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REVIEW OF 1998 EVENTS

The year 1998 saw a range of occasions when Textual Reasoning stepped out of the virtual world of our email-based discussions. We organized study sessions at the World Congress of Philosophy (WCP) in Boston/Mass., at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) in Orlando/Florida, as well as at the annual conference of the Association for Jewish Studies (AJS), also in Boston. In this fashion we broadened our presence at traditional professional associations in the fields of philosophy, religion, and Jewish Studies while, in each case,

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showcasing our very own specific form of learning in groups, based on traditional texts.

WCP, Boston, August 10-16, 1998

TR organized three roundtable discussions at the World Congress of Philosophy on the topic of *Talmud Torah and Paideia*.

Participants were Gerda Elata-Elster (University of Beer Sheva), Steven Kepnes (Colgate University), and Reuven Kimelman (Brandeis University), as chair served Michael Zank. Norbert Samuelson and Hava Tirosh-Samuelson were present at the programmatic first meeting led by Steven Kepnes; an occasion for tough questions: what distinguishes “textual reasoning” from other forms of text study; what is postmodern about this enterprise. Not everyone was satisfied with the answers given, But the fact that this and the following kinds of discussions could be had at the World Congress showed the immense readiness among contemporary students of philosophy to provide room to non-standard approaches to philosophical reasoning. This curiosity was particularly evident when some, albeit few, WCP participants were drawn to our discussions who had not hitherto heard of this enterprise or were even newcomers to Jewish philosophy and Judaism in general. All in all, an enjoyable event, not least thanks to Gerda Elata, Reuven Kimelman, and Steve Kepnes.

Orlando/Florida, Nov. 21-24:

As in previous years since 1991, TR hosted a study session and reception at the annual meeting of the AAR/SBL. This year the text was the Israeli Declaration of Independence. Nancy Levene organized the event. Presenter was Jay Harris. The discussion was lively, engaged and on a high level of sophistication. As in the preceding year, the reception was sponsored by the Center for Judaic Studies at Boston University, Steven T. Katz, Director.

The texts and arguments that were the basis of this discussion can be found in [volume seven](#) of this journal.

AJS, Boston/Mass., December 1998

Jacob Meskin put together a study session, dedicated to Ira Stone's new book on Levinas' reading of the Talmud. Scheduled after the main program had ended and most AJS members had scattered attending to their various private networking needs, this event nevertheless drew a respectable crowd, including such illustrious spectators as Hillel Fradkin of the American Enterprise Institute and tr-member and tireless source of good energy, Jay Harris himself who actually provided us with the accomodation for this additional session.

Books, briefly noted

SUBMISSIONS

We cordially invite submissions on any topic associated with the purposes of textual reasoning. If possible, please send a diskette formatted for Macintosh (Word 6 or lower) to Michael Zank, Dept. of Religion, Boston University, 745 Commonwealth Ave, Boston, MA. 02215, or attach file to an email message and send to mzank@bu.edu.