



האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Orion Newsletter

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

מרכז אוריון לחקר מגילות מדבר יהודה והספרות הקרובה להן

November 2006

Twelfth Issue

Letter from the Incoming Director*

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I am both honored and excited to join the Orion Center, its staff and scholars. As one whose fields of teaching and research include the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Dead Sea Scrolls, I have followed closely the scholarly activity of the Center with admiration and gratitude over the years. Like many others, I have frequently made use of the impressive resources that the Center has provided to the scholarly community, especially its website, updated bibliography, seminar talks, and conferences.

Since its inception in 1995, the Orion Center has played a leading international role in promoting the study of Qumran in all its aspects and related fields. It has brought together leading academics from North America, Europe, Australia, and Israel, published the varied and riveting proceedings of symposia devoted to a variety of topics, and helped fund projects of students and scholars working in the field. It has been a lodestone for all interested in the Dead Sea Scrolls and associated literatures. I plan to continue these important activities and I hope to lead the Center in developing in additional directions.

I, together with the readers of this Newsletter, am greatly indebted to my predecessor, Dr. Esther Chazon, as well as to the Center's Founding Director, Prof. Michael Stone, for making Orion the leading Center for Dead Sea Scrolls study that it is today.

With all good wishes for a rich and productive year,

Dr. Steven Fassberg

**See feature story, p. 2 (Ed.)*

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Letter from the Outgoing Director

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

2007 will mark the 60th year since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. It is a time to celebrate the past and move boldly in new directions.

With appreciation for a long and fruitful association, I publicly announce here the culmination of my term as Director of the Orion Center, as I take up a three-year research appointment in the Hebrew University's Scholion Institute. Although I will miss day-to-day interactions with the Center and its activities, I will continue to be involved with its programs and long-term goals as Head of the Center's Academic Committee.

In turn, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Prof. Steven Fassberg, of the Hebrew Language Department, as the incoming Director of the Orion Center. Prof. Fassberg brings to the Center an abundance of experience in academic leadership positions at the University. He has a long-standing connection with the Orion Center; he has lectured in the Greenfield Scholars Seminar and at the Third Orion International Symposium. I look forward to watching the Orion Center flourish under his stewardship.

Furthermore, on behalf of our Orion colleagues and myself personally, I extend heartfelt thanks to Prof. Michael E. Stone, for his vision in founding the Orion Center and his superb leadership as first Orion Director and Head of the Academic Committee. We wish him well as he embarks upon his pre-retirement sabbatical year at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte. Happily, Prof. Stone promises to maintain his connections with the Center as its Founding Director and as an active participant in Orion programs, upon his return to Jerusalem.

Finally, as I assume my new position with the Orion Center, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the Center's vibrant academic life during my term as Director—our colleagues and associates in Israel and abroad, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Orion Foundation, the Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund, the Dorot Foundation, the Bollag-Herzheimer Fund, the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University, the Orion Academic Committee, and the dedicated and capable Orion staff.

To all, my very best wishes for a healthy, joyous, and fruitful New Year—

Dr. Esther Chazon

New Director at the Orion Center

The Orion Center is pleased to announce the appointment of Prof. Steven Fassberg, of the Hebrew University Department of the Hebrew Language, as the new director of the Orion Center.



Steven Fassberg was born in Washington, D.C. in 1956. He studied Comparative Semitic Philology at Harvard University, where he received his B.A. degree in 1978 and his Ph.D. in 1984. He immigrated to Israel in 1981, at which time he began teaching at the Hebrew University.

Prof. Fassberg has published widely on Biblical Hebrew, the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Aramaic dialects, Northwest Semitic, and Comparative Semitics. He co-edits the journals *Studies in Hebrew Language* (מחקרים בלשון) and *Massorot*. He was elected to the Academy of the Hebrew Language in 2005.

The new Orion director is also well-versed in academic administration at the Hebrew University. He has served as the Acting Head of the Rothberg Overseas School (Spring, 1998), the Head of the Committee for Advanced Studies in the Faculty of Humanities (2002-2005), Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Humanities (2004-2005), and Head of the Hebrew Language Department (1998-2001, 2006-2007). His diverse talents and experience bode well for the long-term vision and work of the Center.



The Eleventh Orion International Symposium: "New Approaches to the Study of Biblical Interpretation in Judaism of the Second Temple Period and in Early Christianity"

The 11th International Orion Symposium, "New Approaches to the Study of Biblical Interpretation in the Second Temple Period and in Early Christianity," will be held at the Hebrew University, June 18-21, 2007. The symposium is once again jointly sponsored by the Orion Center and the Hebrew University Center for the Study of Christianity. Approximately a dozen international scholars and a similar number of Israelis, both senior and junior scholars, will converge to examine the new methods and presuppositions that are currently employed in the study of early Jewish and Christian exegesis. The intention is to bring together two contiguous but often separate or divergent research communities, to investigate the questions that we ask of the texts before us. The colloquium will consist of closed seminars for invited participants, as well as lecture sessions which will be open to the public.

For further information, please check the Orion website, or contact Director Steven Fassberg at the Orion Center office.

Orion Center Academic Committee

Dr. Esther Chazon, Chair
Prof. Steven Fassberg
Prof. Isaiah Gafni
Prof. Deborah Gera
Prof. Joseph Patrich
Dr. David Satran
Prof. Emanuel Tov

Center News

Dr. Esther Chazon has accepted a three-year research position in the Hebrew University's prestigious Scholion Interdisciplinary Research Center in Jewish Studies. In her new appointment, Dr. Chazon is part of the research group, "Religions of Place and Religions of Community." In addition, during the Spring 2007 semester, she will be in residence at Yale University as the Perlow Fellow in Judaic Studies and Visiting Fellow at the Whitney Humanities Center. Dr. Chazon will continue her long-standing association with the Orion Center as the new Head of the Center's Academic Committee.



We wish her success in her new endeavors and are please that we will continue to benefit from her experience.

Prof. Michael E. Stone, outgoing Head of the Academic Committee, is on sabbatical at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte for the 2006-2007 academic year. He is working on several projects in Second Temple and Armenian literature, including a critical edition of the Armenian version of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, in collaboration with past Orion grant recipient Vered Hillel. At the November Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, Prof. Stone will celebrate the publication of *Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and Armenian Studies: Collected Papers* (Leuven: Peeters, 2006).

An Orion Center presence will also be felt in other ways at the SBL. Prof. Stone is slated to speak on *4 Ezra*; Vered Hillel on *Jubilees*. Dr. Chazon will chair a session on Qumran. Alex Jassen, one of last year's grant recipients, will share some of his research on the use of prophetic literature at Qumran; former Webmaster David Emanuel will do a presentation on the Exodus Psalms. Dr. Ruth Clements, Orion Publications editor, will speak on early Jewish and Christian biblical interpretation. Our newest book, *Rabbinic Perspectives*, is also to be launched at the SBL, by Brill Academic Publishers.

This year, we are happy to host the first Jean Matlow Scholarship recipients, Yehoshua Granat and Moshe Tur-Paz. Granat, a Ph.D student in the HU Department of Hebrew Literature, is writing on "Creation Themes in Early Hebrew Poetry and Second Temple Literature." Tur-Paz, also a Ph.D student, Department of Jewish History, is researching "Community Boundaries and Religious Exclusion during the Second Temple Era." A third Orion grant recipient, Joseph Angel, joins us from New York University, where he is writing on "Priests and Priesthood at Qumran."

Nadav Sharon, *Orion Bibliography* research assistant, is on leave from the Center. He has received a graduate appointment to the Scholion Institute, to study Josephus. We welcome research assistants Noa Kremer and Jacqueline Vayntrub, who are helping Dr. Clements prepare the cumulative bibliography, as well as Intern Hannah Wortzman, who is bringing the Orion Library records up-to-date. Webmaster Yael Bezalel Eliahoo and research assistant Asher Altshul are completing the work on the Virtual Qumran site. And as always, Ariella Amir has kept the Center running smoothly through this time of transitions.

**“Both Sides” of the Story:
When Scrolls Scholars and the Media Don’t Quite Communicate**
by Dr. Maxine Grossman, University of Maryland

The Scrolls are in the news again.

Public fascination with the Dead Sea Scrolls is no surprise, but it is always interesting to see how the mainstream press covers them. Articles in major newspapers over the last few months have reported on recently offered arguments about the identity of the Qumran site (“Archaeologists Challenge Link,” *New York Times*, Aug. 15, 2006; “U. of C. Professor may be Right,” *Chicago Tribune*, Oct. 22, 2006; both referring to *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Sept., 2006). Meanwhile, not long ago, the *Toronto Star* gave space to independent scholar Neil Altman’s long-standing claims regarding the dating and content of the Scrolls (“The Chinese Connection,” *Star*, Nov. 4, 2006). These stories may not tell us much about the actual history of the Scrolls, but they certainly shed light on how we tend to think about them.

A recent *New York Times* essay by the paper’s “Public Editor” provides an excellent, if inadvertent, example of the difference between scholarly discourse and the discourse of popular culture and the media. “Getting both sides of a story and sorting them out for readers is the basic job of newspaper reporters and editors,” Byron Calame writes. “This is a key to creating a newspaper that is fair—both to readers and to the people and institutions that are the subjects of stories” (Nov. 5, 2006, sec. 4, p. 12). But time constraints limit the number of opinions a reporter can solicit. As *Washington Post* staff writer Alan Cooperman puts it, “Newspaper writing lends itself to breaking things down in twos” (interview, Oct. 24, 2006). At minimum, that is, journalists must tell “both” sides of the story in order to be fair.

An academic perspective looks rather different, of course. As academics, we don’t really believe in “both,” and we have a very different definition of “fair.”

“Both sides” is a problem for scholars in two distinct ways: it offers at once too many perspectives and not enough of them. When we put forth an argument, it can be based on years or decades of scholarly work, and our goal is to put forward *that* argument—we don’t need a countering view to ensure a “balanced” representation of the subject under discussion. But perhaps more importantly, even when we think we are right, we know that other scholars may have strikingly different perspectives on the subject in question, or may have nuanced versions that mesh with our own on some points but not on others. Only rarely can any academic conversation—from the identity of the Essenes to the significance of the ruins at Qumran—be said to have so few as two distinct and contrasting explanations.

“Fairness” is another problem, since as scholars we tend to want to be fair to the complexities of our subject, more than to the sensitivities of our audience. Making an academic point means having the luxury to be confusing, complicated, and inconclusive. Journalists don’t have that luxury, as Cooperman observes. “When you start trying to present four different opinions in an article, you run the risk of trying your readers’ patience and losing them along the way.”

Understanding a multifaceted subject in terms of exactly two “sides” has an impact on the interpretation of data. We see this in the journalistic phenomenon that Lawrence Schiffman calls “inverting reality” (*Dead Sea Discoveries* 12.1), in which marginal scholarly viewpoints are held up as mainstream, and mainstream scholars are then asked to comment upon them. More than mere perversity on the part of the media, this tendency to divide scholarly opinion into two separate camps (the “scholarly elite” and the “growing number of scholars” who challenge them, as Altman puts it) may reflect the use of this framework of duality. What scholars see as a field of diverse but more-or-less mainstream views, fringed by a variety of distinct and often contradictory minority perspectives, the media can best represent as a conflict between two equivalent competing—and largely monolithic—academic contenders.

The “both sides” dynamic may also be responsible for another phenomenon that we all have noticed and found frustrating: the tendency to lump the Scrolls in with the Nag Hammadi codices, and any other literature that can be deemed secret, rediscovered, or simply non-canonical. Again, this conflation of evidence may reflect the assumption that there are two and only two versions of scripture, the authorized tradition and the one that “they” have been repressing for millennia. The latter, a single “anti-canon” of secret texts, pops up every few years; for example, in a single bound notebook on “The X-Files,” or most recently, in the workroom of Leigh Teabing, the great Grail scholar of *The Da Vinci Code*.

The media work with short deadlines and high pressure, and sometimes this shows in the way they use sources. But the tendency towards the use of two-sided thinking in media reporting on the Scrolls may ultimately be a more significant element in the popular framing of Scrolls scholarship and the Scrolls themselves. In structuring scholarly opinions for popular consumption, therefore, it’s always best to ask how our complex and carefully nuanced arguments will look, when read through the lens of a “both sides” view.

New Electronic Resource: *The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library*. Prepared by the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Edited by Emanuel Tov. CD-Rom. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

This third volume of the DSS CD-ROM gives a complete coverage of all the published non-biblical Qumran scrolls, including scrolls identified in 2004-5, together with morphological analysis and English translations. The CD-ROM also includes Hebrew Scripture. The WordCruncher software enables sophisticated searches of Hebrew and Aramaic terms using their root forms. The database has an improved set of photographs of all the fragments, and each scroll image is individually labeled. This version is Unicode compatible, so that one may cut and paste from the database into Microsoft Word and similar programs.

Orion Center Calendar—Winter 2006/2007

November 28. Rothberg International School/Pontifical Biblical Institute Lectures in Memory of Miriam Sheffer

18:00 p.m. Prof. Daniel Schwartz (Department of Jewish History, The Hebrew University): “Where Should We Put the Second Temple Period? Heinrich Graetz’s Problem and our Own” (in English)

The Rothberg School, Boyar Building, Room 100, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mt. Scopus

***Please check our website for information on the rest of the lectures in the PBI series. The remainder of the PBI programs will be held at the PBI, 3 Paul Emile Botta Street, Jerusalem. All lectures in this series are given in English.*

December 12. Jonas C. Greenfield Scholars’ Seminar 12-14:00 p.m. Prof. Emanuel Tov (Department of Bible, The Hebrew University): “The Many Faces of Scripture: Reflections on the LXX and 4QRevised Pentateuch” (in Hebrew)

January 10. Jonas C. Greenfield Scholars’ Seminar 12-14 p.m. Prof. Menahem Kister (Departments of Bible and Talmud, The Hebrew University): “Liturgical Scrolls and their Contribution to the Study of the Formulation of the Amidah Prayer” (in Hebrew)

January 23. Coffee Hour Presentation 12:00-1:30 p.m. Yehoshua Granat (Orion Grant Recipient, Hebrew University): “‘Before the World was Made’: Early Piyut and the Afterlife of Pseudepigrapha” (in Hebrew)

Please note: Coffee Hour presentations and the Greenfield Scholars’ Seminar are held in the Mandel World Center of Jewish Studies, The Rabin Building, Room 2001/2, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mt. Scopus. Please check the Calendar on our web site for updates, and for the Spring Semester program.

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Orion Center Internships

We still have student internships available for 2006–2007. Interns research the On-Line Bibliography, help maintain the Library, and participate in other Center activities. Call, e-mail us, or stop by for more information.

Research Grants and Awards

The Orion Center awards Research Grants to young scholars once a year. Priority is given to projects that a) can be done uniquely in Jerusalem or at the Hebrew University; and b) help to integrate the new information being gleaned from the Scrolls into the broader historical picture of Second Temple Judaism. *Please visit our website for deadlines and application forms.*

Orion Publications:

The Orion Center is happy to announce its latest publication:

Rabbinic Perspectives: Rabbinic Literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium of the Orion Center For the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 7–9 January, 2003. Edited by Steven G. Fraade, Aharon Shemesh, and Ruth A. Clements. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 62. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

◆We ask our colleagues to check the *On-Line Bibliography* for your own relevant publications and to **send us additions and corrections.** *Thank you!*

Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibition Tours US

An exhibition of the Dead Sea Scrolls is touring the United States, under the combined auspices of the Israel Antiquities Authority and the Dead Sea Scrolls Foundation. The Exhibition is presently housed at the Pacific Science Center in Seattle, WA (<http://www.pacsci.org/dss/>). Check the Orion website for information on current locations and a link to the exhibition schedule.

The **Associates Program** offers the opportunity to receive current news about the Dead Sea Scrolls while supporting the Orion Center. You can help us foster innovative research and disseminate information to both scholars and the general public, about the Scrolls and their significance for the study of the history of Judaism and of early Christianity.

To join the Associates for 2006–2007, please fill in the enclosed form (or visit our website for a printable membership form); mail this form to the Center with your check (made out to “The Orion Center, Hebrew University”). Please be sure to include your name, mailing address, and other contact information, along with your gift. Gifts may be earmarked to any of the following funds:

- 1. Endowment Fund:** To assist the Center towards achieving financial independence.
- 2. Library Fund:** To assist in expanding the Center Library, located in the Scholars’ Room.
- 3. Fellowship Fund:** To provide yearly grants to both young and established scholars for research in the area of Dead Sea Scrolls and related fields.

We thank our current Associates for their ongoing support!