY

MALCOLM C. DOUBLES
Lebanon, Virginia

The most important recent event in research on the Palestinian Targum has been the announcement in 1956 by Professor A. Diez Macho of the discovery of a complete Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch, called Neofiti I, which he had found in the Vatican Library 1). A preliminary study on the antiquity of this targum has been published by Professor Macho, with this conclusion:

"The general conclusion of the foregoing evidence seems to be this: the PT (Palestinian Targum), even if it in its present recension, preserved in the Ms. Neofiti I, seems to belong to the first or second century A.D., is on the whole a prechristian version" 2).

However, this evaluation of Ms. Neofiti I has not gone unchallenged. Professor P. Wernberg-Møller has written a detailed criticism of the evidence so far published and its treatment as it has led to such a conclusion 3). In his article, Professor Wernberg-Møller draws attention to the necessity for the publication of this text before any consensus of scholarly opinion can be reached.

To this end, Ms. Neofiti I is in the process of being prepared for publication 4). Likewise, a new edition of the material from the Cairo Geniza is promised 5). I myself have prepared the texts originally published by Moses Ginsburger for republication, in the process of which about 2000 errors have been discovered in Ginsburger's presentation of Mss. Vaticanus 440 and Leipzig 1 6).

5) Ibid.
6) M. Ginsburger, Das Fragmententhargum, S. Calvary, Berlin, 1899.
At the moment, the question at issue is whether the extant texts of the Palestinian Targum should be published separately, or whether there should be a single edition with a large critical apparatus. It is the burden of this paper to try to make a rudimentary demonstration of the fact that scholarly research would be assisted more by the separate publication of groups of these texts than by the publication of a single text with a massive, cumbersome, and confusing critical apparatus.

THE COMMON TRADITION OF VBNL

The possibility of incorporating the texts of V (Vaticanus 440), B (Bomberg Bible, 1517), N (Nürnberg 1), and L (Leipzig 1) into one text with a critical apparatus has been apparent since the publication of Ginsburger's work. Although the critical apparatus would be more complicated than is indicated by Ginsburger, the common tradition reflected by these texts and their apparently common origin require that they be presented together 1).

VBN have a total of 863 verses in common. In almost every case the same fragment of the Targum is preserved by each of these three texts. Of the 264 verses preserved in L, 263 are also preserved in VBN.

In addition to these verses common to all the texts, V preserves 35 verses which are not found in BNL, namely: Genesis i 8; xxvii 4, 38; xxxv 22 (Hebrew); Exodus x 4; xiv 7, 19, 23, 28; xv 5, 23; xvi 20; xviii 18; xix 1, 10-12, 14, 16-17, 19-20, 22-24; xx 16-20; xxi 28, 35; xxii 14, 30; xxiii 24; and Numbers xxxiv 13.

BN preserve 8 verses which are not found in V or L, namely: Genesis xxxi 22; Leviticus xxvii 23; Deuteronomy xxxii 45 and xxxiv 9-12.

The first seven words of Genesis xxvii 39, as they are found in Targum Onkelos, are preserved by L as a part of the Fragment Targum. VBN have no reading for this verse.

The unity of these texts becomes even more apparent upon examination of the Textual Variation. In spite of the numerous variant readings in these texts, it is very seldom that such a reading materially


Vetus Testamentum XV