



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 2007

11th Orion Symposium: June 18–21, 2007

The Eleventh International Orion Symposium, “New Approaches to the Study of Biblical Interpretation in Judaism of the Second Temple Period and in Early Christianity,” will take place June 18–21, 2007, at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. This year’s symposium is co-sponsored by the University’s Center for the Study of Christianity, under the direction of Dr. David Satran. The symposium marks the second cooperative venture for Orion and the CSC, and continues from the foundational work of our first such venture, the 2004 9th Orion International Symposium, “Text, Thought and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity.”

The 2004 symposium brought together scholars of Second Temple Jewish and early Christian literature to explore the possibilities and problems inherent in studying these texts together. The June symposium takes this exploration several steps forward, involving researchers of later Jewish and Christian writings as well. The invited scholars, who come from North America, Europe, and Israel, will address such issues as the development of the biblical canon; the connections and distinctions between Jewish interpretation within the Land of Israel and outside of it; between Jewish and Christian exegesis in earlier and later periods; between biblical interpretation in literature and in art. In a departure from the past, the Symposium program features several workshops for invited lecturers only, which are intended to encourage free discussion and scholarly give and take, as symposium presenters bring their wide range of viewpoints to bear upon specific questions of method and meaning related to the interpretation of ancient texts.

In marking the 60th anniversary year of the discovery of the first Qumran scrolls, this year’s conference illustrates but one of the new directions possible as the study of the scrolls enters its new “integrative” phase. The multiplicity of academic disciplines and concerns represented by the symposium’s participants promise to make this an exciting scholarly encounter.

For the schedule of symposium lectures and further information, please see our website.

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Director: Steven E. Fassberg
Institute of Jewish Studies
Rabin World Center of Jewish Studies
Mt. Scopus, The Hebrew University
Jerusalem, Israel 91905
Tel: 972–2–588–1966
Fax: 972–2–588–3584
E-mail: msdss@mscc.huji.ac.il
Web site: <http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il>

Celebrating 60: Conferences and Exhibitions Mark Anniversary Year

It comes as no surprise that 2007 presents a bumper crop of conferences and programs on Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls, for both the specialist and the non-specialist. The upcoming Orion conference (see facing box) is but the first in a summer/fall roster of academic conferences marking the 60th anniversary of the discovery of Qumran Cave 1.

The International Organization for Qumran Studies holds their sixth meeting from July 16–18, 2007, in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The topic: *Qumran Cave 1 Revisited: Reconsidering the Cave 1 Texts Sixty Years after Their Discovery*. Conference organizers note that “after fifteen years of scholarly focus on . . . Cave 4,” this anniversary provides an appropriate time and venue to reconsider the Cave 1 texts in light of what we now know from subsequent discoveries. In addition to overviews of scholarship in various areas, specific documents will be discussed.

Coming up in September (2–5) is “Nonbiblical Tradition in Qumran (Apocrypha, Aramaic literature and other),” organized by the Oriental Institute of the Pazmany Peter Catholic University Faculty of Humanities in Piliscsaba (Hungary). Birmingham, England picks up the baton in October, with “The Dead Sea Scrolls: Texts and Context” (October 29–November 1), which is aiming for an “interdisciplinary reassessment” of the Dead Sea texts in relation to each other, to the Qumran site, and to the larger context of Second Temple Judaism. And later in November (the 17th to the 20th) the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, held in San Diego, will feature a plenary session reviewing 60 years of scrolls study; two interdisciplinary sessions—one on archaeology, sectarian history, and high-tech approaches to the scrolls, and one on the gospel of John and the scrolls; plus the regularly scheduled Qumran section meetings.

The common thread to this diversity of gatherings is the desire to celebrate and take advantage of the new directions of research now possible, with the publication of the multitude of Dead Sea fragments virtually complete. The discussions begun in these multiple venues should set the stage for new advances in the fields of Qumran studies and related disciplines for the coming decade.

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Meanwhile, the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition continues to make the rounds in the United States. It has been at the Union Station Museum in Kansas City, Mo., from February through mid-May, and may be seen in San Diego from the end of June through the end of December (not by chance coinciding with the SBL Annual Meeting!). As with its prior stops, local exhibition organizers have taken care that a range of educational resources and programs on the scrolls are available to the community during the run of the exhibitions. Thus, sixty years on, the Qumran caves continue to yield up their treasures for many to grasp.

News From the Scholars' Room

The Scholars Room Library, one of the great benefits of our location in the Hebrew University's Rabin World Center for Jewish Studies, has been undergoing a modest transformation throughout the course of this year.

Orion Intern Hannah Wortzman, a Masters' candidate in Jewish Civilization, who hails originally from Ontario, has spent much of this year preparing our collection of offprints for cataloguing. Although the project is not yet completed, the offprints are already much more easily accessible to scholars who come to work at the Center.

The backbone of the offprints collection is a gift of articles from the library of the late Jonas C. Greenfield on subjects ranging from Bible to Hebrew and Aramaic linguistics to Qumran. The collection has been greatly enhanced by the receipt of a recent donation of offprints from Shemaryahu Talmon, relating particularly to various aspects of Qumran studies. Again under Prof. Talmon's direction, we now enjoy a range of publications from the Hebrew University Bible Project.

A number of other academic friends from near and farther away have also been taking pains to help us bring our Library collection up to date. Special thanks to Daniel Schwartz, who steadily supplies us with offprints and has added significantly to our on-shelf journals. We have received several publications from members of the Nordic Network in Qumran Studies, giving us new translations of the Scrolls into Danish and Norwegian; as well as recent donations in Spanish and German. And we are now working with our editorial colleagues at Brill to bring our collection of Brill publications in Scrolls scholarship up to speed.

The staff of the Orion Center and the scholars who come to work here owe a great debt of gratitude to all of you who have been helping to make sure that your publications reach the Library as well as the Bibliography. It has been an exciting year from the desks of the Scholars' Room, and we hope to further develop this resource in the course of the coming year.

Orion Center Events—Spring 2007*

March 13: Coffee Hour Presentation

12:00–13:30 p.m. Joseph Angel (Ph.D. student, Skirball Department of Jewish History, New York University): "Priesthood in History and Imagination at Qumran" (in English). Rabin Building, Room 3001.

APRIL 17: Jonas C. Greenfield Scholars' Seminar

12:15–14:00 p.m. Prof. Torleif Elgvin (Department of Biblical and Jewish Studies, Evangelical Lutheran University College, Oslo): "Seeing the Heavenly Temple: from the Tanach to Qumran" (in English). Rabin Building, Room 2001.

May 15: Coffee Hour Presentation

12:15–13:30 p.m. Moshe Tur-Paz (Ph.D. student, Department of Jewish History, Hebrew University): "מי הוא לא יהודי? זהות יהודית בימי הבית השני" ["Who is *Not* a Jew: Jewish Identity in the Second Temple Period"] (in Hebrew). Rabin Building, Room 2001.

May 29: Coffee Hour Presentation

12:15–13:30 p.m. Russell Hobson (Ph. D. student, Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies, University of Sydney, Australia): "Methods for Measuring the Stability of Ancient Near Eastern Texts in Transmission" (in English). Rabin Building, Room 3001.

*All events are held in the Mandel World Center for Jewish Studies (the Rabin Building).

Research in Progress at Orion

This academic year has been quite a stimulating one within the context of the Greenfield Scholars' Seminar and other research taking place at Orion. This past winter, the Seminar hosted Emanuel Tov and Menahem Kister, both of Hebrew University, in two groundbreaking presentations. Tov, speaking on "The Many Faces of Scripture" in light of the Qumran discoveries, noted that a number of ancient texts NOT included in the Masoretic Hebrew Bible—including manuscripts used by the Septuagint translators and the redactors of the Samaritan Pentateuch, as well as some texts found at Qumran—share a combination of "stretches of Scripture text and exegetical expansions." If the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch texts were regarded as authoritative, as *scriptural*, by their communities, then likely some Qumran texts with similar characteristics, in particular *4QReworked Pentateuch*, should be considered as similarly authoritative for the communities in which they circulated. Says Tov, "All these texts need to be studied as Hebrew Scripture."

Kister's presentation, on "Liturgical Scrolls and their Contribution to the Study of the Formulation of the Amidah Prayer," first considered a series of Greek synagogue prayers that are found in the fourth century Christian "rule book," the *Apostolic Constitutions*, teasing out the implications of these prayers for "the documentation of early forms of the Amidah." Then Kister discussed liturgical fragments found in the Judean Desert, dating from ca. 100 CE, which contain a prayer very similar in content and style to the *Modim* prayer of the Amidah. These recent discoveries indicate that late medieval versions of the rabbinic prayer "are in fact ancient, and have striking parallels in texts from the first centuries CE."

Our roster of student researchers and Visiting Scholars this year has given the Orion Calendar an "intercontinental" flair. Doctoral student researchers have included Yehoshua Granat and Moshe Tur-Paz, both of Hebrew University, as well as Joseph Angel of New York University, and Russell Hobson, of the University of Sydney, Australia. Granat studied "creation themes" shared by second Temple literature and early *piyyutim*; Tur-Paz has been investigating the boundaries of religious community in the Second Temple period; Angel is researching the rhetoric of priesthood in the Qumran documents; Hobson has been studying the issue of uniformity in the transmission of the biblical text from the third century BCE to the second century CE.

Torleif Elgvin, professor at Evangelical Lutheran University College, Oslo and chairman of the Nordic Network in Qumran Studies (www.mnqs.org) was an Orion Visiting Scholar from March until May. While in Jerusalem, he prepared text editions of biblical fragments from the Judean Desert belonging to the Norwegian Schøyen Collection. Elgvin presented some of his research in a Scholars' seminar talk entitled "Seeing the Heavenly Temple, from Tanach to Qumran." In dialogue with recent studies on the origins of Jewish mysticism, Elgvin argues that a type of priestly, Temple-focused visionary mysticism *predates* the throne vision of Ezekiel, and that a trajectory may be traced from a number of other First Temple period texts, through to some presectarian mystical writings found in the Qumran library.

A thank you to all who have made the Center such a stimulating scholarly forum!

