

SYMPOSIUM MYCONENSE ALTERUM DE PAPYRO DERVENIENSI

It is with great pleasure that I announce the organization of a major symposium devoted to a focused study of the Derveni Papyrus. This special meeting will be held from 6 to 14 July 2008, in Myconos, Greece.

The colloquium is meant to open a new era in the investigation of that crucially important document. For the first time, a reliable and more complete foundation for scholarly research will be provided by the presentation of evidence established in the context of the novel project of a comprehensive study of the papyrus and its text, which has been undertaken by Dirk Obbink and myself. The project involved the first digital imaging of the papyrus employing the technique of multispectral analysis by the BYU specialists Roger Macfarlane and Gene Ware. Direct autopsy of the papyrus fragments, also under the microscope, has also been carried on, as well as work on the confusing old sets of photographs. First results regarding the reconstruction of the papyrus roll and the constitution of a truly critical text will be shown in the meeting.

The aim in the symposium is to restart research in the papyrus on firmer ground while utilizing the critical and exegetical work done so far. This work however has been severely compromised by the unreliability of the information provided by those responsible for the publication of the papyrus for 45 years. Their hastily produced edition of the text in 2007 (prompted by our new initiative of systematic research) is gravely defective; it is totally inadequate as the long-awaited, required foundation of further inquiries into this highly important document.

In the meeting we shall endeavour to subject the Derveni papyrus and its text concurrently to diverse lines of approach in the fields of ancient philosophy, history of Greek religion, philology, papyrology, history, history of ideas and archaeology. Vital questions of authorship and import of the document are expected to be thoroughly discussed. In depth debate on its significance for Orphism on the one hand and for the intellectual milieu of its time on the other, can lead to important clarifications and insights in both areas of inquiry.

This conference belongs to the series of meetings entitled **Symposia Philosophiae Antiquae**. The schedule of work consists of a sequence of sessions, each session lasting for two hours, one approximately hour of presentation, one of debate on each paper. Final versions of the papers for inclusion in the publication of the Proceedings are submitted within a reasonable time limit set after the event. The volumes, like all publications of the Institute for Philosophical Research, are being handled internationally by Oxbow Books, Oxford.

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