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1989: THE THIRD BATTLE OF THE SCROLLS BEGINS

Many ancient manuscripts were discovered around Khirbet Qumran in the Judean Desert at the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s¹. So far scholars have fought two battles around them. The first battle was over by mid 1950s and the antiquity of the scrolls was proved, with overwhelming evidence for dating them in the period from about 150 B.C. to 70 A.D. A working hypothesis that they were compiled in the Essene Monastery at Khirbet Qumran continued to be generally accepted until 1980s². The second battle, over attempts to "Christianize the Scrolls" or to "Essenize Christianity", which started with a famous article in "The New Yorker" printed by an eminent American journalist, Edmund Wilson in May 1955³, was practically over by the beginning of the 1960s. Both battles were based mostly on published manuscripts of the Qumran Cave 4⁴. After a long and frustrating expectation of the publication of several hundred scrolls from the Qumran Cave 4, it seems that scholars have now started a new, third battle this time for urgent publication of the remaining scrolls. If so the next decade should be marked by quick progress in publication. A number of scholarly meetings in 1989⁵, dozens of articles and interviews in newspapers and weeklies are the evidence of the beginning of the new battle. In this report I try to present some events of the last five months of 1989.

THE GRONINGEN CONFERENCE

In August 1989 a meeting of Qumran scholars was held in the Netherlands to end the celebrations of the 375 anniversary of the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. The main subject of the conference was "The Texts of Qumran and the History of the Community". Numerous important papers were presented, first of all connected with presentation of new texts⁶. It was great news, announced by Professor E. Ulrich on August 21, that the Biblical texts of Qumran Cave 4 which he received after the

death of Father P. Skehan in 1980 are almost nearly ready for print⁷. E. Ulrich released "for private use only", two charts giving full data on progress in the publication. As some American newspapers (cf. below) have made the news public, I feel free to offer a few details here. The chart No. 1 gives a list of "The Biblical Manuscripts from Qumran Cave 4", the number of volume of the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert series in which the text will be published and the name of the editor. One hundred twenty seven manuscripts are listed which will appear in the series, in Volumes 9, 10 and 12. The disquettes of Volume 9, in which 35 manuscripts will be presented on 55 plates prepared by P. Skehan, E. Ulrich and R. Sandersen, are ready and according to promise of E. Ulrich the volume really be brought out by the Oxford University Press before the end of 1990. In this way the scholars interested will shortly have the following manuscripts available: paleoGen^l, paleoExod^l, paleoExod^m, paleoDeut^r, paleoDeut^s, Isaiah (20 manuscripts on 17 plates), paleoJob^c, LXXLev^a, LXXLev^b, LXXNum, LXXDeut, paleoUnid and UnidGreek. It seems that especially Biblical scholars interested in the critique of the Hebrew text of Isaiah, Exodus, Deuteronomium and Leviticus should be pleased to have the new texts for comparison.

Volume 10 of the DJD series will present forty six manuscripts on sixty eight plates and Volume 12, fifty two manuscripts on sixty one plates. Thirty five manuscripts and forty six plates of Volume 10 (in preparation by 11 scholars) are now ready, as are thirty eight manuscripts on forty four plates of Volume 12 (in preparation by 8 scholars). That means that Volume 10 is ready in 76% (with 67% of plates) and Volume 12 in 73% (with 72% of plates). The promised date of publication of all Biblical texts, 1993, looks realistic (in only the Oxford University Press do their best).

The second important announcement made at the end of the Groningen conference concerned an attempt to create an "International Association of the Dead Sea Scrolls Research". The following representatives were selected to form the Organizing Committee:

H. Stegemann from Germany, G. Brooke from England, E. Puech from France, J. Trebolle from Spain, E. Ulrich from the U.S.A., E. Duhaime from Canada, E. Tov from Israel and J. van der Woude from the Netherlands.

The latter offered his own help and that of his Qumran Institute at the Groningen University in creation of the association. Dr. F. Garcia Martinez, who organized the Groningen Conference, offered to act as a temporary secretary of the organizing committee. The idea was accepted by the participants and knowing the manifold activities of F. Garcia Martinez, the creation of the

association can be expected soon. It is hoped that the East European countries will not be left aside. If the association is created, affiliation of East European scholars would be possible at the next Mogilany colloquium in July 1991.

THE 1989 MOGILANY COLLOQUIUM

The Second International Colloquium on the Dead Sea Scrolls was organized in memory of the Rev. Professor Jean Carmignac, who cooperated with the Oriental Committee of the Cracow Branch of the Polish Academy of Sciences at the end of his life in such a friendly way⁸. The main subjects of the conference were the following: The Teacher of Righteousness in the Qumran Texts, Qumran and the New Testament, general studies on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the present state of Qumranology as a new branch of scholarly research. The proposals for improving qumranology presented by the undersigned were fully discussed. For the first time in the history of the discipline, the participants unanimously voted a serious open appeal to all people and institutions interested to stop obstructing progress in the Dead Sea Scrolls studies, to give free access to the unpublished scrolls by printing plates with photographs of manuscripts before publishing translations and commentaries of the texts, and to improve international cooperation in the field. Further suggestions concerned the necessity of publication of new, full Qumran bibliography, finishing the Qumran dictionary project, etc. The text of the Mogilany 1989 Resolution was released unofficially in mid-October to give people time and to send their opinions before publication in the *Folia Orientalia*. It is printed officially in full in this issue of our annual, in its chronicle section⁹. Only a few people sent us their comments, but I think that was connected with another important event, which took place in the U.S.A. in mid-November 1989, when the leading people in charge of the publication of the Qumran scrolls met their opponents in Princeton. That fact drew the attention of interested scholars away from the Mogilany Resolution, but the purpose of the Resolution remains valid and more people will certainly sign it. The first letters accepting the proposals of the resolution have come¹⁰.

THE PRINCETON MEETING

On November 14th 1989 an evening meeting was organized in Princeton N.J., by Ephraim Isaacs, the Director of the young (only four years old) Institute of Semitic Studies at the University of Princeton. This put an end to the unpleasant situation that had arisen in the last few years, when critics of the present state of Qumran studies spoke with the old members of the scrollery team only

through letters or newspapermen. The indefatigable Hershel Shanks has played a great role in this year's events as he has published a few impressive articles in the *Biblical Archaeology Review*, directly or indirectly attacking the people and institutions involved in publications of the Dead Sea Scrolls¹¹. Even if the present writer would have preferred to see the main accents of his attack placed slightly differently and the attacks themselves not to be based on (sometimes) illusory authorities¹², he and his journal played a significant part in turning public attention to the problem. His continuous attack made a strong impact first in the American and later on the European press. After many years of silence, dozens of articles concerning the problem of the Dead Sea Scrolls come back to the front pages of the leading newspapers and weeklies of the world¹³. In view of all this, it cannot be surprising that nearly two hundred people, met in Princeton, among them not only scholars and people directly involved but also many journalists. During the meeting Prof. J. Strugnell of Harvard University and Prof. E. Ulrich of the University of Notre Dame disclosed "a schedule under which much of the material, found [...] in caves at Qumran on the western shore of the Dead Sea, will be published over the next 10 to 12 years"¹⁴. In the ensuing dispute, which was reported as "in an encounter that at times was as heated as it was rare"¹⁵, the editors of the Dead Sea Scrolls faced "two of the critics who have denounced the secrecy surrounding hundreds of still unpublished texts from the scrolls"¹⁶. Prof. N. Golb of the University of Chicago and H. Shanks the editor of the *Biblical Archaeology Review* repeated shortly and to the point their well known arguments concerning obstructive role played by their opponents. They pointed out that quick publication of the remaining scrolls is a must for the development of Qumran studies and that without it the so-called hypothesis of Jerusalem origins of the Dead Sea Scrolls can not be verified. A critic of the present situation, Prof. N. Golb, rightly stressed that "a generation of scholars will never get a chance to study the documents"¹⁷. Besides the Biblical documents which, as mentioned above, are to be presented in the DJD series Vol. 9, Prof. J. Strugnell announced the publication soon of *4QMMT*, the 121-line so-called Letter of the Teacher of Righteousness. However, this document, which may become one of the key documents from Qumran was completely unknown till 1984, when it was presented in the preliminary way at the Congress of Biblical Archaeology in Jerusalem¹⁸. It seems that 36 years after the discovery of Qumran Cave 4 about 25% to 50% of the documents found there will still remain unknown for another decade. Even if new Biblical manuscripts will finally be available in two or three years, scholars' main interest and a subject of dispute the non-Biblical texts will remain. Each Qumran scholar will agree with Prof. N. Golb when he says that "our understanding of early Judaism and early Christianity hinges on publication of

the non-Biblical scrolls"¹⁹. As Mr. J. Noble Wilford of "The New York Times" put it, "'Liberating' of the Dead Scrolls from the Qumran-Essene hypothesis, Dr. Golb believes, would open the way for a new appraisal of the ferment 2,000 years ago when Christianity took root and most Jews turned away from Judaism dominated by the priesthood and began to evolve the rabbinical Judaism that has survived in history..."²⁰.

The Princeton meeting had no immediate positive effects, apart from throwing a new light on the arguments of the opposing sides and giving even more publicity to the scrolls themselves. The main argument against publication of plates is the negative attitude of the Oxford University Press, which "would not be amenable to such a plan"²¹. But to tell the truth, the Oxford University Press publishers have never made any official statement, concerning the problem. What we know in fact is the information given by Prof. G. Vermes in 1987 that the experienced editor of the DJD has been retired for a few years. What I can add is that one of the members of the Qumran scollery team, whom I met in August 1989, after a long conversation finally agreed that publication of the plates with Qumran manuscripts is possible. He even showed me original plates with his transliterations and philological comments. All Qumran scholars would be very grateful to him if he would decide to publish his manuscripts without waiting for the decision of his colleagues. Other scholars may not be ready to reveal the present state of their work, but some of them could certainly decide to print plates and their readings. Let us hope that this year's battle of the Dead Sea Scrolls will remind them their own first and second battle of the scrolls in the 1950s, and help them to take a proper decision. The Princeton meeting again exposed a great moral crisis in the discipline. E. Isaacs is certainly right in saying that the conference was a success; "It's always better for people to speak directly to each other"²², and that has now happened for the first time. Will it be a turning point in the battle? In a time of political solidarity and pluralism spreading in the world the narrow Qumran circle remains as selfish as the Amazonians are in cutting tropical forests heeding the of results of their policy. Do they not understand that they are not owners of the documents and that Father de Vaux would certainly not have liked their policy, that all manuscripts belong to all of us as they are connected with the roots of our religion, our culture and civilisation?

Notes

¹ The best chronicle of events is available in J. C. Trever, The Dead Sea Scrolls. A Personal Account, 3rd ed., Upland, CA 1988 [Appendix II: Outline of the Dead Sea Scroll Story], pp. 195-206.

² A new phase in the interpretation of the Qumran documents started with publication of N. Golb's article: The Problem of Origin and Identification of the Dead Sea Scrolls, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 124, No. 1, 1980, pp. 1-24.

³ A Reporter at Large. The Scrolls from the Dead Sea, "The New Yorker" May 14, 1955, pp. 45-121. The article appeared as a separate book under the title: The Scrolls from the Dead Sea, New York 1955.

⁴ The battles are presented in an interesting way by A. N. Gilkes, The Impact of the Dead Sea Scrolls, London 1962, pp. 68-96 and 119-145.

⁵ Only some of them can be presented here. The Qumran problems were also discussed during 1989 meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature and some other institutions. Cf. Annual Meeting 1989 American Academy of Religion, Society of Biblical Literature and ASOR, 18-21 November 1989, Anaheim, CA [Program printed in Atlanta, GA 1989, Scholars Press], pp. 75 and 95.

⁶ Cf. mimeographed program: The Texts of Qumran and The History of the Community. 20-23 August 1983. Program and Abstracts [Groningen 1989], pp. 1-19.

⁷ Cf. E. Ulrich, The Biblical Scrolls from Qumran Cave 4: A Progress Report on Their Publication [in: The Texts of Qumran..., p. 3 and his previous report: Horizons of Old Testament Textual Research at the Thirtieth Anniversary of Qumran Cave 4, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 46, 1984, pp. 613-636.

⁸ Cf. Z. J. Kapera, Life and Activity of Rev. Jean Carmignac (in Polish), *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny* 40, 1987, pp. 119-132.

⁹ Cf. Z. J. Kapera, The Second International Colloquium on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Mogilany near Cracow, 1989, *Folia Orientalia* 26, 1989. Cf. also H. Shanks' article in the January-February 1990 issue of the *Biblical Archaeology Review* [=BAR].

¹⁰ For example, a letter of December 13, 1989, from Mr. Lowell S. Robertson (Kansas City, Mo) signed on behalf of "International Committee for Full Publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls".

¹¹ Cf. H. Shanks, At Least Publish The Dead Sea Scrolls Timetable!, *BAR* 15,3 (May-June 1989), pp. 56-58; Dead Sea Scrolls Scandal. Israel's Department of Antiquities Joins Conspiracy to Keep Scrolls Secret, *BAR* 15,4 (July-August 1989), pp. 18-21, 55; What Should Be Done About the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls? *BAR* 15,5 (September-October 1989), pp. 18-22; New Hope for the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls, *BAR* 15,6 (November-December 1989), pp. 55-56, 74. Cf. also his article in the January-February 1990 issue of the *BAR*.

¹² As for example in his article: H. S [hanks], Debate on Enoch Stifled For 30 Years While One Scholar Studied Dead Sea Scrolls Fragments, *BAR* 3,2 (March-April 1987), p. 34. Cf. my opinion in the matter: The Present State of Qumranology, *Folia Orientalia* 26, 1989.

¹³ Cf. their list in my article: On The Most Recent Developments in Qumranology, *Folia Orientalia* 26, 1989. The list can be supplemented with: R. N. Ostling, Secrets of the Dead Sea Scrolls. A scholarly squabble over an archaeolo-

gical treasure, the "Time" magazine August 14, 1989, pp. 71-72; H. Shapiro, Unrolling the Dead Sea Scrolls, "The Jerusalem Post Magazine" September 29, 1989, pp. 10-11; G. D. Moffet, III, Demand Grows for Dead Sea Scrolls. Slow pace of publication for the Biblical manuscripts found 42 years ago irks some scholars, "The Christian Science Monitor" November 20, 1989, p. 12.

¹⁴ J. L. Franklin, Scholarly Clash for the Dead Sea Scrolls, "The Boston Globe" November 15, 1989. Cf. also: R. Atkin, A "Dead" Issue Comes Alive, "The Christian Science Monitor" November 20, 1989, p. 12.

¹⁵ J. L. Franklin, l. cit.

¹⁶ l. cit.

¹⁷ As quoted by M. Specter, Dead Sea Scrolls: Open to Whom?, "The Washington Post" November 15, 1989. Reprinted in the "International Herald Tribune" on November 16, 1989.

¹⁸ Cf. E. Qimron, J. Strugnell, An Unpublished Halakhic Letter from Qumran [in: Biblical Archaeology Today. Proceedings of the International Congress on Biblical Archaeology, Jerusalem, April 1984, [Jerusalem 1985], pp. 400-407. Not only such important documents as 4QMMT are still unavailable. Even the list of the manuscripts prepared in 1980 (and the museum numbers of photographs) was long kept closed among the scrollery members circle. Even more shocking is the announcement that a new catalogue of about 200 pages (in preparation by an unnamed young scholar) will mention as many as one third again the earlier number of plates and half again the number of photos. (Cf. H. Shanks' article published in *BAR* November-December 1989.) The previous catalogue of documents ["Catalog of the Dead Sea Scrolls", computer printing dated April 1981, 104 pages, 6538 lines] finally obtained by scholars is in fact worthless as requests for unpublished documents made on its basis are rejected.

¹⁹ Quoted from the article by D. Kovach, Scholars Wants Rights to Dead Sea Scrolls, "The Times" (New Jersey) November 15, 1989.

²⁰ Cf. Scholars Clash (Sharply) Over Origins of the Dead Sea Scrolls, "The New York Times" (Science Times) November 15, 1989.

²¹ D. Kovach, l. cit.

²² l. cit.

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