THE LAST SURVIVING COLUMNS OF 11QNJ

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The ‘Description of the New Jerusalem’ of Qumran Cave 11 ($11Q18 = 11QNJ$) is the only manuscript of a considerable size in the Dutch lot which is still unpublished. It seems thus appropriate to include its preliminary publication¹ in a volume in honour of Prof. A.S. VAN DER WOUIDE, as a fitting tribute to his achievements in publishing the Dutch share of Qumran scrolls².

At the time of its discovery $11QNJ$ was a seemingly complete scroll³, but in such a bad state of preservation that only isolated fragments from a protuberance on the upper exterior part could be recovered. In all aspects the appearance of the scroll was similar to the scroll of Ezekiel from 11Q which has been amply described by W.H. BROWNLEE⁴. This scroll was also complete when acquired, but after many efforts by H.J. PLENDERLEITH, the foremost expert, only a few fragments could in the end be recovered.

¹ The preliminary character of this publication is evident in the fact that it is based not on a study of the originals but on the study of the photographs present at the Qumrán Instituut in Groningen. This is the reason why no material description of the fragments nor palaeographic analysis of the script are included here. I want to express my thanks to Prof. J.P.M. VAN DER PLOEG for having entrusted to me the publication of this text.
² See VAN DER WOUIDE’s “Bibliography” at the end of this volume.
³ See the photograph PAM 43.891, published by A.S. VAN DER WOUIDE, “Fragmente einer Rolle der Liederen für das Sabbatopfer aus Höhle XI von Qumran (11QSirSabb)”, in Von Kanaan bis Kerala. Festschrift für Prof. Mag. Dr. Dr. J.P.M. van der Ploeg O.P. (AOAT 211, Kevelaer/Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1982), 333.
The 11QNJ fragments recovered come from at least two different sheets of leather. One of the fragments has preserved part of the stitching. This fragment also shows that the system used to trace the dry lines was not in this case by piercing a hole, but by drawing ink points to guide the ruler. The manuscript has been carefully prepared. Vertical and horizontal dry lines are clearly visible in most of the fragments. The distance between the lines is 0.7 cm\(^5\); the intercolumnar margins oscillate around 1.8 cm., except at the end of a sheet. In this case (frag. 17), the distance between the points and the edge of the leather is 1.5 cm, which implies a margin of about 3 cm. between the last column of a sheet and the first column of the next one. Most of the fragments preserve the upper margin, up to 1.8 cm. in frag. 16. and 2.5 cm. in frag. 25, but I suspect that in this case part of the upper margin is formed by extraneous elements which have become adhered to the original leather.

Most of the fragments recovered are reproduced in the PAM photographs 43.993-44.002 (the photographs which I received from VAN DER PLOEG). An examen of the rest of PAM photographs of 11Q materials of the Qumrân Instituut shows that also all the fragments of PAM 44.009 belong to this scroll\(^6\). These fragments are probably the small fragments detached during the process of unrolling the scroll. Some of them have been tentatively assembled with the biggest fragments to which they could have belonged, but others remain as unidentified fragments. These joints are, of course, provisional, and must be verified from the originals in Jerusalem.

In this presentation I give no palaeographical analysis of the script, since this can be offered only after study of the original manuscript. But, as is apparent from a cursory perusal of the photographs, the script clearly belongs to the sort described by CROSS\(^7\) as a ‘Round’ semiformal

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\(^5\) The measured distances in the 1:1 photographs are: 1.8 frag. 3; 1.9 frag. 11; 1.8 frag. 16; 2.0 frag. 19; 2.0 frag. 21; 1.6 frag. 22; 1.8 frag. 24. But a margin must be allowed for distortion.

\(^6\) All these photographs are reproduced in A Facsimile Edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Prepared with an Introduction and Index by R.H. EISENMAN and J.M. ROBINSON (Biblical Archaeology Society, Washington 1991). The 11QNJ plates are 1702-1711 and 1718 in Volume II.

\(^7\) The hand described by F.M. CROSS, “The Developments of the Jewish Scripts”, The Bible and the Ancient Near East. Essays in Honor of W.F. Albright (Garden City, 1965), 176, figure 2, line 5, using as model 4QNum\(^5\), now published by N.R. JASTRAM, The book of Numbers from Qumran Cave IV (4QNum\(^9\)) (Harvard University Diss., 1990)