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AAJS 20th Conference 2008

Call For Papers

"A people that dwells apart"? — Exploring the boundaries of Jewishness

17th-18th February 2006,
Hosted by the Australian Centre for Jewish
Civilisation MONASH UNIVERSITY,
Melbourne, Australia.

The conference theme, "A people that dwells apart?" seeks to explore the boundaries of Jewishness from a multi-disciplinary perspective. This ancient verse (Numbers 23:9) is originally a curse, but Jews also regard it as a blessing. Do Jews and Judaism really "dwell apart"? What are the implications of dwelling apart? We are seeking papers that explore the borderlines between Jews and the nations of the world, between Judaism and other civilisations. We encourage literary, historical, theological, political and sociological approaches to issues such as authenticity, uniqueness, commonality, anti-Semitism, multiculturalism, communitarianism and exchange between outside and inside. In what ways are Jews "a people that dwells apart"?

In addition, submissions are encouraged that reflect upon the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel. Dedicated sessions will be devoted to exploring this landmark.

Papers on other topics will be considered but preference will be given to those bearing directly on the conference theme.

Submissions to present papers must be made by 9 October 2007. Acceptance of papers will be notified by email no later than 2 November, 2007. Submissions must include author's name, postal and email address, institutional affiliation, abstract of the paper to be presented and short biographical note. The abstract must be 200-300 words and the biographical note no more than 50 words.

The AAJS encourages students who are engaged in academic research to submit

proposals based on their work to the program committee. Authors should clearly indicate their student status with their submission.

Presenters are invited to submit written articles for consideration for publication in the *Australian Journal of Jewish Studies*.

Proposals for conference papers should be sent either electronically or by post to:

Dr. Michael Fagenblat
michael.fagenblat@arts.monash.edu.au
Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation,
Monash University, Menzies Building, 3800,
Australia

PROPOSALS MUST ARRIVE BY 9
OCTOBER 2007

Registration and Conference fees:
Two days including lunch: \$170/\$140 AAJS
Members/\$85 Students
One day including lunch: \$90/\$80 AAJS
Members/\$45 Students

Presenters and conference attendees should pay their conference fees no later than 12 December 2007.

Payments can be made by cheque or international money order made out to THE AAJS CONFERENCE.

Questions about the conference should be made directly to:

Dr. Michael Fagenblat
michael.fagenblat@arts.monash.edu.au
Tel: +613 9527 9890
Fax: +613 9905 2210

or:

Dr. Dvir Abramovich
dvir@unimelb.edu.au
Tel: +613 8344 3789
Fax: +613 8344 0194

22 May 2007

News from the Department of Hebrew,
Biblical & Jewish Studies University of
Sydney.

MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The department is hosting the 25th
annual conference of the National
Association of Professors of Hebrew at
the University of Sydney Village. This is
only the second time the conference has
been held outside of North America —
the first being held at the University of
Ben Gurion, Beersheba, Israel. We have
over 60 international presenters coming
for the event. Registrations for the
conference are still possible. Further
details are below.

25th NAPH International Conference on
Hebrew Language and Literature

The 2007 NAPH Conference on Hebrew
Language, Literature and Culture will be
held at the University of Sydney in
Australia on July 1-6, 2007. Regular
conference sessions will be held on July
2-4. Pre-and post-conference activities,
including excursions, are planned for
July 1 and July 5-6. The conference will
be chaired by Professor Rifaat Ebied of
the University of Sydney.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

The tentative program guide for the 2007
NAPH International Conference on
Hebrew Language, Literature and
Culture is available from the NAPH
webpage.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Participants may register by mail or
PayPal.

Please note: This registration form is
different from the registration form
submitted in December, as it includes
information about meals, excursion, and
registration fees.

MAIL REGISTRATION: Download
registration form from the NAPH
webpage.

Form and payment should be mailed to:
NAPH 1346 Van Hise Hall, 1220
Linden Drive University of Wisconsin
Madison, WI 53706-1558

Participants registering via PayPal must
also complete a registration form and
mail it to above address. Please indicate
on form that you paid via PayPal.

**Forms and Payment must be received
by June 12, 2007.** Housing and hotel
accommodation information can be
found here. Payments for housing and
hotel accommodation must be made
separately from conference registration.
Deadline extended to JUNE 12, 2007.

EXCURSIONS INFORMATION

Participants may take part in three
excursions as a part of pre- and post-
conference activities. City Sights and
Harbour Cruise (Sunday, July 1,
9:00am-4:30pm), Blue Mountains
(Thursday, July 5, 8:30am-6:00pm),
Taronga Zoo – North Head – Manly
(Friday, July 6, 9:00-4:00 pm).

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The Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) will convene the annual International Meeting in Auckland, New Zealand, 6 - 10 July 2008.

We are hoping this will be an international gathering of all those who are interested in Theology and Religion in addition to those in Biblical studies. You may remember that we held our 1992 congress in Melbourne along with 9 other organizations. We have begun to work with several colleagues in New Zealand. We have been invited by the Ngati Whatua of the Maori to hold the meeting, and they will be conducting a powhiri at the opening of the congress.

We would like to be enriched by organizations from New Zealand and Australia as well as the entire Pacific Rim. Therefore we are writing you to gain the participation of the Australian Association of Jewish Studies. The AAJS will be able to hold whatever sessions you wish. You can have sessions open to the entire congress or if you wish sessions open only to your members. We will highlight the organizations responsible for each of the sessions and parts of the meeting program, while printing a listing of all sessions in one program booklet. We would hope, just as in Melbourne in 1992, to have a wonderful opening session with all of the assembled groups.

We currently have commitments from 10 other groups who will participate in this congress. The other groups are as follows:

Australian Association of Studies in Religion

Australian Catholic Biblical Association

Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Biblical Scholars

Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools

Australia New Zealand Society for Theological Studies

Association of Practical Theologians of Oceania

New Zealand Association of Theology Schools

Religious History Association of Aotearoa New Zealand

Society of Asian Biblical Studies

Systematic Theologians Association of Aotearoa New Zealand

Women Scholars of Religion and Theology

We hope that you will also join us and your colleagues for this important congress in Auckland. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you. If you are willing to participate please let us know and please give us the name of a key contact person

.Matthew S. Collins Director of Congresses and Professions Society of Biblical Literature

The Luce Center

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www.sbl-site.org

Jewish Leadership throughout the Ages”. Successful Conference concludes in Sydney

“What constitutes Jewish leadership?” “Are there different kinds of leadership?” “Is Jewish leadership different from other kinds of leadership?” “Why is it that some Jewish leaders appear to have inspired people even after their death, such as Rabbi Shimeon Ben Yohai?” These and other questions were discussed, debated and argued at length at the lively nineteenth annual conference of The Australian Association of Jewish Studies held in Sydney at Mandelbaum House from 11-12th July. Convened by A/Prof Suzanne Rutland, this conference continues to attract scholars from round the world, as well as local participants.

Discussion and debate were the order of the day. The conference attracted several scholars from Israel, such as the Middle East history scholar Professor Rafi Israeli, and biblical expert, Professor Yairah Amit, Tobias Grill from Munich, Associate Professor Ehsanul Haque from Bangladesh and many well known figures from Sydney and Melbourne including Avril Alba, Professor Sol Encel, human rights lawyer Melinda Jones, Peta Jones Pellach and Don Perlgut. Areas covered in twenty eight papers ranged from the biblical period to the modern day, and included such topics as “Portraits and Mirrors: Joshua in biblical and Post-biblical Texts” (Dr Shani Berrin, Sydney University), “Styles of leadership in the Australian Jewish Community: the Case of the Campaign for Soviet Jewry” (Associate Professor Suzanne Rutland (also the conference convenor) and Prof Sol Encel, “Shaping the South African Jewish Community” (Phyllis Sakinofsky), a paper on Rabbi Jose the Galilean and Beruriah by Dr Uri Zur (Israel) and on the Zohar by Dr Nathan Wolski who teaches at the Australian Centre for the Study of Jewish Civilization at Monash University. Professor Bill Rubinstein returned from Aberystwyth to speak on Anglo-Jewish leadership and the Holocaust. Sephardi Jewry featured in the list of topics (Dr Myer Samra) as well as the underground medical school in the Polish ghetto (Dr George Weisz). Israeli literature was discussed by Dr Dvir Abramovich (present AAJS President), and Dr Rachel Birati, while Lynne Swarts looked at the artwork of Lilien.



A/Prof Suzanne Rutland and A/Prof Ehsanul Haque

Professor Yehuda Bauer gave an inspiring keynote address on “Jewish Councils under Nazi Rule”, and contributed considerably to the conference debate on various topics. A very different paper was given by a young Muslim scholar from Bangladesh, Associate Professor Ehsanul Haque: “The Jewish Leaders: in Search of a Just Peace with the Muslims.” Overall it was a most stimulating conference, and several of the best papers will be published in the 2007 Australian Journal of Jewish Studies. The next conference will be convened at Monash University in February 2008. **Marianne Dacy**

NATIONAL (FEBRUARY 15, 2007)

Visiting Muslim academic defends Israel's existence

YONI BASHAN

A VISITING Muslim academic from Bangladesh has called on all Muslims to accept Israel's right to exist.

Associate Professor Ehsanul Haque, 42, made the remark at the Australian Association of Jewish Studies annual conference at the University of Sydney's Mandelbaum House earlier this week.

Associate Professor Haque – whose homeland has no diplomatic ties with the Jewish State – criticised the Bangladeshi Government for being “too conservative” and rife with “extremists”.

The academic, who openly lauded Israel's right to statehood in his presentation, titled “The Jewish leaders: in search of a just peace with the Muslims”, told the AJN: “The problem is that Bangladesh is an extremely conservative society and people are largely ignorant about other religions.

“So that's why misunderstandings often come up between people,” he said.

The Australian Association of Jewish Studies sponsored Associate Professor Haque to fly to Australia for the conference after he submitted his paper – with the inherent risks he may face when he returns home.

Bangladesh is the third-largest Muslim nation in the world and one of 31 states which refuse to establish diplomatic ties with Israel. In the past, the government has detained people attempting to visit the Jewish State.

A fellow countryman, journalist Salah Uddin

Shoaib Choudhury, is currently facing sedition charges for attempting to visit Israel in 2003 for a conference.

He was reportedly detained, tortured and kept in isolation for over a year under suspicion that he was an Israeli spy.

Eventually released, he was later assaulted at his newspaper's office by members of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, who have alleged ties with Jemaah Islamiah. If found guilty, he faces the death penalty.

But Associate Professor Haque said that despite his outspoken views, he has no qualms about returning to the country this week.

“I strongly believe that what I feel is not wrong.

“A gulf of misunderstanding exists between the Jews and the Muslims. And there are moderate Muslim groups as well who always speak for greater harmony and cooperation.”

A lecturer of international relations at the University of Dhaka, he said anti-Israel rhetoric dominated academic debate, and said it was his duty to balance his students' biased perspectives.

“A lot of my students show their intolerance toward Jews and Israel. So I thought as a faculty member I should give a balanced view to students as a moral responsibility.”

Acclaimed international scholars at the two-day conference included Islam expert Professor Raphael Israeli and Holocaust scholar Professor Yehuda Bauer. The conference also attracted academics from Germany, Wales and New York.

The event, convened by Associate Professor Suzanne Rutland, has taken place annually for the past 19 years and will be held at Melbourne's Monash University next year.

SPOTLIGHT

The fall of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 brought immense changes to the political, economic, social and cultural infrastructure of countries, whose post-war generations were deprived of the freedom of independent intellectual enquiry. The nations of these countries are now immersed in a catharsis from which, it is hoped, a new and tolerant society will emerge.

Of the many issues requiring examination is the topic of the Jewish presence in these countries. The need to study the history of the Jews, their interaction with the non-Jewish population, the Shoah and the role of the non-Jewish population during its course and together with the disregard and indifference towards the Jewish tragedy in the former Soviet Union during the post-war era, now became the centre of research and critical analysis. Moreover, Jewish culture, literature and Israeli studies are also being studied.

An important centre of Jewish studies has been established at the Central European University in Budapest. Courses are presented by members of the faculty and by visiting academics from Israel, North America and Europe, funded by the Hanadiv Charitable Foundation, the Rich Foundation, and the Joods Humanitair Fonds. Summer University courses in Jewish studies are also available. In the academic year 2006-2007 the courses on offer are as follows:

- Shlomo Avineri: Israel: Nation-Building, Political Development, War and Peace.
- Andras Kovacs: Interpretations of Modern Antisemitism
- John Klier: Jews in Multi-National Empire: Russia, 1772-1914
- Michael Miller: Paths to Jewish Emancipation
- The Emergence of Zionism
- Frank Stern: Being Jewish in European and American Cinema 1914-2006.

The university offers postgraduate courses in Jewish Studies leading to - Master of Arts and Ph.D. degrees. For the past eleven years it has presented a series of public lectures on topics related to Jewish Studies and in May 2007 it hosted an international conference on Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism and the Jews of East Central Europe.

REMINDER

Have you paid your membership subscription for 2006? Our Association depends on members paying their annual dues.

\$50 AU regular membership

\$60 AU institutional and overseas

\$15 AU full-time student/pensioner

Send fees to: Dr Marianne Dacy:

PO Box 233, Holme Building,

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY NSW 2006.

My name is Anna Rosenbaum and I am a Ph.D. student of Professors Suzanne Rutland and Konrad Kwiet at the University of Sydney. The history of the Shoah has been a lifelong interest of mine and it was therefore only a matter of time before I became a fully committed student of Holocaust Studies. The focus of my interest are refugees from Nazi persecution. The impulse to proceed in this direction was close to my heart. The story of my family's escape from Germany in 1939 is without doubt one of countless thousands of those who succeeded in finding refuge in another country and survive the war. My family's experiences then became an inspiration to commence researching the predicament of being a refugee.

My Ph.D. dissertation is focused on the history of Czechoslovak Jewish refugees who arrived in Australia prior to and after the outbreak of the war. It will cover the entire spectrum of processes involved: the response of the Australian government to the Czechoslovak crisis in 1938 and 1939, the impact thereof on its policies towards refugees from that country, the refugees' quest to reach safety in Australia, their

arrival, involvement in the war effort, as well as their integration and acculturation within Australian society. My research will concentrate on the study of archival material in Australia, the UK and in the Czech Republic. It is my hope that the dissertation will bring to light the untold story of a singular group of refugees and thus fill a void in the history of Jewish immigration to Australia.

I would like to hear from other Ph.D. students – tell us about your discipline, research, experiences and progress. I would also like to build up a register of all doctoral students in Hebrew and Jewish Studies in Australia at present. Hopefully we can all meet in person at the next AAJS Conference at Monash University. In the meantime, please join the AAJS Association.

Anna

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