

# Orion Center News Update

*The Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature*  
מרכז אוריון לחקר מגילות מדבר יהודה והספרות הקרובה להן

May 2002

## Orion Fellow Investigates Slavonic/Jewish Sources

By *Mayaan Pase-Jaffe*

Orion Center Fellow Dr. Alexander Kulik has a long-standing association with the Hebrew University. He completed here both his M.A in Slavic and Jewish Studies and his Ph.D. on *The Apocalypse\* of Abraham*, under the supervision of Professor Moshe Taube. In recent years he has taught both at the Hebrew U. and abroad. He is currently Academic Director of the University's Chais Center for Jewish Studies in Russian, organizing teams of Israeli scholars to teach Jewish studies courses at universities in the former Soviet Union.

During his tenure as a Center Fellow, Dr. Kulik is preparing a commentary on the Greek-Slavonic *Apocalypse\* of Baruch* (3 *Baruch*). This work is scheduled for publication in the series *Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature*, from de Gruyter Press. Kulik presented his research at a recent Orion Center Coffee Hour. He concluded by saying that the question of whether 3 *Baruch* was originally a Jewish or Christian text remains unresolved.

Dr. Kulik is also pursuing a project on the beginnings of Jewish history in Slavic lands at the Institute of Jewish Studies, and on Jews and the Eastern Church through the Hebrew U. Center for the Study of Christianity. The cross-disciplinary foci of Kulik's work promise rich results.

*\*What is an Apocalypse? A text that tells of a revelation given to a human being by an "other-worldly" figure, such as an angel, who reveals previously hidden heavenly knowledge.*

### Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature

Institute of Jewish Studies  
Faculty of Humanities, Mt. Scopus  
The Hebrew University  
Jerusalem, Israel 91905  
Tel: 972-2-588-2063 Fax: 972-2-588-3584  
E-mail: [msdss@mscc.huji.ac.il](mailto:msdss@mscc.huji.ac.il)  
Web site: <http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il>

## Welcome Home! Professor Michael Stone Returns after Semester Sabbatical

By *Mayaan Pase-Jaffe*



Professor Michael E. Stone, Gail Levin de Nur Professor of Religious Studies at the Hebrew University, says he is "pleased to be home." After a semester-long sabbatical at Harvard University, Professor Stone returns to the Hebrew U. to continue inspiring students of Armenian and Second Temple Jewish literature. Currently the chairman of the Orion Center's Academic and Executive committees, as well as its founder and first director, Stone says that being at Harvard gave him a chance for some "quiet thinking," revitalizing his fascination with the "complexity and richness of Judaism" in the Second Temple period.

However, Stone's sabbatical was anything but quiet. He wrote two articles on the *Aramaic Levi Document* and a third on the experiential basis of apocalyptic visions. He also published two new books in the field of apocrypha (non-biblical writings) on Adam and Eve: *Adam's Contract with Satan: The Legend of the Cheirograph of Adam* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press); and *A Concordance of the Armenian Apocryphal Adam Books* (Leuven: Peeters).

"*Adam's Contract with Satan* allowed me to follow one of my passions: Intercultural detective work," Stone said. "Because the Adam stories are paradigmatic for all human beings, the study of those texts enables us to gain insight into how people in the past viewed the basic problems of the human condition." The *Concordance*, the first volume in the new Hebrew U. Armenian Studies Series, provides scholars with an important reference for future work on the Adam literature.

Professor Stone's sabbatical interests continue to bear fruit back at home. He is working with Esther Eshel on an edition and translation, with commentary, of *Aramaic Levi Document*, originally begun with Jonas Greenfield; he is also writing a book on the metamorphoses of the Adam and Eve stories in Armenian culture.



# ORION CENTER NEWS UPDATE

MAY 2002

As a leader in Armenian studies, Stone recently initiated a Jewish-Armenian cemetery project. With archaeologist David Amit, he has made two expeditions to Armenia, to locate and compare early Jewish and Armenian Christian tombstones. This season's discoveries included an inscription dated to 1289, the earliest find thus far.

In the course of more than thirty years, Professor Stone has made many diverse contributions to the study of the Second Temple period. In 1990, he published an extensive and highly regarded commentary on *4 Ezra*. Combining careful textual and verse-by-verse exegesis with broader analyses of the book's literary and religious dynamic, the commentary has been termed the best on *4 Ezra* in a century. With the late Jonas Greenfield, Stone edited the Qumran fragments of *Aramaic Levi* for the *Discoveries in the Judean Desert* series (DJD 22, 1996). His research on *Aramaic Levi* led to wider investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Professor Stone has written on Qumran literature and allied topics; he is considered a leading authority on apocalyptic literature and on ancient religious thought.

Still, those who know Professor Stone call him humble. His hearty laugh and endearing attitude towards his colleagues and students have earned him a reputation that goes beyond his academic accomplishments. When asked about future goals, Stone just chuckled. "I hope to devote a substantial part of my energies over the coming years to the study of ancient Judaism," he said. "It never stops taking my interest."

*Professor Stone holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass. and a Litt.D. from Melbourne University in Australia.*

## Professor Leonard Greenspoon to Visit Israel

*By Mayaan Pase-Jaffe*

Professor Leonard Greenspoon is popping into the Hebrew University soon for a month long stay as an Orion Center Visiting Scholar. But in one month, he plans to accomplish a myriad of tasks. Soon after his arrival, Professor Greenspoon will present an Orion Center Greenfield Scholars' Seminar, on Jewish translations and translators of the Hebrew Bible.

During Greenspoon's visit, "A prime objective will be to work ... with those involved in the Hebrew U. Bible project, to determine feasibility and direction of cooperation of scholars in Jerusalem and those in the United States," he said. "I will also familiarize myself with the working procedures of the project and hope to contribute some insights in my areas of specialization connected with the Septuagint [Greek Bible] and textual criticism."

Professor Greenspoon holds the Klutznick Chair in Jewish Civilization at Creighton University. He is the author and editor of numerous books, among them *Representations of Jews Through the Ages* (Creighton University Press, 1996).



## ORION CENTER CALENDAR—SPRING 2002

### March – April 2002

#### **March 20: Greenfield Scholars' Seminar**

12:00-1:30 p.m. Dr. Aaron Shemesh (Bar Ilan University) and Dr. Cana Werman (Ben Gurion University): *The Halakha in the Qumran Scrolls: Methodological Questions and their Solutions*

#### **April 10: Coffee Hour Open House**

12:00-1:00 p.m. Orion Center Scholars' Room (Humanities 6115, Mt. Scopus)

#### **April 24: Coffee Hour Presentation**

12:00-1:00 p.m. Dr. Alexander Kulik (Hebrew University): *3 Baruch—Jewish or Christian Text?*

### May – June 2002

#### **May 8: Coffee Hour Open House**

12:00-1:00 p.m. Orion Center Scholars' Room

#### **May 22: Greenfield Scholars' Seminar**

12:00-1:30 p.m. Prof. Leonard Greenspoon (Creighton University): *Texts and Contexts; Constancy and Change in Jewish Translations of the Bible*

#### **June 5: Coffee Hour Open House**

12:00-1:00 p.m. Orion Center Scholars' Room

#### **June 19: Coffee Hour Presentation**

12:00-1:00 p.m. Prof. Elisha Qimron (Ben Gurion University): *The Contribution of the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Study of Ancient Hebrew*

\* \* \*

*Note: The Greenfield Scholars' Seminars and Coffee Hour Presentations are held in the Institute of Jewish Studies Seminar Room (Humanities 4121, Mt. Scopus).*