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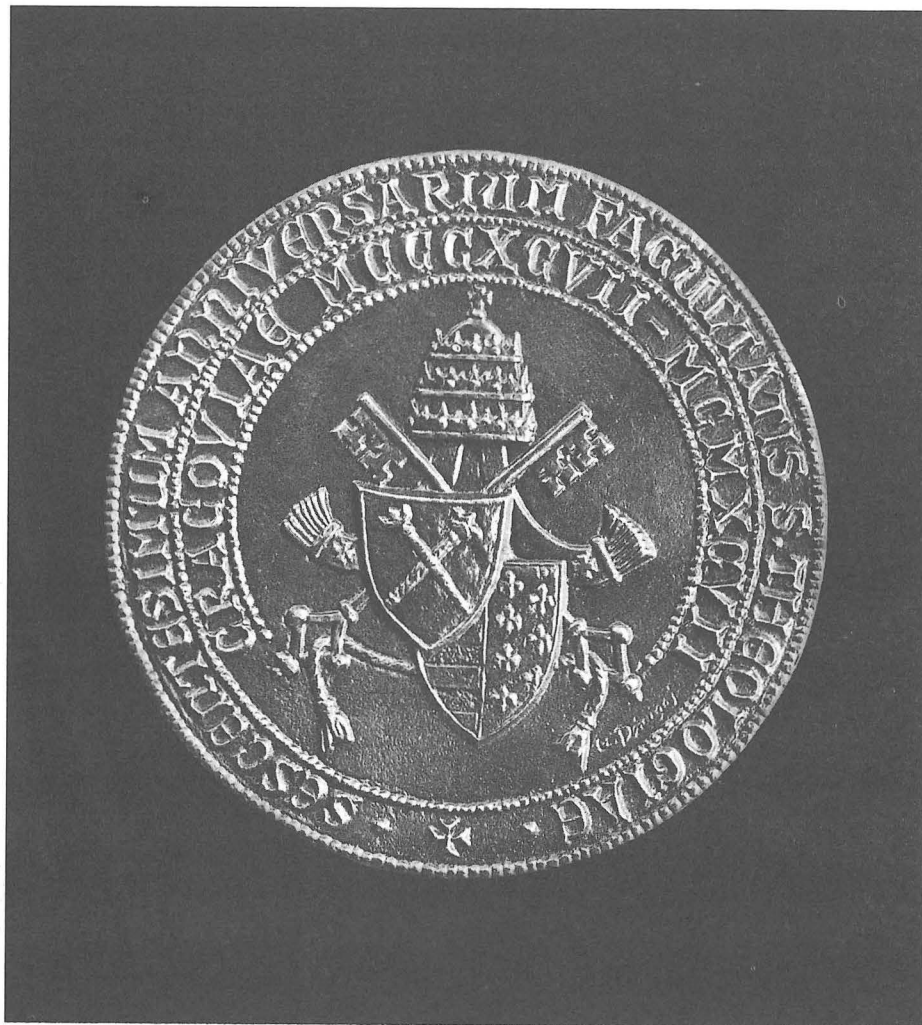
SBL IN CRACOW

The Sixteenth International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature
Cracow, July 18 - 22, 1998

The Sixteenth International Meeting¹ of the Society of Biblical Literature² was held in Cracow in July 1998³. It was an expected and an unex-

¹ The SBL organizes two congresses every year. One in its home country, the USA, regularly at the beginning of the third decade of November. For example, the annual convention for 1998 will be held on November 21-24 in Orlando, Florida. Recently about 8,000 (!) participants are usually attended, despite the fact that the SBL has now only 7,000 registered members. The success of the enterprise is obvious. The second Biblical congress is regularly organized outside the USA, usually in Europe, as the Society has 1,200-1,600 members from Europe. This congress usually starts just after 20 July. The date coincides with the beginning of the summer holidays in most of American universities. It is regrettable that the annual convention is now held without the American Schools of Oriental Research, i.e. without archaeological sessions, as the Directors of ASOR have decided convene their meeting separately, before the SBL convention. In fact, the congresses were organized jointly by the Society of Biblical Literature, the American Academy of Religion and ASOR for many years.

² The SBL was created in 1880. Its first president was Daniel Raynes Goodwin. In 1998 the President is Professor Patrick D. Miller, Princeton Theological Seminary. The SBL is one of the oldest learned societies (the fourth or fifth oldest) in the USA. It has members on every continent, but very few in Poland. Its membership includes researchers, educators, students and other people interested in Biblical studies, in the philology, history and archaeology of the Biblical countries. According to the handbook of the Society, its purpose is 'to stimulate the critical investigation of biblical literature, together with other related literature, by the exchange of scholarly research both in published form and in public forum'. Cf. *SBL. Society of Biblical Literature. Membership Directory and Handbook 1994*, SBL, Decatur, GA 1994, p. 191.



pected event at the same time. It was expected in a sense, because after their first visit to a Central European country, Hungary in 1995, and two meetings in Dublin and Lausanne it was the Society members very likely to direct their steps to Central Europe again. The purpose of the Society's meetings is to promote Biblical research and to get a chance to see local scholarly centers, whose representatives rarely leave their country and only exceptionally present their own research on the Bible to an international audience. The Directors of the SBL were cognizant of the fact that Poland had several internationally known universities, such as the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, the Warsaw University and the Poznań University. However, they also knew that except for one place only, the Catholic University of Lublin, theology and Bible studies were pursued outside the university structure. So they chose a combined invitation from the Jagiellonian University (with a solid, five hundred year old tradition of Biblical and Hebrew research)⁴ and the Pontifical Academy of Cracow (which was established to replace the theological faculty forced to separate from the University by the communist government at the beginning of the 1950s). The event was unexpected as there were rumours that the SBL should eventually go to continents not yet 'discovered' such as South Africa or the Far East or South America, where there are also numerous Christians living and promotion of Bible studies is worthwhile. It is possible that interest in the religious changes in Eastern Europe and the beauty of the mediaeval city of Cracow prevailed and the Society decided to go to Poland, and Cracow in particular. In any case we must stress the deep personal involvement of Professor Kent Richards, the Executive Director of the SBL. The Cracow meeting realized the dream of the undersigned (who has participated in four SBL meetings, and one annual convention of the SBL, in Kansas City, KS in 1992).⁵

³ Previous international meetings were held in Salamanca 1983, Strasbourg 1984, Amsterdam 1985, Jerusalem 1986, Heidelberg 1987, Sheffield 1988, Copenhagen 1989, Vienna 1990, Rome 1991, Melbourne 1992, Münster 1993, Leuven 1994, Budapest 1995, Dublin 1996 and Lausanne 1997.

⁴ Cf. Aleksy Kławałk, *Zarys teologii katolickiej w Polsce* [An Outline of the History of Catholic Theology in Poland], Kraków 1949 (with a summary in French); Witold Tyloch, *Hebrew Studies in Poland* [in:] W. Tyloch, ed., *Oriental Studies in the Sixty Years of Independent Poland*, Polish Scientific Publishers, Warsaw 1983, pp. 11-15.

⁵ It seems I have to take this opportunity to explain the origins of the Cracow meeting, which was certainly the biggest event of its kind in post-war Poland. I met Professor Kent Richards for the first time in Vienna in 1990. I do not know who had suggested my name to the SBL; it may have been Professor Philip R. Davies, whom

Kent Richards came to Cracow in autumn of 1996 to present his proposal to representatives of the Jagiellonian University and the Pontifical Theological Academy and to the interested institutions. He and the undersigned first visited Prof. Marek Szymoński, Vice-Rector of the Jagiellonian University responsible for international cooperation, and received a welcome to the idea of the Cracow congress.

The official collaborators from the University side who participated in the introductory meeting included the Institute of Oriental Philology, the Department of Religious Studies, the Research Center for Jewish History and Culture in Poland and the Department of Archaeology. The Pontifical Academy of Theology was represented by the Head of the Dept. of Hermeneutics, Rev. Prof. Jerzy Chmiel. Prof. Chmiel simultaneously represented the Oriental Committee of the Cracow Branch of the Polish Academy of Sciences, as President of the Committee. Also taking part in the meeting was Dr. S. Russek, head of the Jewish Cultural Center in Cracow. The proposal of the Cracow meeting was warmly welcomed and Dr. Przemysław Piekarski, head of the Institute of Oriental Philology, officially undertook to supervise the preparations. Dr. Z. J. Kapera, Librarian of the Institute of Oriental Philology, was appointed his direct representative responsible for the practical organization of the meeting.

In the later stages of preparations two institutions became particularly involved, helping in the achievement of the final result. The Oriental Committee of the Cracow Branch of the Polish Academy of Sciences kindly invited the eminent qumranologist Prof. Norman Golb (Oriental Institute, University of Chicago) with a guest public lecture on the present state of the Jerusalem hypothesis. Dr. Roman Bogacz, Director of the newly opened, Institute of John Paul II, very kindly agreed to put the resources of his insti-

I had met earlier at the International Mogilany Colloquium of 1989. I only remember that I was very surprised that the SBL wanted me at Vienna even without a paper. I took the floor to discuss some newly created publishing possibilities in the post-communist countries at a special panel meeting of publishers and other interested persons (I was then myself preparing to create The Enigma Press). It was probably there that Prof. Richards noticed me and in effect invited me to Rome (1991) with a paper concerning the present state of Polish Qumranology. Next came my paper at Münster (1993) concerning new research on Qumran in Eastern Europe, where I was able to present to him newly published volumes of the 'Qumranica Mogilanensia' series and current issues of "The Qumran Chronicle" which appear to have impressed him. He accepted my paper on the Qumran cemetery for the Budapest 1995 meeting and seriously took my suggestion to take one of the future SBL meetings to Cracow.

tution at the disposal of the Cracow congress. Thanks to this the organizers received free the possibility to use the building at 18, Kanonicza Street for five days and with enough rooms to make a large exhibition of books on the Bible. The Institute also made available their beautiful garden for opening reception and two open lectures. The sections lectures were held in the rooms of the Collegium Broszianum in the Grodzka Street, close to the Church of St. Peter and Paul, and at the Collegium Juridicum (rooms of the Institute of History of Arts) just opposite.

The Cracow congress of the SBL was organized by the executive staff consisting of Matthew S. Collins, Martha Shockey, Judith Streit and Greg Glover. Rex Matthews was in charge of the book exhibition of the Scholars Press and other American publishers. Mr. and Mrs. Peeters (Leuven) coorganized the exhibition of books from the European side. Prof. Kent Richards, Executive Director of the SBL, always remained in charge as the chief of the enterprise.

Other participants in the preparation for the congress were the American Academy of Religion, the European Association of Biblical Studies (*in statu nascendi* in fact)⁶ and the European Seminar on Methodology in Israel's History. Altogether 132 papers were proposed and mostly delivered, in nearly forty sessions in the following sections: Archaeology; Hebrew Linguistics; Compendium of Feminist Interpretation of the Bible; The Intertestamental Period; Greco-Roman World and Early Christianity; History of Interpretation; Biblical Theology; Materials and Methods: Hebrew Bible; Qumran; Judaica; Pentateuch; Prophets; Isaiah; Kings; Psalms and Wisdom; Synoptic Gospels; Pauline Epistles; Pastorals and Catholic Epistles; Johannine Literature; Apocalypse of John. Besides that, several seminars took place, such as Religion, State and Society in Eastern Europe; European Seminar on Methodology of Israel's History; European Seminar: Mark and Q; and Kompendium feministische Bibelauslegung (the only session in German).

The opening reception took place on Saturday July 19th, 1998 in the small, but comfortable garden on the premises of the Institute of John Paul II. The congress was opened by Professor Kent Richards on behalf of the SBL. Next to take the floor were in succession Dr. Przemysław Piekarski as the representative of the Jagiellonian University and the Rev. Professor Jerzy Chmiel, Vice-Rector of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Cracow. On behalf of

⁶ A meeting of the just being organized European Association of Biblical studies took place during the congress. Its first congress is to be held the year 2000 in Utrecht in the Netherlands. Prof. Lester L. Grabbe of University of Hull (England) acts as its representative.

his institution he presented the medal ACADEMIAE MERENTIBUS to Professor Kent Richards. The precious distinction was warmly acclaimed by the Honoree and by all those present.

The opening convocation (on the next day) also took place at the Institute of John Paul II. Prof. David J. A. Clines delivered a paper summarizing the achievements of the SBL international congresses: *From Salamanca to Cracow: What Has (and Has Not) Happened at the SBL International Meetings*. Ida Fröhlich (Budapest) and Kent Richards, himself responsible for the meetings, took floor as respondents.

Slightly more than two hundred people, including some twenty five from Poland, were officially registered. This proportion of Polish participants was not bad, even if more could have been expected. Very few people represented the main Polish theological and Biblical centers. It is not too surprising that the new, younger generation is more interested and involved in international cooperation, and that the English language is more familiar to them. The presence of some very young people interested in the study of the Bible, not necessarily from the official centers, and the presence of laypeople was a promising sign. But it has to be added that Polish Biblical scholars are usually abroad in mid July collecting material for their research in foreign libraries, or simply on holidays.

The number of papers delivered by Poles is to be noted. It was not very high (a dozen altogether), but for the first time at the SBL international meeting it was higher than that of papers by Hungarians, who were leaders in Eastern Europe for some years. The Polish and Hungarian Biblical scholars were in fact the dominant group among the East Europeans.

Polish scholars read the following papers concerning the Bible: 1. Krzysztof Bardski (Academy of Catholic Theology, Warsaw), *Patristic Interpretation of the Scripture and Modern Biblical Studies. Some Methodological Suggestions* [Session on the History of Interpretation, I]; 2. Jerzy Chmiel (Pontifical Academy of Cracow), *The Visual Interpretation of the Bible* [Session on the Biblical Theology]; 3. Piotr Kasilowski (Pontifical Theological Faculty, Warsaw), *How to be Wealthy? The Letter of James and the Problem of Wealth* [Session on the Pastoral and Catholic Epistles]; 4. Andrzej Kowalczyk (Theological Seminary, Gdańsk-Oliwa), *The Genre of the Gospel of Matthew* [Session on the Synoptic Gospels]; 5. Julian Sulowski (Pontifical Faculty of Theology, Warsaw), *Two Wisdoms - with God and without God: Were Adam and Eve "naked" (Gen 2:25)* [Session on the Pentateuch, II]; 6. Bernard Wodecki (Higher Theological Seminary, Pieniężno), *Jerusalem in Proto-Isaiah Texts* [Session on the Prophets, I]; 7. Izabela Maria Jaruzelska (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań), *The*

Officials in the Kingdom of Israel in the 8th c. B.C. in the Books of Amos, Hosea and Micah [Session on the Prophets, II]. Very unfortunately, two Biblical papers remained undelivered: 1. Franciszek Sieg (Bobolanum, Warsaw), *The Basileia tou theou in Luke-Acts and the Revelation of John* [Session on the Apocalypse of John]; 2. Michał Wojciechowski (Academy of Catholic Theology), *Unity of the Old and New Testament Ethics* [Session of the Biblical Theology]. The Editors of the "Folia Orientalia" are glad to be able to include them in the present issue. We also publish a brief presentation of the Polish biblical research by Michał Wojciechowski (Academy of Catholic Theology, Warsaw), which was distributed among participants of the Cracow congress in xerox copies, and a brief notice on Caiaphas by a doctoral student, Tomasz Bielecki (Jagiellonian University).

The only Polish paper on the Dead Sea Scrolls was delivered by Zdzisław J. Kapera (Jagiellonian University), *Archaeological Interpretations of the Qumran Settlement: A brief review of hypotheses on the fiftieth anniversary of the Dead Sea discoveries*. Because of its length, this paper was presented at a special session, 'Qumran After Fifty Years', with Prof. Kent Richards presiding. It was read in the absence of Geza Vermes's proposed paper on *Fifty Years Involvement with the Dead Sea Scrolls*, but the interest which it aroused proved once more (as the paper of Norman Golb on the Jerusalem hypothesis of origins of the scrolls had done two days before) that the new trend which started in Mogilany in 1987 and slowly began to erode the general consensus was the right direction in the Qumran research. We can no longer maintain the simple, direct connection between the scrolls, the ruins and a community. We now have more questions about the origins of the scrolls than we had in the 1950s and 1960s. The paper delivered by Z. J. Kapera had just appeared in the book *Mogilany 1995*⁷, but was publicly discussed and defended at the SBL meeting for the first time.

⁷ Cf. Z. J. Kapera, *Archaeological Interpretations of the Qumran Settlement. A Rapid Review of Hypotheses Fifty Years After the Discoveries at the Dead Sea* [in:] Z. J. Kapera, ed., *Mogilany 1995. Papers on the Dead Sea Scrolls offered in memory of Aleksy Klawek*, The Enigma Press, Kraków 1998, pp. 15-29 plus appendix (dated December 1997) on pp. 30-33. [Previously published in Polish: *Interpretacje archeologiczne osiedla qumrańskiego. Zwięzły przegląd hipotez w pięćdziesięciolecie odkryć nad Morzem Martwym*, "Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny" 50,4 (1997), pp. 237-250. Cf. slightly revised version in *Amicorum Dona. Studia dedykowane Profesorowi Stefanowi Skowronkowi w siedemdziesięciolecie urodzin*, ed. by F. Kiryk, M. Wilczyński and J. Ciecieląg, Cracow Paedagogical University, Kraków 1998, pp. 63-76 (with a summary in English)].

The Qumran session was very modest and included only several papers. Dr. Felipe Sen (Oriental Society, Madrid) spoke on *Qumran and gnosticism*. Jerzy Ciecieląg (Cracow Pedagogical University) discussed *Coins from the So-Called Essene Settlements on the Dead Sea and the Chronology of Archaeological Strata at Qumran*. Ida Frölich (Pázmány Peter Catholic University, Budapest) presented a paper on *5Q5:10-11 (Songs of Sage) and the Qumran Demonology*⁸.

A reception on the occasion of the first public presentation of the book *Mogilany 1995. Papers on the Dead Sea Scrolls offered in memory of Aleksy Klawek*, published in May 1998 by The Enigma Press was a special event. The volume was prepared for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of the eminent Polish Biblical scholar and Hebrew scholar Reverend Aleksy Klawek (1890-1969), professor of Jan Kazimierz University in Lvov and of the Jagiellonian University. It was a great pleasure for the editor and publisher that Prof. Norman Golb kindly agreed to precede the public presentation by his guest lecture on the scrolls⁹.

From Sunday to Wednesday a dozen publishers (representing thirty two publishing houses in all) exhibited several hundred books, probably almost five hundred titles, on the Bible and the ancient Near East. Among the major publishers were the Scholars Press (Atlanta, GA) (an official publisher for the SBL), the Sheffield Academic Press (Sheffield), Peeters (Leuven), E. J. Brill (Cologne). Books of some smaller English (like Routledge) and some American publishers were also presented. The only one German publisher represented was Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht (Göttingen). The Polish publishers included books of Wydawnictwo Papieskiej Akademii Teologicznej (Cracow), The Enigma Press (Cracow), The British and Foreign Bible Society (Polish Branch, Warsaw), Vocatio (Warsaw) and Wydawnictwo WAM of the Cracow Jesuits. It was an extremely friendly gesture on the part of Peeters and the Scholars Press to offer their theological and philological publications free of charge to the libraries of the Pontifical Theological Academy in Cracow, the Institute of John Paul II and the Institute of Oriental Philology (Jagiellonian University). In this way nearly one hundred valuable publications found their home in the Cracow scholarly libraries.

We should also like to add that separately, but included in the general programme, a session was held on "Christianity-Judaism-Islam: Biblical Stud-

⁸ Cf. Norman Golb, *The Present Status of the Theory of Jerusalem Origin of the Scrolls* (to be published soon by The Enigma Press).

⁹ Cf. Z. J. Kapera, *Qumran at the SBL in Cracow*, "The Qumran Chronicle" 8,1/2 (August 1998).

ies and Cooperation of European Universities”(Sunday, July 19th). Eight papers were given at the session, among them a text by J. R. Zwi Werblowski on *How does the Study of the Bible Affect the Mutual Relationship of Jews, Christians and Muslims*. The session was organized by Dr. Barbara Mękarska, of the Institute of Oriental Philology, on behalf of the Jagiellonian University in connection with the end of the EC Tempus Project. It can be expected that materials of the session will soon appear in a separate volume.

Among further additional events we should mention at least three cultural occasions: a showing of the film “The Unexpected Guest” and a concert of “The Reiner Trio” which were held on the premises of the Cracow Jewish Cultural Center in the Kazimierz district on July 19th; a photo-exhibition “Pray for Peace for Jerusalem” was available in the Institute of John Paul II (the Polish authors of the photographs: Piotr Dylík, Beata Męcel, Cezary Sękowski, Zbigniew Ważydrag).

The last event in the story of the Cracow Congress of the SBL was an evening open air banquet in the historic gardens of the Archaeological Museum in Cracow on July 22nd, 1998. The beautiful weather and the fascinating view of the surrounding park (Planty), the Wawel Castle, the Cracow Cathedral and the 19th century building of the Cracow Theological Seminary, and the very friendly atmosphere among the participants will certainly remain in everyone’s memory.

The Biblical congress in Cracow attracted the attention of the local TV station. Reporter Hubert Hudzio presented three news pieces for information programs on Saturday and Sunday. Also the local “Plus” radio station announced the congress at its beginning and had a half-hour broadcast after it ended. Dr. Z. J. Kapera and Dr. R. Obirek, S.J. talked to the reporter. Information and a brief interview with Dr. Z.J. Kapera were broadcast by the all-Poland Radio Programme 3. Dr. R. Obirek supplied the Polish Section of the Vatican Radio with general information about the SBL congress. The Catholic Information Agency prepared the basic facts for the Polish press, but the congress seems to have escaped the most journals, as in the next week only one brief item was published by the weekly, ‘Gość Niedzielny’. Listing all these minor events may be surprising. However, they are ‘historic’ for the Polish mass media (not only local). One is likely to find information about theological or other religious congresses or colloquia. But ‘Biblical colloquia’ usually go completely unmentioned. This time we could see some small progress.

MICHAŁ WOJCIECHOWSKI

BIBLE AND BIBLICAL STUDIES IN POLAND

Historical background

We are aware of the influence of the denominational, national and other background on scholars. I don’t presume it should and has to determine us; on the contrary, any serious scholarship consists largely in liberating ourselves from such an influence (an unilateral approach can bring some valuable insights, but usually lacks a full scholarly value). Nevertheless, we never free ourselves and our work from a background – and the knowledge of the background does help to understand people.

Let us begin with a more distant past, the 16th century, a key period for the reading and studying of the Bible in Europe. It was also a classical period of Polish culture; we call it the Golden Age. In Western Europe this period was heavily marked by religious struggle, in Poland it brought prosperity. The then state of Polish kings was a kind of commonwealth, including ethnic Poland, Lithuania (both Catholic), Byelorussia and Ukraine (both Orthodox, later mostly Uniate). There were important minorities – German and Jewish. The Reformation, influential during the 16th century, was divided into four main currents (Lutherans, Calvinists, Czech Brethren, antitrinitarians). The high degree of political freedom and the renaissance cultural life also favoured tolerance and finally brought about a competition between the denominations rather than a struggle. Catholicism won the competition – Poland is predominately Catholic now – but that Catholicism perhaps assimilated something from the other currents.

An interest in the Bible in the 16th century came not only from the Protestant side. Polish intellectual life and Polish Christianity as well, was strongly influenced by Erasmus, admired both by critics of the official Catholicism and by Catholic leaders like the main figure of Polish Counter-Reformation,