



The Seventeenth International Orion Symposium

(Con)textual Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls

Zoom Webinar, February 28–March 3, 2022

*Please note: Times are given in Israel Standard Time. Start time for each day's first session is
4:00 p.m. IST; 2:00 p.m. GMT; 9:00 a.m. EST.

**Pre-registration for the webinar is required; to pre-register, please click [here](#).

ABSTRACTS

Monday, February 28, 2022

Session I (4:00–6:00 p.m.)

Emanuel Tov

Hebrew University

The Development of Groups of Scripture Texts

The existence of text groups is not self-understood. Initially there was one early Scripture text, while in some books there were several early texts, and afterwards scribes started to transmit those texts. The transmission by individual scribes could have continued without limitation, but because of certain social, religious, and historical conditions, groups of texts were created. Some of these conditions had to do with the existence of scribal schools, others with liturgical and literary needs, and again others with the development of popular texts. In this study we wish to focus on these diverse processes. Major textual diversity is recognized in the pre-Christian centuries, but within that variety, patterns of text groups are visible, each of them developing for different reasons. Before the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered these text groups were not known, and with further discoveries (?), possibly additional groups will come to light, or the known data will be viewed in a different light. The simplistic presentation of the textual development of three generations ago as if the world of Scripture was limited to MT, LXX, and SP, has long ago been overtaken by a more realistic view of the data.



Michael Segal

Hebrew University

From the Jordan to Mt. Ebal and Back:

On the Textual Dynamics of Deuteronomy 27 and Joshua 3–4; 8

The biblical fragments discovered among the Dead Sea scrolls have provided a wealth of information and insight into the final stages of the growth and the early stages of the transmission of various biblical books. The present lecture will address one such example, the locations and functions of the stones and altar set up after crossing into the Land, according to the law in Deuteronomy 27 and in the narrative(s) of Joshua 3–4; 8. This case has received extensive attention from text-critical scholars due to the significant difference in the order of events attested in a large fragment in 4QJosh^a in contrast with all other textual witnesses. I will present a new reconstruction of the textual dynamics that led to the various texts and versions in their current forms, from the pre-canonical stages through the earliest stages of transmission and interpretation.

The literary development of Deuteronomy 27 and Joshua 3–4 will be discussed (only briefly, due to time constraints), and in particular how it relates to the subsequent arguments. The lecture will focus on the composition of the passage in Josh 8:30–35 (MT), the building of the altar on Mt. Ebal and the accompanying ceremony. Josh 8:30–32 functions as the fulfillment of the rewritten command in Deuteronomy 27 in the final stage of its literary development. The intertextual allusions in Josh 8:33–35 are also significant, adopting the language and themes from the public reading ceremony in Deuteronomy 31 and reflecting the fulfillment of that passage as well.

This analysis will form the basis for the investigation of the version of events in 4QJosh^a, which places the section in the context of the events of Joshua 3–4. In addition to discussing the motivation for the reordering of the fragments, it will be suggested that the order of events, and the “additional” text in col. I, lines 2–3 of that scroll reflect a novel ancient interpretation of the text(s) of Joshua 3–4.

Session II (6:30–8:00 p.m.)

Jonathan Ben-Dov

Tel-Aviv University

Qumran Texts in Cryptic Script and Secrecy in Antiquity

In recent years I have conducted a long-term project on texts from Qumran written in the alphabet commonly called “cryptic A.” In general, the corpus is not as large as previously considered, and attests to no more than ten different scrolls from caves 4 and 11. Some scrolls represent previously known texts or similar content (*Serekh haEdah*, calendars), while some show fragments of texts not known from elsewhere. In addition to evaluating this corpus in and of itself, a cultural comparison is also required. In this paper I address the phenomenon of cryptic writing among various other contemporary traditions from the Hellenistic–Roman period in the Ancient Near East and Egypt. Some scholars would say that the cryptic script from Qumran is not “cryptic” at all, but rather should be called “hieratic,” in the sense of a specialized writing system for priests or initiates rather than a secret endeavor. On the other hand, the Qumran corpus shows similarities with the wider phenomenon of “secrecy” in comparative religion. In turn, the very phenomenon of “secrecy” is now better understood based on some recent studies. This wide array of information will be considered in the present paper.

Atar Livneh

Ben-Gurion University

A Gulf between Us?

The Study of Qumran and Non-Qumran Texts that Rewrite the Bible

Coining the term “rewritten Bible” sixty years ago, Geza Vermes applied it to diverse documents—some from Qumran, others (Josephus’s *Antiquities*, for example) surviving through other channels. Although most scholars concur that both groups belong to the same category (irrespective of its precise definition), they have largely conducted their research in separate subdisciplines. Tracing the history of this study, this paper evinces that each subdiscipline highlights slightly different aspects, and thus demonstrates the advantage of an

interdisciplinary approach.

Two aspects of Qumran studies are prominent: 1) Scholars who discuss the Qumran texts that rewrite the Bible, as well as other contemporary Jewish works composed in the land of Israel, tend not to relate to Greco–Roman literary conventions; 2) The state of preservation of many of the texts has hampered the determination of their literary features; scholars thus frequently engage in detailed analysis of the biblical background.

Notwithstanding their fragmentary nature, the gradual publication of these texts has stimulated a lively debate regarding the “rewritten Bible” category. While taking center stage in Qumran studies, it has rarely crossed disciplinary borders. Even recent studies by non-Qumran scholars analyzing texts that rewrite the Bible tend to closely adhere to Vermes’s definition of “rewritten Bible” as a “genre” and “type of biblical interpretation.” Generally discussing complete texts composed or preserved in Greek or Latin, these scholars tend to pay close attention to literary aspects, especially Jewish authors’ adoption of classical literary models.

An inter/multidisciplinary approach would thus provide us with a more comprehensive view of the phenomenon. Treating 1QGenAp 19–20 and *Jubilees* 11–12 as Hellenistic literary creations, for example, reveals that the former exhibits typical novelistic features while the latter fabricates a childhood for a figure that anticipates his greatness as an adult. Applying the observations about “rewritten/rewriting the Bible” developed in field of Qumran to the study of *Biblical Antiquities (LAB)* similarly enables us to more accurately classify it as a “historiographical” work, its penchant for exempla being characteristic of contemporaneous historiographies.

Session III (8:30–10:00 p.m.)

Armin Lange

University of Vienna

Scriptural Texts in Context

This presentation will contextualize the copies of the Jewish Scriptures found in the various sites around the Dead Sea within both their textual history in antiquity and late antiquity and within the textual history of other authoritative literatures in these periods. It has long been observed that the biblical manuscripts from the Dead Sea document both textual plurality and



emerging textual fixity of the Jewish biblical text(s). However, it remains unresearched if this intertwining of textual plurality and an emerging Jewish standard text is unique to ancient Jewish culture or has parallels elsewhere in the ancient world. A comparison with the textual histories of Homeric, rabbinic, and early Christian Literature will hopefully shed new light on the textual history of the Jewish scriptures as documented in the Dead Sea scrolls.

Noam Mizrahi

Hebrew University

Revisiting 4QIsa^m (4Q66)

Stemming from an ongoing research project studying the 4Q Isaiah scrolls, the paper focuses on five fragments published under the siglum of 4QIsa^m (4Q66). The first part discusses material and scribal differences between two groups of fragments, which may or may not represent two different manuscripts. The second part is devoted to text-critical analysis, demonstrating that even an unimpressive, seemingly insignificant correction actually reveals an exegetical debate about a key phrase in Isa 61:3, with implications for biblical lexicography and the theological conceptualization of the art of scribal transmission.

Tuesday, March 1

Session V (6:30–8:00 p.m.)

Carol A. Newsom

Emory University

The Significance of 1QH^a 9:33–41 for Understanding the *Hodayot* of the Teacher

From the earliest beginnings of research on the *Hodayot*, the hypothesis that the Teacher of Righteousness composed or is the implied speaker of at least some of the compositions has been a central claim. Even those who were skeptical of associating certain compositions with the historical Teacher of Righteousness recognized their distinctiveness. Although early attempts to distinguish a subset of Teacher psalms relied on internal criteria, the reconstruction of 1QH^a and the evidence of the 4QH manuscripts made clear that the compositions often associated with the Teacher formed a distinct collection which were sometimes copied as a



separate scroll (see 4Q429). This codicological evidence also confirmed the scholarly perception that the composition in 1QH^a 9:1–10:4, often associated with the *Maskil*, served as an introduction to the collection. Inadequate attention has been paid, however, to the rhetorical shaping of the final section of this psalm (9:33–41) and the pattern of intertextuality between these lines and the Teacher psalms. Taken together, this information may help adjudicate among competing hypotheses for understanding the origin, nature, and functions of the collection of Teacher *Hodayot*.

Tzvi Novick

University of Notre Dame

Conceiving the Collective at Qumran and Beyond

My paper considers the notions of local communities and quorums in Second Temple literature and in early rabbinic literature, and how these different corpora conceptualize the organizing logic of these units, and their relationship to the whole. My aim is both to evaluate relevant literary links among the corpora, and to reflect on the social structures that are reflected in these texts.

Session VI (8:30–10:00 p.m.)

Jutta Jokiranta

University of Helsinki

How Anthropomorphic is the God of the Scrolls?

This paper explores divine conceptualizations and metaphoric language in the Scrolls, making use of recent cognitive approaches. While it has been suggested that anthropomorphic depictions of God came to be avoided, especially in some Greek translations, no consensus exists as to how widespread phenomenon this may have been. Cognitive theories offer an alternative model: Abstract entities are frequently made more concrete, especially in situations where information demands quick processing or future-oriented decision-making. Thus, the very abstract or complex information may nevertheless be processed in the human mind differently, and sometimes scribes may make use of those aspects that make information more

memorable or easy to process. Cognitive science also underlines that anthropomorphic information is not only about bodily information; also, psychological properties ascribed to God are presented in anthropomorphic manner. So, in the metaphoric sphere, we may, following Mark Smith's model of divine bodies, first ask how the Scrolls present the divine body. But we must also pay attention to the metonymic nature of bodily language in Hebrew. The divine hand stands for power, just as the "head of the project" stands for the person in charge. I will argue that, instead of seeking an anti-anthropomorphic tendency in the Scrolls, they may be successfully approached for other tendencies that help us to understand how thinking of God(s) mattered and was facilitated.

Eibert Tigchelaar

KU Leuven

Mladen Popović

University of Groningen

From Maresha, to Nash, to Qumran

The Nash Papyrus has been important for dating the Dead Sea Scrolls from when they were first discovered. But the Nash Papyrus has no internal, absolute date. Its date, too, was based on comparative analysis. With the discovery of the ostraca from Maresha came an Idumaeen marriage ostrakon in Aramaic with the date of 176 BCE. When considering Aramaic and Hebrew scripts, this ostrakon is the sole example of an internally dated document from the second century BCE, far removed from the fifth and fourth century BCE documents from Elephantine, Bactria, Maresha, and Wadi Daliyeh, and from the second century CE for the book-hand documents from Murabba'at. From the eleven caves near Qumran, we have no internally dated manuscripts at all. The Maresha Ostrakon has been said to resemble the script of the Nash Papyrus and to support the paleographical typology for the Dead Sea Scrolls suggested by Cross, but there has not been a paleographic assessment of these three. We intend to present here our preliminary paleographic findings comparing the Maresha Ostrakon, Nash Papyrus and some of the oldest manuscripts from Qumran.



Wednesday, March 2

Session VII (4:00–6:00 p.m.)

John Collins

Yale University

Israel in the End of Days: The *Rule of the Congregation*.

1QSa, the *Rule of the Congregation*, was found together with the *Community Rule* (*Serek ha-Yahad*), and has often been taken as a rule for the sectarian movement at some stage of its existence. I will argue that it is not a rule for a sectarian community, but rather a rule for all Israel in the end of days. The sectarian movement will still have a role, but many of the provisions apply to the wider Israelite community.

Oren Ableman

Israel Antiquities Authority, University of Michigan

Resistance and Rebellion Against Belial's Evil Empire:
Reading the Sectarian Texts in their Roman Context

Practically all the sectarian texts discovered at Qumran that can be dated were composed after the Roman conquest of Judea in 63 BCE. In some of these texts, the Roman domination of Judea is viewed as a major crisis that is expected to be resolved by the upcoming eschaton. In my paper I will discuss the importance of this Roman context for understanding the eschatological worldview of the Scrolls Sect.

In *Pesher Habakkuk*, the rising power of Rome is presented as a political crisis that was life-threatening to all peoples in the region, including the members of the Scroll Sect itself. The text hints at an eschatological punishment of the Romans but is a bit vague on this point. In contrast, the *War Scroll* (along with some related texts) is very explicit about how the Romans will be destroyed during the eschatological war. *Pesher Habakkuk* 5:4–5 states that the punishment of both the nations and the wicked Jews will be given into the hands of the members of the Scrolls Sect. This concept is further developed in the *War Scroll*, where the Sect are quite literally the executioners of eschatological judgment.

It seems that the Scrolls Sect was actively preparing to fight against the Romans in what

they believed would be God's final judgment of the wicked. In light of this, the Scrolls Sect should be regarded as one of the many anti-Roman resistance movements that existed in Judea at the time. The possibility that the Scrolls Sect actively participated in some of the Jewish rebellions against Rome should be taken into consideration. In this regard, the Scrolls Sect was part of a widespread anti-Roman sentiment among Jews (and other people the Romans conquered). Still, the Scrolls Sect articulated this sentiment in their sectarian vocabulary and fully integrated it into their unique worldview.

Session VIII (6:30–8:00 p.m.)

Lutz Doering

University of Münster

The Prophet like Moses in Second Temple Jewish Texts and the New Testament

The “prophet like Moses” (Deut 18:15, 18) appears to be part of the Deuteronomic reconceptualization of public offices (Bernard Levinson). Whether and for how long such a public office existed in Israel is debated. Nevertheless, we find clues that, by the second century BCE, the future aspect that may be based on the biblical wording (“will raise up”: אקים/יקים; ἀναστήσει/ἀναστήσω) was highlighted; this led to the expectation of a future and in some cases eschatological figure, although a sharp distinction between the two does not seem warranted. While remaining a “shadowy figure” (John Collins), there are a number of references suggesting that “the prophet like Moses” was a notion worth adopting and adapting in Second Temple Judaism. This paper briefly discusses the references in the Scrolls: 4Q175; 4Q375; 1QS 9:11 (“the prophet”); and—as potential references—CD-A 6:11 (“one who teaches righteousness in the end of days”) as well as 4Q377 2 ii 5, 11 (the “anointed of spirit”); and then turns to the juridical function attributed to the prophet according to 1 Macc 4:41; 14:41; the evidence in Philo (*Spec.* 1:65); and the potential relevance of “sign prophets” like Theudas (*Ant.* 20:97; Acts 5:36). The paper will then probe the pertinence of the notion in some New Testament passages, such as the Transfiguration (Mark 9:2–8 and parallels); Acts’ record of increasing estrangement from Israel (cf. Acts 3 and 7); and christological debate in John (John 1:21; 7:40). I will close with some remarks on the conceptual contribution of the notion of the “prophet like Moses” for the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7).



Menahem Kister
Hebrew University

Paul and Passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Phrases and Theological Ideas

The lecture will deal with phrases in several passages of Paul's epistles which may be illuminated by the Qumran scrolls. A large part of the lecture will be devoted to the discussion of some major points in Galatians 3 from the perspective of passages in the Dead Sea scrolls.

Thursday, March 3

Session X (4:00–6:00 p.m.)

Loren Stuckenbruck
University of Munich

The Book of Enoch: Why the Aramaic Scrolls Matter

In this paper, I begin by emphasizing that the Ge'ez evidence for “the *Book of Enoch*” does not, essentially, provide sustained evidence for the Second Temple Jewish work (despite the absence of Christian interpolation). The Greek evidence is also so problematic in many places that we cannot use it as a basis for accessing Second Temple traditions with confidence. Exceptions for the Ge'ez and Greek can be found, of course, where they overlap with the fragmentary Aramaic evidence. However, when the Aramaic evidence is examined on its own terms, a recognition of its integrity cautions against casually filling textual gaps on the basis of the Ge'ez and Greek traditions. The paper points out examples in the Aramaic that remind us of what the later texts should not allow us to assume about the forms in which the Enochic material circulated during the last centuries before the Common Era.

Eshbal Ratson, Tel-Aviv University

Lee-Ad Gottlieb, Ariel University || Jakub Zbrzeźny, Tel-Aviv University

Dimid Duchovny Independent Researcher

More on Babylonian Features in the Aramaic of the Dead Sea Scrolls

The project “Word Embeddings for Aramaic Dialects” combines the powerful tools of machine learning with the classical field of textual criticism. The goal of the project is to use machine



learning techniques to train a machine in differentiating between various dialects of Aramaic. This can be used in turn for critical study of the initial composition and early influences on these texts. We began our project with the two Talmudim, which provide us with large textual corpora, required for the training of the algorithm. The training was highly successful, and we were surprised to find that the algorithm was already consistently able to correctly identify the influence of foreign dialects within a text. Experiments using the algorithm provided us with new and unexpected critical insights concerning the compilation and subsequent transmission history of the text. Currently we test the algorithm on the approximately 100 scrolls written in Aramaic, some of which reflect significant Babylonian affinities. If indeed a Babylonian influence will be detected on the dialect of even some of the passages in these scrolls, it may contribute to the ongoing scholarly debate about the compositional process of these texts and on the question of migration of knowledge from Babylonia to Qumran.

Vered Noam

Tel-Aviv University

New Insights into Miqṣat Ma'ase Ha-Torah

I am now engaged in a project of creating a fresh translation of and a new, updated English commentary on 4QMMT, as part of the series, *The Oxford Commentary on the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Dr. Eshbal Ratson is responsible for deciphering and reconstructing the manuscripts based on new technical devices. My discussion of every section of the scroll is based on Dr. Ratson's and my own scrutiny of the original manuscripts, against the *editio princeps* and other readings and reconstructions that have been suggested thus far; a review of the scholarly research of the past two and a half decades concerning 4QMMT; and then reinterpretation of the text in light of these new insights, with attention to the biblical sources, Qumranic parallels, and rabbinic literature. In the conference I will discuss new readings at the beginning of the legal section of MMT (section B).