

# **SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA**

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FOR THE PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

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# SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA

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*Edited by*

HANNAH M. COTTON, JONATHAN J. PRICE, DAVID J. WASSERSTEIN  
DAVID M. SCHAPS, NETTA ZAGAGI

*Assistant to the Editors: Ori Shapir*

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## John Glucker

On his retirement, the Society congratulates with this volume Professor John Glucker, an ardent and indefatigable promoter of classical studies in Israel, Secretary of the Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies from 1978 to 1984 and its President from 1995 to 1997. Born in Haifa in 1933 to parents who had immigrated to Palestine, his father from Vienna and his mother from the Soviet Union, he was educated at the liberal High School Hugim, where he was fortunate to have as a teacher Baruch Kurtzweil, a profound thinker and critic who was later appointed professor of literature at Bar Ilan University. Following his military service he moved to Jerusalem and studied Philosophy, Classics and History at the Hebrew University (1954-1960), where he received his BA and MA degrees. After three years of postgraduate studies in Oxford, mainly with G.E.L. Owen and Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones, he was appointed Assistant Lecturer (1963-1965) and then Lecturer in the University of Exeter (1965-1978). He joined the University of Tel Aviv in 1978, first as Associate Professor and then from 1984 as Full Professor of Classical Philology and Philosophy.

As an undergraduate John studied philosophy with Sh. Pines and J. Fleischman and classics with Chaim Wirszubski, A. Fuks and R. Meridor, who were themselves students of the founding fathers of higher education and in particular of the study of Classics in this country. In this respect John Glucker belongs to the third generation of Israeli scholars and has himself done much to continue the tradition and to raise a new generation of classical scholars in Israel.

John's numerous publications (see the appended bibliography) — mostly in English and Hebrew, but some in modern Greek, Latin and German — are mainly on subjects in the fields of Greek and Latin philology, and for the most part concerned with philosophical texts and the classical tradition. His enquiries touch varied writers and themes, including Plato and Aristotle, Theophrastus and Philo, Aeschylus and Thucydides, Cicero and Seneca, the Academy and the Stoa, Pyrrhonists, Peripatetics and the later Platonists, Casaubon, Madvig and Bernays. Erudition, subtlety, a critical approach to accepted views and original solutions to problems old or recently noticed, often by John himself, are the hallmark of his researches, amply and lucidly demonstrated in his justly acclaimed *Antiochus and the Late Academy* (1978), 'an astonishing hoard of scholarly treasures' as one reviewer aptly called it. He is one of those scholars, rare in our days, who are as familiar with Jewish as with classical philosophy, and it is interesting to note that his first publication dealt with Maimonides: 'Modality in Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed* (*Iyyun, Hebrew Philosophical Quarterly* 10 [1959], 177-91, in Hebrew). It is not surprising that he should have taken it upon himself to translate into English such works as Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *The Faith of Maimonides*, S. Rosenberg, *Good and Evil in Jewish Thought*, and David Flusser, *Jewish Sources in Early Christianity*. English readers can also benefit from his excellent translations of Yehuda Bauer, *Jewish Reactions to the Holocaust*, and Nurit Govrin, *Alienation and Generation*, which appeared in 1989. His academic achievements and contributions were recognised by the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy *honoris causa* by the University of Athens in 2001.

John's contributions to the Society are many and varied. As Secretary he worked hard to establish regularity of activities, and as President invested much effort in the endorsement by the Society of the new constitution required by Israeli law. He has always been a conscientious participant in the annual meetings, both in presenting papers and in discussions and general debates. Over the years he has contributed articles and reviews to *Scripta Classica Israelica*, and always takes seriously his duties as a member of its International Advisory Board. Dedicated to the aim of the Society, the promotion of classical studies in Israel, he has always been willing not only to participate in academic seminars intended for fellow-scholars and advanced students, but also to deliver popular lectures to the general public. To this activity belong two series of lectures he delivered for Israel's 'Broadcast University', which were published as *The Rise of Greek Philosophy* (1982) and *Introductory Lectures to Plato* (1985). No less important for the Hebrew reader are his translation of A. Koyre's seminal *Introduction à la lecture de Platon* (1978) and his learned and instructive introductions to the Hebrew translations of Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, by A. Katzir (1992), Homer, *Odyssey*, by A. Kahane (1996), and Cicero, *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, by A. Katzir (1997). The endeavour to attract the public to the study of Classics is made without any concession in academic demands. Indeed John is a staunch and vigorous defender of scholarly standards and has not hesitated to castigate openly colleagues who, in his opinion, were negligent in their writings.

We may be sure that John Glucker will take advantage of his retirement to pursue his studies and researches still more intensively, and we look forward to benefit from the fruits of his investigations.

πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη

I. S.



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