



15. Members of the team of organizers: Dr. Matthew Collins (SBL) and Dr. Zdzisław J. Kapera (with his wife)



16. Beautiful gardens of the Archeological Museum, where the final banquet was held

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SOME RESEARCH PROBLEMS CONCERNING CAIAPHAS

Joseph Caiaphas (high priest 18-37 CE) is one of the best known Jewish personalities of the Second Temple period. Although that is caused by his presence in the Evangelists' descriptions of the trial of Jesus Christ, we would like to submit here some research problems concerning his biography apart from the episode of Christ's trial.

A. Establishing the date of deposition of Caiaphas is strictly connected with the discussion on the end of Pontius Pilate's term of office as procurator. According to Josephus Flavius' relation, his career finished on account of his severe action against Samaritans.¹ That was why their delegation went to the governor of Syria Vitellius. He dispatched Marcellus, one of his friends, to take charge of the administration of Judea, and ordered Pilate to return to Rome to give the emperor his account of the matters with which he was charged by the Samaritans. And so Pilate, after having spent ten years in Judea, hurried to Rome in obedience to the orders of Vitellius, since he could not refuse. But before he reached Rome, Tiberius had already passed away (...) After Vitellius had bestowed these benefit upon the nation, he removed from his sacred office the high priest Joseph surnamed Caiaphas, and appointed in his stead Jonathan, son of Ananus the high priest.²

Josephus's words about ten years of Pilate's stay in Jerusalem fit in well with the traditional dating of his departure to Rome, before Pesach 36 CE,³ and consequently of the deposition of Caiaphas during Pesach 36CE. But the

¹ *Antiquitates Judaicae* 18:85-90,95.

² *Ant* 18:88- 95, trans. L. H. Feldman, *Josephus...*, London 1965.

³ E. Schürer, rev. & ed. G. Vermes, F. Millar, M. Black, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, Edinburgh 1979, vol. 1, p. 493, n.152.

date of Tiberius' death (16 March 37 CE) makes this view rather impossible.⁴ We would have to presume that Pilates' journey to Rome (where he arrived after the emperor's death) took above 1 year. It would be too long a time especially because: a) Josephus writes that Pilate 'hurried' to Rome, b) it would contradict the law allowing about 3 months for the return of deposed official,⁵ c) it would have been quite strange if an emperor had delayed a new appointment for over a year.

We can try to resolve the problem by assuming that the author of *Antiquitates Judaicae* made a mistake in identifying the Jewish holidays in the relevant passages. For instance, some scholars have tried to assume that Vitellius was in Jerusalem for the first time⁶ during Sukkot 36 CE.⁷ It was then that deposed Caiaphas and designated Jonathan (so Pilate had left Jerusalem before Sukkot 36 CE). In this case the description of Vitellius' next stay in Jerusalem⁸ would have to occur at Pesach 37 CE. But Josephus names the holiday in Ant 18:90-95 as Pesach, and leaves the next one (in Ant 18:122-125) without a name. Also anyone who dates the departure of Pilate to December 36 CE, Vitellius' first visit to Jerusalem to the end of 36 or beginning of 37 CE and his second visit to Pesach 37 CE⁹ has to assume a mistake on Josephus' part. Accordingly to that proposal Caiaphas would have been deposed during Pesach 37 CE. Also at that time Vitellius would have received information about the death of Tiberius.¹⁰

It seems to us that the best chronology of the events of interest to us is due to H.W.Hoehner.¹¹ He considered three descriptions of Vitellius' visits to Jerusalem: Ant 15:405, Ant 18:90-95 and Ant 18:122-125. Here is his way of dating: a) Vitellius' first visit, Ant 15:405, autumn 36 CE,¹² b) Pilate's

⁴ H. W. Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, Cambridge 1972, p. 313; J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, Philadelphia 1975, p. 195, n.153.

⁵ Dio 53:15:6.

⁶ Ant 18:90-95.

⁷ M. Holzmeister, "Biblica" 13 (1932), pp. 28-232.

⁸ Ant 18:122-125.

⁹ E. M. Smallwood, *High Priests and Politics in Roman Palestine*, "Journal of Jewish Studies" 13 (1962), pp. 12-21; E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, Leiden 1981, p.1722, n.93.

¹⁰ Ant 18:122-125.

¹¹ H. W. Hoehner, *Herod ...*, p. 315.

¹² For E. M. Smallwood Ant 15:405 and Ant 18:90-95 are descriptions of that same visit. J. Jeremias and J. Blinzler omit that problem.

departure, winter 36/37 CE¹³, c) Tiberius' death, 16 March 37 CE, d) Vitellius' second visit, Ant 18:90-95, Pesach 37 CE, deposition of Caiaphas, e) Vitellius' third visit, Ant 18:122-125, Pentecost 37 CE; on this occasion he received information about Tiberius' death.¹⁴

Rejecting the dating of Caiaphas' deposition to Pesach 36 CE, we must treat the words of Josephus about 10 years of Pilate's stay in Jerusalem as a rounded number. The most convincing date for the end of Caiaphas' holding the office of high priest is Pesach 37 CE (22 March or 20 April).¹⁵

B. Besides the New Testament, which mentions Caiaphas directly, and *Antiquitates Judaicae*, which mentions Joseph Caiaphas, we also have some passages relating to his family in the rabbinic literature.¹⁶ Since 1990 we have also had to take into consideration inscriptions on the ossuaries found in the tomb excavated in Jerusalem.

The correct semitic transcription of the Greek name 'Kaiaphas' is established as QYP¹⁷ (beginning with qof, not kaf as proposed some scholars¹⁸). Its meaning is not clear; there are several suggestions, eg. 'Physiognomiker'¹⁹ or 'an expert of faces'.

Both rabbinic sources and ossuary inscriptions indicate that the name of Caiaphas was a nickname, a designation of an entire family.²⁰ The New Testament calls the high priest simply Caiaphas, but Josephus refers to him as 'Joseph nicknamed (epikaloumenon) Caiaphas'.²¹ His family came from Bet

¹³ It is in accordance with J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time...*, p. 195, n. 153 and J. Blinzler, *The Trial of Jesus*, Westminster, Md. 1959, p. 271-273.

¹⁴ Concerning Ant 18:122-125 to Pentecosta 37 CE (also in J. Jeremias and J. Blinzler) let us avoid changing holidays described by Josephus.

¹⁵ H. W. Hoehner, *Herod...*, p. 315.

¹⁶ H. Strack, P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament und Midrash*, Munich 1922, vol. I, p. 985.

¹⁷ G. Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinischen Aramäisch*, Leipzig 1905, 2nd ed., p. 161, n. 2, p. 127, n. 4.

¹⁸ See H. Grimm, *Clavis Nov. Test.*

¹⁹ See P. A. de Lagarde, *Überischt über die im Aramäischen, Arabischen und Hebräischen übliche Bildung der Nomina*, 1899, p. 97.

²⁰ JT Ma'asrot 52a.

²¹ D. Flusser, *Caiaphas in the New Testament*, "Atiqot" 21 (1992), p. 19.

Meqoshesh²², a village near Jerusalem. The high-priestly branch was descended from a levirate marriage.²³

In Para 3:5 we find El'yoenai ben ha-Caiaph (QYP or QWP) who was a high priest, one of the few who burned a red heifer.²⁴ R. Brody²⁵ has focused on the attempt to demonstrate that the person from Para 3:5 and that from Ant 19:342 (the high priest Elionaeus, son of Cantheras) are the same one. Given the fact that the same person with the rare name of El'yoenai/Elionaeus bears both nicknames, he assumes that they mean the same thing, one translating the other (i.e. the Semitic one is a translation of the Graeco-Roman form). R. Brody points out that Latin Cantheras (Greek Kanthelios) and QYP (QYP') are etymologically related (meaning 'basket', 'carrying'). So an ancestor of the family could have received the nickname from an occupation (a basketmaker, user of pack-asses).²⁶ But we must remember that such translations of nicknames rarely occurred and moreover that QYP (QYP') may derive from several different Semitic roots.²⁷

R. Rosenfeld²⁸, focusing on the reference to the house of Caiaphas in Tosephta²⁹, writes about the family's musical background suggested by the name Cathros, which we find in the rabbinic literature³⁰ and inscriptions.³¹ Cathros is in Rosenfeld's opinion etymologically related to the Greek kithara ('lyre') which he equates with the Roman name Cantheras (its Semitic equiva-

²² Ant 18:35,95.

²³ Tos. Yeb 1:10, JT Yeb 1:6:3:1, D. Flusser, *Caiaphas...*, p. 19.

²⁴ Some scholars have already suggested a relation between that person and Joseph Caiaphas, eg. that between son and father (see J. Derenbourg, *Essai sur l'histoire et la géographie de la Palestine...*, Paris 1867, p. 212, n.5; E. Schürer, 1901, p.199, n.550) or between brothers [see M. Stern, *The Politics of Herodes and Jewish Society toward the End of the Second Commonwealth*, "Tarbiz" 35,2 (1966), pp. 235-253 (Hebrew)].

²⁵ R. Brody, *Caiaphas and Cantheras* [in:] D. R. Schwartz, *Agrippa I. The last king of Judaea*, Tübingen 1990, pp. 190-195.

²⁶ R. Reich, *Ossuary Inscriptions from the Caiaphas Tomb*, "Atiqot" 21 (1992), p. 75.

²⁷ R. Reich, *Ossuary...*; R. Reich, *Jewish Burial Customs*, "Jerusalem Perspective" 4 (1991), p. 17.

²⁸ B. Z. Rosenfeld, *The Settlement of Two Families of High Priests* [in:] Y. Katz, Y. Ben Arie, Y. Kaniel eds., *Geographical Studies in the Settlement of Eretz Israel III*, Jerusalem 1991, pp. 212-218.

²⁹ Tos. Yeb 1:10.

³⁰ BT Pesachim 57a, Tos. Menachot 13:21.

³¹ See A. Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1983; Y. Yadin, J. Naveh, *Masada I*, Jerusalem 1989.

lent would be QNTRS). Thus, affirming the QYP'-Cantheras equation he suggests another one: QYP'-QTRS (for Cathros).³² Moreover he proposes the opposite direction to Brody's and suggests that the name Caiaphas predated the name Cantheras.

Basing on those considerations R. Reich³³ tries to reconstruct the history of the Caiaphas family. It is probable that his family underwent two changes in the period of Herod the Great. The first of them was that they left their place of settlement, moving from Beth Meqoshesh to Jerusalem (where they had their burial place); the second was a change of name. Those might have been two aspects of the same event. Herod the Great promoted some priestly families (creating a new aristocracy), making them move to Jerusalem.³⁴ Maybe the Jerusalem branch of that family changed its name from QNTRS to QYP' whilst another one became QTRS (simply by assimilation of nun with tav). So in the first century CE both were represented.

C. In November 1990 a tomb was excavated in the Peace Forest in Jerusalem which some scholars regard as the burial place of Joseph Caiaphas and his family.³⁵ The tomb is typical of the late Second Temple period. Six ossuaries were found in it among other things.³⁶ There are 8 inscriptions on them. Three of them (the first on one ossuary, the second and third on another one) are the main indication that the tomb belonged to Caiaphas' family.

They are: the 1st: QP'; the 2nd: YHWSP BR QYP'/QWP'; the 3rd: YHWSP BR QP'.³⁷ The form found in connection with the name Yehosef (2nd inscription) is mainly taken into consideration. The proposal which identifies that nickname with Joseph Caiaphas makes us treat the two forms from the 2nd and 3rd inscriptions as a translation of the nickname known from the New Testament and Antiquitates Judaicae.

³² In fact, as R. Reich assumes, it is unlikely that two different families would have so phonetically similar names. So that equation is reasonable.

³³ R. Reich, *Ossuary...*; R. Reich, *Jewish...*

³⁴ M. Stern, *The Politics of Herod...*, p.235-253.

³⁵ R. Reich, *Jewish...*

³⁶ Z. Greenhut, *The Caiaphas Tomb in North Talpiyot*, Jerusalem, "Atiqot" 21 (1992), p. 63; Z. Greenhut, *Discovery of the Caiaphas Tomb*, "Jerusalem Perspective" 4 (1991), p. 6-12

³⁷ R. Reich, *Ossuary...*

But there are some objections to that type of reading them. It is said for instance that the orthography of QP' (1st and 3rd ins.) does not allow us to read it as Qayyafa or Qayafa because in the first century CE a scribe would have had to put in the semivowel jod for the inscription to be read in this way.³⁸ Moreover, even the editors of the inscriptions admit that the reading of the 2nd inscription is influenced by the historical context and it would be possible to read the second letter in QYP' as waw instead of jod. That would change the reading into Qoppa, Qufa.³⁹ But we must pay attention to the fact that on one ossuary there are two forms of the nickname (2nd and 3rd; with yod/waw and without it). It may be a testimony that the orthography of the nickname was not certain or that the scribe made mistakes (inscriptions had no decorative function and were made after the ossuaries were placed in the loculi).

Although some scholars accept the way of reading of the nickname, there are also other objections (secondary ones in our opinion): the lack of the word *kohen* before the name, situation and form of the tomb (not very decorative), a coin of Agrippa II in one of the craniums (a pagan custom in a Sadducean family?), a higher than average level of mortality of non-adult members of the family.⁴⁰

If the tomb really belonged to Caiaphas' family, we could assume that he died as a man of about sixty; this is based on the study of the skeletal remains.⁴¹

³⁸ E. Puech, *A-t-on redécouvert le tombeau du grand-prêtre Caïphe?*, "Le Monde de la Bible" No. 80 (1993), p. 47.

³⁹ In opinion of E. Puech QYP' is a unique possible translation of Caiaphas; the first name is useless in the identification because of its high frequency in that period.

⁴⁰ But see J. Zias, *Human Skeletal Remains from the Caiaphas Tomb*, "Atiqot" 21 (1992). It may have been caused by a drought.

⁴¹ J. Zias, *Human...*

FERDINAND ROHRHIRSCH

ZUR NÜTZLICHKEIT DER PHILOSOPHIE IN DER ARCHÄOLOGIE

EINE PARAPHRASIERUNG VON "WISSENSCHAFTSTHEORIE UND QUMRAN"

Zusammenfassung:¹

Auf der Basis einer von Karl Popper entwickelten kritisch-rationalen Wissenschaftstheorie untersucht diese philosophische Arbeit - in Auseinandersetzung mit gegenwärtig praktizierter Methodologie einer Fachwissenschaft - die Argumentationsstrategien, mit denen die Geltungsansprüche von Theorien der Biblischen Archäologie abgesichert werden. Die theoretisch-methodologische Reflexion und die vom Autor vorgeschlagenen Korrekturen für eine Biblische Archäologie werden anschließend am Grabungsbefund der Ausgrabungen von Chirbet Qumran und En Feschcha exemplarisch angewendet. Dabei zeigt sich, daß die Theorie des Ausgräbers, 'die Anlage von Chirbet Qumran war Sitz einer religiösen Gemeinschaft', als 'bewährt' gelten kann, da sie die verfügbaren Daten widerspruchsfrei und kohärent einzubinden vermag. Das gelingt den vorliegenden Konkurrenztheorien nicht im selben Maße.

A) Offenlegung der Arbeitsprämissen

Philosophie ist nützlich. Philosophie kann auch für eine ganz konkrete Fachwissenschaft von Nutzen sein. Meine unausgesprochene, operative Leitillusion war es, diese These mit den Ergebnissen meiner Arbeit zu belegen.

¹Ferdinand Rohrhirsch, *Wissenschaftstheorie und Qumran. Die Geltungsbegründungen von Aussagen in der Biblischen Archäologie am Beispiel von Chirbet Qumran und En Feschcha*, (NTOA = Novum testamentum et orbis antiquus, 32), Universitätsverlag, Fribourg und Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1996. 408 Seiten, 23 Pläne und zahlreiche Register, ca. 160,- DM.