

Orion Center News Update

The Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature

מרכז אוריון לחקר מגילות מדבר יהודה והספרות הקרובה להן

May 2001

Orion Center Welcomes New Web Master

Hebrew University doctoral candidate, David Emanuel, has been appointed webmaster of the Orion Center website and moderator of the Orion email discussion group. David recently completed an M.A. degree in the field of "The Bible and Ancient Near East" at the Hebrew University's Rothberg International School and is working on a Ph.D on "Inner Biblical Interpretation and Allusion in Historiographic Psalms". He served as an Orion Student Intern last year, while taking a graduate seminar on Biblical Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls with Orion Center Director, Dr. Esther Chazon.

David also holds an M.Sc. in Computer Science from University College, London, and worked in that field as Project Executive for Reuters in London. He thus brings strong computer skills and experience, in addition to knowledge of the Bible and Dead Sea Scrolls, to his new position at the Orion Center. David replaces former Orion Chief of Publications, Dr. Avital Pinnick, who has taken a position in the private computer market. The Center wishes both David and Avital well in their new endeavors!

Virtual Qumran

The Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature has been awarded a grant by the Dorot Foundation to develop a Virtual Qumran tour on the Orion web site.

Virtual Qumran (VQ) will provide information about the Dead Sea Scrolls and the new picture they offer of Jews, Judaism and the origins of Christianity during the formative Second Temple period. This will be an educational resource for high school and college students, teachers, and the general public. The information will be presented in an entertaining format and will include scans of scroll fragments, artifacts, maps, a timeline and pictures with captions.

VQ will be organized as an on-line tour of the caves and archeological site at Qumran. The visitor will be able to enter the caves, buildings and other installations (water cisterns, cemeteries, etc.) where he or she can learn about the activities conducted there and the people engaged in them.

At the pottery workshop, for example, the visitor will be able to compare the pottery made at Qumran with that from other sites, learn about the life styles and beliefs of different communities and about modern scientific techniques of pottery analysis, including neutron activation of the clay in nuclear reactors. During the visit to the communal hall, the visitor will get a sense of communal meetings, meals, study, and worship, while learning about competing institutions of Second Temple Judaism - including the Jerusalem Temple and the fledgling synagogue.

The VQ tour will be fully co-ordinated with the scholarly pages of the Orion web site, providing additional resources for those who wish to pursue a specific topic in greater detail. The tour and expanded Orion web site reflect the most up-to-date academic research on the Dead Sea Scrolls, which is the hallmark of the Orion Center.

The Orion Center wishes to thank the Dorot Foundation for its generous contribution to the Virtual Qumran Project.

Orion Grant Recipients Speak

Three Orion grant recipients spoke at our coffee hour talks this spring: Dr. Avner Glicklich (History of Israel, Tel Aviv University), Noach Hacham (Doctoral Student, History of Israel, Hebrew University) and Ronit Nikolsky (Doctoral Student, Religious Studies, Hebrew University).

At the most recent event, Dr. Avner Glicklich spoke about his application of comparative religion, anthropology and phenomenology in order to understand the priests' experience when they conducted sacrifices in the Jerusalem Temple. He draws comparisons with Greek religion and culture, particularly sports and theater, and poses the question: Why were the priests themselves drawn to Hellenistic (that is, Greek) influence? The Scrolls' component of his work includes a new perspective on the priestly origins of the Qumran sect and on aspects of that community's self-understanding.

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Sixth International Orion Symposium Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls

20-22 May 2001

Beit Maierdorf, Mt. Scopus

The recent publication of two volumes of the "Discoveries in the Judaean Desert" series, devoted exclusively to sapiential texts, XX and XXXIV, provides the impetus for a reassessment and reevaluation of this group of compositions within Judaism and early Christianity. Prior to the discovery of the Scrolls, our knowledge of wisdom literature in the Second Temple period was limited to contemporary biblical books, apocryphal works, and pseudepigraphical writings. Recently published compositions, especially 4QInstruction (formerly Sapiential Work) and Mysteries, now allow for a more refined and nuanced picture of wisdom literature and its impact on and interaction with other genres. In addition to shedding light on the world of their authors, these texts also provide a missing link between earlier and later sapiential compositions. Analysis of these newly published works also demonstrates how the authors reacted to and reused biblical wisdom in their new literary creations.

March - April 2001

March. 14: Coffee Hour Presentation

Ronit Nikolsky (Ph.D Student, Hebrew University): *History of the Rechabites.*

April. 18: Coffee Hour Presentation

Noach Hacham (Ph.D. Student, Hebrew University): *New Perspectives on III Maccabees.*

May 2001

May. 5: Coffee Hour Presentation

Dr. Avner Glicklich (History of Israel, Tel Aviv University): *The Historical-Anthropological Background to the Formation of the Dead Sea Sect.*

May. 16: Greenfield Scholars' Seminar

Susan Sheridan (Orion Visiting Scholar and Associate Prof, Anthropology Dept, University of Notre Dame): *Reexamination of the Human Skeletons from Qumran and the Question of Women at the Site.* Beit Maierdorf Faculty Club, 12:00 - 14:00.

May. 20-22: Sixth International Orion Symposium

Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

May. 22: Scrolls' Forum

Esther Eshel (Bible, Bar Ilan University): *The Belief in Demons in the Second Temple Period.* Israel Museum, 19:00.

May. 30: Coffee Hour Presentation

Nathaniel Levtow (Ph.D Candidate, Brown University): *Polemics against 'Incorrect' Worship Practices in Qumran Sectarian Literature.*

June 2001

June. 6: Greenfield Scholars' Seminar

Michael Swartz (Orion Visiting Scholar and Associate Professor of Hebrew and Comparative Studies, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Ohio State University): *Sacrifice in the Synagogue: The Ritual for the Day of Atonement in Jewish History and Imagination.*

June. 20: End of Term Coffee Hour

(In the Scholars Room - 6115)

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Note: Coffee Hour Presentations and Greenfield Scholars' Seminars are held at 12:15, room 4121, Humanities Wing, Mt. Scopus, unless otherwise noted.

Orion Center Programs Spring 2001