

## ICI REPORT FOR MAY 2012

### (a) ICI LIAISON NETWORK

The International Cooperation Initiative's Liaison Network is getting underway. We are pleased to announce that the following colleagues have begun to serve as members of the Liaison Network. They will contribute to furthering two-way communication between scholars in their countries and ICI in order to facilitate greater collaboration:

Argentina: Juan Manuel Tebes  
Brazil: Marcos Paulo Monteiro da Cruz Bailao  
Cameroon: Ernest van Eck  
Caribbean: Garnett Roper  
Central Africa Republic: Joseph Nzita Mavinga  
China: Jeremiah Meng  
Croatia: Igor Lorencin  
Czech Republic: Jan Roskovec  
Estonia: Thomas Richard Kämmerer  
India: David Joy  
Indonesia: Martin Harun  
Malaysia: Kar-Yong Lim  
Nigeria: Berekiah Olugbemiro  
Pacific Islands: Younis Sadiq Masih  
Peru and Bolivia: Teofilo Correa  
Philippines: Galen Hertweck  
Poland: Lukasz Niesiolowski-Spano  
Romania: Mihai Valentin Vladimirescu  
Russia: Valeriy Alikin  
South Africa: Jaqueline (Jackie) du Toit  
Ukraine: Taras Khomych

Tim Langille [tim.langille@gmail.com](mailto:tim.langille@gmail.com) is working on establishing the Liaison Network. SBL members in ICI countries for which there is already a member in the Liaison Network are still encouraged to contact Tim to volunteer to further ICI and its goals. SBL members in all countries are asked to suggest colleagues in ICI countries who might be willing to participate in this initiative. The goal of the Liaison Network is to establish open lines of communication that will promote awareness of the resources and opportunities made available through the ICI to scholars, teachers, and students and to communicate and develop an awareness of the scholarly work done in ICI countries.

(b) SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING

The Universiteit van Amsterdam will host the 2012 SBL International Meeting. This meeting is in conjunction with the 2012 annual meeting of the European Association of Biblical Studies (EABS) and the triennial joint meeting of the Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland en België (OTW) and the Society for Old Testament Study (SOTS) from July 22-26.

We are fully aware that most of you will not (be able to) be at the meeting. Yet some of you will. So we are planning an ICI informal meeting Tuesday, July 24, at 9:00 am. Please let me ([ehud.benzvi@ualberta.ca](mailto:ehud.benzvi@ualberta.ca)) or Leigh ([leigh.andersen@sbl-site.org](mailto:leigh.andersen@sbl-site.org)) know if you plan to attend the ICI meeting.

(c) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW BOOKS ADDED

(For the full list, please go to [http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books\\_ICIbooks.aspx](http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ICIbooks.aspx))

The following books were added since the last report:

- (1) Wallace, Howard N. *“Psalms” Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

The Book of Psalms is often seen as an anthology of prayers and hymns from which the reader may extract a selection as need or interest dictates. However, a recent development in Psalms scholarship has been a discussion of whether the collection of psalms has some overall structure. Is the whole of the Book of Psalms greater than the sum of its individual parts? This commentary argues that it is and presents a continuous reading of the Book of Psalms.

Moreover, the long-standing tradition, found within both Judaism and Christianity, of associating the psalms with David is used as a reading strategy. In this volume, the Psalms are presented sequentially. Each has its place in the collection but thirty-five are treated at greater length. They are read, at least in the first two books (Psalms 1–72), as if they were David’s words. Beyond that a more complex and developed association between David and the Psalms is demanded. David becomes a figure of hope for a different future and a new royal reign reflecting the reign of Yahweh. Throughout, David remains a model of piety for all who seek to communicate with God in prayer. It is in the light of this that

later disasters in the life of Israel, especially the Babylonian Exile, can be faced. In the Book of Psalms, the past, in terms of both David's life and the history of Israel, is the key to future well-being and faithfulness.

- (2) Hallbäck, Geert; Hvithamar, Annika; Editors. *“Recent Releases: The Bible in Contemporary Cinema.”* Bible in the Modern World, 15. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008.

The relationship between theology and film has always been a complicated one. When film was invented at the end of the nineteenth century, it quickly gained its place in popular culture, far from the orthodoxies of the scholarly world and of the Church. For the better part of the twentieth century popular cinema was considered off limits for serious studies of Bible and culture. Recently, however, there has been a growing understanding of how the Bible is being used in popular culture—not as a historical document or as an authoritative canon, but as part of the cultural intertext.

Cinema is a vivid example of the role and impact of the Bible in contemporary society. In this well-theorized collection of essays the issue is treated from several angles. Using the methodology of theology, the question of the alleged escapism of popular cinema is explored. Using the methodology of media studies, the impact of the media on religious communication is analysed. And, using the methodology of religious studies, the influence of the cinema in the creation of new religions, religious behaviour and religious institutions is investigated.

In addition, the book offers fruitful analyses of the cinematic use of biblical themes such as Eden, salvation, Mary Magdalene and Jesus—as well as of the cinematic application of ethical themes such as truth-telling, personal growth, suffering, the accomplishment of good and the creating of meaning for human beings.

- (3) Iverson, Kelly R.; and Christopher W. Skinner (eds.), *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect.* Resources for Biblical Study, 65. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

*Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*, originally published in 1982 and extensively revised in 1999, was a turning point in Gospel studies, both

for the contribution it made to Markan scholarship and for the methodological insights that it advanced. This volume celebrates *Mark as Story* and offers critique, engagement, and exploration of the new hermeneutical vistas that emerged in the wake of this pioneering study. In these essays, leading international Markan scholars discuss various texts and themes in the Second Gospel, reflect upon the rise of narrative criticism, and offer a glimpse at future trends in Gospels research

(d) EVENTS

The SBL maintains a significant list of events taking place anywhere in the globe. For the full list please go to <http://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/events.aspx>. Events that may be of interest to you include:

June 13-15, 2012 SOCIETY OF ASIAN BIBLICAL STUDIES (SABS)

The next meeting of the Society of Asian Biblical Studies will be held in Sabah, Malaysia from the 13-15 June 2012. Arrival the 12th and departure on the 16th. Kindly block these dates in your calendar and look for updates on the SABS website. <http://www.sabs-site.com>

July 9 – July 20 Polemos/Pulmus: Ways of Confrontation in Judaism, Paganism and Christianity in Late Antiquity

A summer course offered by the Central European University (CEU) in Budapest, Hungary. The course aims at exploring the nature and various ways of confrontation between and within Early and Rabbinic Judaism, the Early Church, and Pagan religions and schools of thought. The sessions discuss how these movements coped with conflicts within and without; what their strategies were in confronting and accommodating foreign ideas, competing religions, worldly powers or internal subversion; and what role these external and internal confrontations played in shaping them. Course faculty include Daniel Boyarin, Shaye J. D. Cohen, John M. Dillon, Mark Edwards and Guy G. Stroumsa. For more information <http://www.summer.ceu.hu/polemos-2012>

July 22-26 SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING (I-SBL)

The Universiteit van Amsterdam will host the 2012 SBL International Meeting. This meeting is in conjunction with the 2012 annual meeting of the European Association

of Biblical Studies (EABS) and the triennial joint meeting of the Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland en België (OTW) and the Society for Old Testament Study (SOTS).

August 28-30 OCEANIA BIBLICAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION (OBSA) ANNUAL MEETING

The meeting will be held at the Sia'atoutai Theological College in Tonga.

For more information please go to

<https://sites.google.com/site/wavesofthemoana/about-obsa>

or send an e-mail to [OBSAMail@gmail.com](mailto:OBSAMail@gmail.com)

September 6–9 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

The NTSSA will meet at the University of North West in Potchefstroom, South Africa.

For further information, please visit <http://www.newtestament.co.za/>

**Note:**

Please submit basic information about events to Sharon Johnson at [sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org](mailto:sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org).

(e) PLEASE PASS THE INFORMATION

You are encouraged to distribute this report among all those you think might find it helpful. If you are a member of other professional organizations related to biblical studies, we urge you to send our newsletters to those responsible for communication within those groups as well.