

Aren M. Maeir, Jodi Magness, and Lawrence H. Schiffman (eds.)

“Go Out and Study the Land” (Judges 18:2): Archaeological, Historical and Textual Studies in Honor of Hanan Eshel. JSJSup 148. Hardcover. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

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It is with tears that one approaches this volume, intended to honor our “dear friend, revered colleague, and cherished teacher” (ix), though which ultimately, alas, must serve as a memorial tribute to Hanan Eshel, one of the most gifted scholars of the past several decades, who died all too young, on April 8, 2010, at age 51. When news of Hanan’s illness became public, the editors and contributors quickly realized that the best way to raise Hanan’s spirits was to produce this Festschrift in his honor. Hanan was able to see a print-out of all the articles before he died, though, once more alas, the volume itself did not appear until after his passing. The editors add, most poignantly: “Given that the original title of the volume—which Hanan himself received—was dedicated in his honor, we decided to retain the original title and not to rename it ‘in memory of’” (ix). Twenty-six scholars contribute twenty-two articles (several are co-authored), covering the range of subjects which attracted the honoree’s attention (and what a range it was): the archaeology of Eretz-Israel (spanning Iron Age through Roman-Byzantine, Persian period Judea and Samaria, the Samaritans, the Hasmonean dynasty, Josephus, Bar-Kokhba, early rabbinic literature, and—*ante omnia*—the Qumran caves, Khirbet Qumran, and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

This review will highlight only those articles which the present writer found most stimulating, based mainly on my own personal interests, which on the whole accord with the subject matter to which this journal is devoted. The reader will understand that lack of specific mention does not reflect a diminished appreciation for the other articles included in this volume (see below for access to the complete list of essays), for the high quality of all the contributions is self-evident.

Esther G. Chazon, “The Classification of 4Q505: Daily or Festival Prayers?” (24–34), responds to arguments put forward by Florentino García Martínez and Daniel Falk (and others in their wake) concerning 4Q505. These scholars have argued that this composition should be classified as Festival Prayers, rather than Words of the Luminaries. Chazon marshals considerable arguments in support of the latter identification. Most prominent among them is the textual overlap between 4Q504 5 ii 2ה]לפניכ[עומד קודש and 4Q505 124 7 לכה]לפניכ[עומד קודש, with the three words comprising “a distinctive word cluster that is unparalleled in the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls” (27).

Menahem Kister, “Ancient Material in *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eli’ezer*: Basilides, Qumran, the *Book of Jubilees*” (70–93), presents six examples of ancient traditions (from *Jubilees*, Qumran, etc.) which “skip” (as it were) the large Tannaitic and Amoraic corpora of rabbinic material, but which appear, quite unexpectedly, in the relatively late composition *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* (eighth century). To cite but one example: the name of Noah’s wife in this late compilation is מזרע, which accords with the name given in *Jub.* 4:33 (ʿEmzara) and 1QapGen 6:7 (אמזרע). These studies—along with parallel cases of the *Damascus Document*, *Aramaic Levi Document*, etc.—remind us of the need for the perspective of *la longue durée* as we approach our ancient Jewish texts, with congruent dots on the timeline often separated by a millennium.

Jodi Magness, “Disposing of the Dead: An Illustration of the Intersection of Archaeology and Text” (117–32), begins by noting, as per the subtitle of her article, that Hanan Eshel’s “work provides a model for incorporating literary and archaeological evidence” (117)—indeed how true. Magness then proceeds to present another stellar instance, with attention to the trench graves in the Qumran cemetery, in contrast to the rock-cut tombs used by most (or at least the elite) contemporary Jews. While trench graves are attested elsewhere, and while they at times are marked by a headstone, only at Qumran are these burial sites covered with heaps of stones. Magness proposes, especially in light of 4QMMT B 58–62 (= 4Q394 8 iv 8–9), that “the stones heaped on the trench graves at Qumran were intended to prevent dogs and other scavengers from digging up the remains” (132). She further suggests that purity concerns may explain “the placement of the largest *miqveh* at Qumran (L71) next to the gate that provided access to and from the direction of the cemetery” (128). Magness notes both of these points in her book *Stone and Dung, Oil and Spit: Jewish Daily Life in the Time of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 160–64, though the present article provides the reader with a more sustained and focused argument.

Vered Noam, “Josephus and Early Halakhah: The Exclusion of Impure Persons from Holy Precincts” (133–46), explores a crucial issue in ancient Jewish law, as reflected in Josephus, the *Temple Scroll*, and early rabbinic literature. While there are points of contact between and among all three approaches, Noam is absolutely spot on when she refers to “the innovation and audacity that characterized the rabbinic legislation” (145)—for the sages alone permitted not only the person contaminated by the corpse into the Temple Mount, but even the corpse itself! (*T. Kelim Bava Qama* 1:8)—“a breakthrough without precedent” (143) which actually runs against the spirit and perhaps even the letter of the biblical law.

Joan E. Taylor, “Buried Manuscripts and Empty Tombs: The Qumran *Genizah* Theory Revisited” (269–315), lays out the contours of her idiosyncratic (albeit well-argued) theory, which holds that many or most of the Dead Sea Scrolls derive from Essene communities elsewhere in the land of Israel. When the texts no longer were useable, they were brought to Qumran for deposit in the caves in preparation for proper burial. I suspect that the majority of scholars will not accede to Taylor’s position (stimulating as it is), especially in light of the evidence presented by Ira Rabin, et al., “On the Origin of the Ink of the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QHodayota),” *DSD* 16 (2009): 97–106 (which admittedly treats one scroll only, and which, by the way, Taylor cites).

Emanuel Tov, “Eclectic Text Editions of Hebrew Scripture” (323–33), bolsters the argument against eclectic editions of the Bible, with particular attention to the *Oxford Hebrew Bible* project (in progress). His final sentences are worth quoting: “Further, what should we do if two parallel eclectic editions of the same biblical book are published? Should we read the Bible according to Smith or according to Johnson?” (333).

Shani Tzoref, “4Q252: Listenwissenschaft and Covenantal Patriarchal Blessings” (335–57), proposes that “Patriarchal Blessings and Their Fulfillment” (357) is the overarching theme which unites the Genesis texts exegeted in this composition, concerning Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with particular attention to the presence of the root ב־רַחַם (“to bless”).

James C. Vanderkam, “The Common Ownership of Property in Essene Communities” (359–75), is a fine review of all the essential texts: Josephus, Philo, CD, and 1QS. The author concludes that while the four sources “offer descriptions that differ in a number of points, they also present a consistent picture of groups who took an unusual approach to property, an approached [*sic*] that focused on communal rather than individual control” (374).

For the complete Table of Contents, the reader is directed to the publisher’s website: <http://www.brill.com/go-out-and-study-land-judges-182>.

The volume includes an “In Memoriam” essay (xi–xiv) by Hanan Eshel’s close colleagues and frequent co-authors, David Amit and Boaz Zissu, along with a complete list of publications from the pen of the honoree (xv–xxxv). A bonus is the superb photo (frontispiece) of our cherished friend in full health, taken against the stunning backdrop of the Judean desert.

All who knew our departed colleague will echo the words of contributor Loren T. Stuckenbruck: “Ever since meeting Hanan Eshel . . . I have been inspired by his polymathic commitment to recovering new information and ideas” (257). The reader will oblige the present writer if he ends on a personal note: I first met Hanan in Jerusalem in 1987, and I cherish the 23 years I knew

him. I last saw him when I paid a visit to Hanan and Esti's house in Rehavia in January 2010. Obviously the course of the illness already was taking its toll, but Hanan exuded the will and strength which so characterized him. Never for a moment did I think that Hanan would succumb to the horrid disease; never for a moment did I imagine that this would be the last time I saw him. But such was not to be. יהי זכרו ברוך.

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