

SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE ICI REPORT FOR MAY 2014

(a) SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA

and

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION INITIATIVE (ICI) FORUM MEETING

The SBL is joining forces with the EABS (European Association of Biblical Studies) again for the International Meeting which will take place in Vienna, Austria, from 6-10 July. The Call for Papers is closed now, and the program is available on the SBL-website. See the following link:

http://sbl-site.org/meetings/Congresses_ProgramBook.aspx?MeetingId=24

An ICI forum meeting will be held at the Vienna conference, where any interested person will be welcome to join us to share their ideas and views on how the work of the ICI can be expanded/improved. The meeting will take place on MONDAY 7 JULY at 01:30-02:30PM in ROOM HS45 – HAUPTGEBÄUDE. We look forward to meeting you there!

(b) SBL ANNUAL MEETING IN SAN DIEGO, CA

and

IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT ACCOMMODATION AT ANNUAL MEETING

The SBL Annual Meeting will take place in San Diego, California, from 22-26 November. The Call for Papers is closed now, and the program director is busy scheduling the sessions. The program will be made available soon. Registration and accommodation bookings are open, and you may still benefit from the early bird pre-conference discount until June 19. See the following link:

http://sbl-site.org/meetings/meetings_registrationAM.aspx

An ICI forum meeting will be held at the San Diego conference as well, so you will be welcome to join us to share your ideas and views. The time and venue will be communicated to you later.

More affordable accommodation in San Diego? Following up on a suggestion by one of our ICI-members, we looked into the possibility of making available the ICI liaison network to members and non-members from ICI countries to find somebody who would

be interested in sharing a room in San Diego to make accommodation costs more affordable. We are happy to announce that you may send a message to Tim Langille (tim.langille@gmail.com), our liaison officer who will then distribute your request through the ICI network. Mention in your e-mail from when till when you will need accommodation, your gender, and contact details. Further contact can then be established directly.

(c) PUBLICATION IN ANEM/MACO

ANEM/MACO is a series that was established by the SBL at the request of the International Cooperation Initiative (ICI), and which is co-edited by Ehud Ben Zvi and Roxanna Flammini. The series publishes volumes on the Ancient Near East (including ancient Israel) electronically and makes them freely available for download. (Paperback and hardback versions of the volumes are available too, for a reasonable price.) Any work published in ANEM/MACO is freely available in electronic version to anyone in perpetuity. To view the volumes published in the series, please go to http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ANEmonographs.aspx

(d) PUBLICATION IN IVBS

IVBS is a series that was established by the SBL at the request of the International Cooperation Initiative (ICI), and which is co-edited by Monica Melanchthon and Jione Havea. IVBS encourages in particular submissions from scholars in the present seven international regions for which it has editorial boards: Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle East-South Asia, Northeast Asia, Pacific, and Southeast Asia. Interregional collaborations are also welcome. IVBS publishes works in English and in any other language for which its editors can find qualified peer reviewers. Any work published in IVBS is freely available to anyone in perpetuity. The series publishes work generally in the area of reception history and criticism. The scope is not limited to any particular biblical text or historical timeframe. The works will mainly be published in English and, wherever possible, also in primary languages of authors. For more information please go to <http://ivbs.sbl-site.org/home.aspx>. If you would consider publishing your work in this series, feel free to contact one of the two general editors, [Monica Melanchthon](#) or [Jione Havea](#).

(e) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW BOOKS ADDED

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

John Chrysostom, Homilies on Philippians

Allen, Pauline. *John Chrysostom, Homilies on Philippians: Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Pauline Allen*. Writings from the Greco-Roman World 36. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.

This volume offers a translation of sixteen homilies by the most famous preacher in Christian antiquity, John Chrysostom. These homilies on Paul's letter to the Philippians constitute the most comprehensive ancient surviving commentary on the letter in any language. The homilies have a direct and conversational style in which examples from daily life abound: children, the elderly, food, agriculture, seafaring, money, commerce, building, furniture, weather, illness, good health, animals, and slavery. Friendship themes, based on Paul's relationship with the church at Philippi, and Christology also figure largely in these homilies. This volume, with Greek text and English translation on facing pages, situates Chrysostom's homilies on Paul's letter to the Philippians in their historical, homiletical, rhetorical, and liturgical contexts.

Postcolonialism and the Hebrew Bible

Boer, Roland, ed. *Postcolonialism and the Hebrew Bible: The Next Step*. Semeia Studies 70. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.

This volume returns to where initial interest in postcolonial biblical criticism began: the Hebrew Bible. It does so not to celebrate the significant achievements of postcolonial analysis over the last few decades but to ask what the next step might be. In these essays, established and newer scholars, many from the interstices of global scholarship, discuss specific texts, neo/post/colonial situations, and theoretical issues. Moving from the Caribbean to Greenland, from Ezra-Nehemiah to the Gibeonites, this collection seeks out new territory, new questions, and possibly some new answers. The contributors are Roland Boer, Steed Davidson, Richard Horsley, Uriah Y. Kim, Judith McKinlay, Johnny Miles, Althea Spencer-Miller, Leo Perdue, Christina Petterson, Joerg Rieger, and Gerald West.

Jonathan Loved David

Heacock, Anthony. *Jonathan Loved David: Manly Love in the Bible and the Hermeneutics of Sex*. Bible in the Modern World 22. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2011.

The relationship between the Hebrew heroes David and Jonathan has caught the attention of popular and scholarly writers alike. Yet there is little agreement about the nature of this relationship that speaks of a love between two men that ‘surpasses the love of a man for a woman’ (2 Sam. 1.26). Weighing the arguments of scholars including Nissinen, Stone and Zehnder, Heacock produces a meta-critical analysis of the many interpretations of the relationship between David and Jonathan, identifying three dominant readings: the traditional political-theological interpretation, the homoerotic interpretation, and the homosocial interpretation.

After outlining the three interpretive approaches, Heacock considers the evidence cited to support each: namely, themes in the David and Jonathan narrative and related biblical texts, ancient political treaties, laws pertaining to homogenital behaviour in the ancient Mediterranean world, and the heroic tales of the Gilgamesh Epic and Homer’s Iliad. By applying recent epistemological shifts in knowledge as developed in the interdisciplinary fields of sexuality studies, queer studies and ancient studies, Heacock emphasizes the inescapability of the modern reader’s cultural context when reading the narrative, particularly the influence of modern discourses of sexuality.

Rather than suggest an alternative historical reading, Heacock turns the debate on its head by abandoning claims to historical veracity and embracing the input of the contemporary queer reader. Using queer theory and reader-response criticism, he offers a reading of the relationship between David and Jonathan through the lens of contemporary gay male friendships. This queer reading not only celebrates manly love in its numerous forms, but also adds a self-critical voice to the discussion that exposes the heteronormative assumptions underlying the questions often asked of the narrative.

Paradoxes of Paradise

Landy, Francis. *Paradoxes of Paradise: Identity and Difference in the Song of Songs, Second Edition*. Classic Reprints. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2011.

Rabbi Akiba is famously reported to have said, ‘Heaven forbid that any one in Israel ever disputed that the Song of Songs is holy, for the whole world is not worth the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel, for all the writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the Holy of Holies’. This book is an extended elaboration of Rabbi Akiba’s

statement. It argues that the Song is a Hellenistic composition, drawing on the resources of ancient Near Eastern erotic poetry and characterized by a complex though fragile unity.

Through the metaphors, the lovers progressively see themselves reflected in each other, as well as in the world about them and the poetry of love. The poem celebrates the land of Israel in spring, an ideal humanity, and a perfected language. It culminates in the contestation of love and death, and the assertion that only love survives the exigencies of time.

The pervasive ambiguity of the Song, in which one never quite knows what happens, is related to the ambivalence of beauty, which is closely related to ugliness. Hence the surrealist imagery of the Song verges upon the grotesque and stretches the resources of our imagination. Through a detailed comparison with the Garden of Eden story, Landy argues that the Song is a vision of paradise seen from the outside, through the ironic poetic gaze, in a world potentially hostile or indifferent.

Drought, Famine, Plague and Pestilence

Robertson, Warren C. *Drought, Famine, Plague and Pestilence*. Gorgias Biblical Studies 9. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010.

This interdisciplinary study integrates textual analysis of the Hebrew Bible and comparable ancient Near Eastern material with social theory and archaeology in order to articulate the ancient Israelites' taken-for-granted understandings (doxa) of natural disasters, their intellectual and theological challenges to those understandings, and their intellectual and theological reconstructions thereof. After a survey of textual and archaeological evidence for natural disasters in the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean world, Robertson demonstrates that common understandings of them are cast in terms of punishment for covenant infidelity. However, when natural disasters are understood as such, their arbitrary destruction challenges those taken-for-granted assumptions. The clash between cognitive expectation and experiential reality produces cognitive dissonance. Responses, then, come in the attempt to return to cognitive, if not social, stability.

The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries B.C.E.

Schoors, Antoon. *The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries B.C.E.* Translated by Michael Lesley. Biblical Encyclopedia 5. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.

The period of Assyrian domination over Israel and Judah (ca. 750–650 b.c.e.) can be reconstructed with reasonable accuracy. For example, both biblical and extrabiblical records indicate that the northern kingdom (Israel) came to an end in 722 with the fall of Samaria, while several decades later Jerusalem, capital of the southern kingdom (Judah), narrowly escaped being taken by Sennacherib. The first half of the seventh century was dominated by Manasseh in Judah, who not only served his overlords the Assyrians but also practiced a bloody form of despotism. With regard to biblical literature, the eighth century was the period of Israel's first great literary prophets: Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah. Other important texts, such as the Book of the Covenant, the early stories about the kings, the early forms of the patriarchal narratives in Genesis, and collections of proverbs, were either created or underwent profound editorial shaping during this time. This volume surveys the history of this formative period and presents a critical study of the biblical literature that originated within this historical context, as well as theological conclusions that readers may draw from these texts.

(f) 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>

A selection of events is listed below—mainly those taking place in ICI regions.

Please provide information on conferences in your region, including calls for papers, to Sharon Johnson at sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org.

May 31, 2014

Call for Papers Deadline: Biblical Exegesis between East and West

Review of Ecumenical Studies issue 3/2014 invites authors of various confessions to discuss the differences and similarities in the field of Biblical studies and to illustrate the extent to which they have mutually learned from one another. How can an Orthodox Bible scholar employ the historical-critical method? What could a Protestant theologian learn from the Orthodox Biblical exegesis? Is there an Orthodox Biblical exegesis at all?

What would be its characteristics and what is the opinion of the rather critical Bible scholars on this approach?

[More information](#)

June 16, 2014

MATS 2014, Call for Papers Deadline

The biennial conference of the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools will be held at the Christian Leaders' Training College, Mt. Hagen, Papua New Guinea, from 7-11 July 2014. The conference theme, Gospel Responses to Vital Issues Facing the Melanesian World in the 21st Century: Biblical, Theological, Missiological, allows for a wide range of papers addressing church, government, and globalization issues, as well as social, cultural, and moral concerns in Melanesia. Persons who hold or are undertaking a postgraduate degree in a theology-related field are invited to present 30 minute papers that will be followed by 15 minutes of questions from the audience. Papers on the theme are preferred but others will be accepted. Send abstracts of 250 words by email (as Word attachments) to Dr. Doug Hanson at graduate_studies@cltc.ac.pg and douglas.david.hanson@gmail.com or call (675) 73565595.

June 22-25, 2014

[Meeting of Society of Asian Biblical Studies \(SABS\)](#)

The next meeting of the SABS will be held from the 22nd to the 25th of June 2014 (arrival 22nd and departure 26th) in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The meeting is jointly hosted by the Church of Christ in Thailand and the McGilvary College of Divinity, Payap University. The theme of the conference is "Violence in the Human and Earth Community—Asian Biblical Response." For more information regarding this conference go to <http://www.sabs-site.com/>. Please write to [the Secretary](#) for any queries.

July 1-4, 2014

Meeting of the Society of Indonesian Biblical Scholars (ISBI)

The next meeting of the ISBI will be held from the 1-4 July 2014 in Manado, North Celebes. The meeting is jointly hosted by STAKN Manado and STFK Pineleng. The theme of the conference is "Monotheism in Bible and Local Religions." For more information regarding this conference please write to ISBI's President [Rev Agus Santoso](#) or via ICI liaison [Martin Harun](#).

July 6-10, 2014**[SBL International Meeting & European Association of Biblical Studies Meeting](#)**

To be held in Vienna. Call for papers is closed now. Registration is now open. See information above.

October 9-10, 2014**International Theological Conference “The Knowledge of God: East and West. Dogmatic and Spiritual Dimensions”**

Keynote Speakers: Andrew Louth, Durham University and Robin Darling Young, The Catholic University of America

The Christian Churches in the West and East have been seeking new approaches to interpreting the nature of the knowledge of God to reengage the reciprocal relation between theology and spirituality and to balance theological academic education with missionary practices of evangelization of the Church. It is commonly believed that the depth of the knowledge of God is found in the living experience of communicating with God. But how are we to articulate it theologically and implement it practically in the face of secularist challenges of the postmodern era? This conference proposes to become a theological forum, in which we will discuss different ways to attain the knowledge of God in the context of secularization and globalization.

Conference Focus: The Conference intends to be a theological forum for Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Ukrainian Greek Catholic and Protestant theologians to discuss different approaches to the “knowledge of God” based on Western and Eastern traditions.

Conference Details: The Conference will take place on October 9-10, 2014, at the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology of the Ukrainian Catholic University, L’viv, Khutorivka St. 35a. It will have plenary sessions in the morning and three thematic sessions in the afternoon: (i) Dogmatic Foundations of the Knowledge of God; (ii) Church Fathers on the Knowledge of God; (iii) Spiritual Life, Askesis, and the Knowledge of God.

Submit your proposal in Ukrainian, Russian, Polish and English. Participants interested in submitting a proposal and presenting at conference in Ukrainian, Russian, Polish or English may submit their proposals (see the form below) until June 30, 2014 to the following email address: theologia@ucu.edu.ua

Full texts in a form of articles will be considered for publication.

The organizers will pay for food, accommodation and publications.

Conference sessions will be held at the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology (Khutorivka St 35a, Lviv, Ukraine) with lodging at the University Residence Building (Kozelnytska St 2A, Lviv, http://studyukrainian.org.ua/en/about-lviv/accommodation_in_lviv).

The participants will pay for transportation (the organizers will arrange individual pick ups from the Lviv airport LWO for free).

Registration fee: 100 USD or 80 Euros (payable in cash at the registration desk in Lviv)

For further information please visit us at <http://www.theologia.ucu.edu.ua/kontakty>, email: theologia@ucu.edu.ua, or call + 38 032 240 99 55.

Submission Form

<http://theologia.ucu.edu.ua/en/component/content/article/7-anonsy/345-mizhnarodna-naukova-bogoslovska-konferencija-qbogopiznannja-shid-zahid-dogmatychni-ta-duhovni-vymiryq>

November 22-25, 2014

SBL Annual Meeting

The SBL Annual Meeting is the largest gathering of biblical scholars in the world. Each meeting showcases the latest in biblical research, fosters collegial contacts, advances research, and focuses on issues of the profession. The Annual Meeting will be held in San Diego, California. (See note above about accommodation sharing.)

(g) SBL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FREELY AVAILABLE

There are links to numerous educational resources on the SBL website. The following are freely available: (i) Resources on Teaching the Bible; (ii) Freely downloadable Hebrew, Greek and Transliteration fonts (amongst others); (iii) Resources on Bible translations and commentaries; and (iv) Research tool resources.

See <http://sbl-site.org/educational/default.aspx>

See also the following message from Executive Director of SBL, dr John Kutsko:

“Texts lie at the heart of biblical studies and the related fields its members research and teach. It is with this core interest in mind that the Society of Biblical Literature has launched a web page providing resources for text-critical research, writing, and collaboration. Please visit [Texts and Resources](#), which you can also find under the Educational Resources navigation button on the left column of the SBL home page. At its launch, this web page showcases the decades-long commitment of the German Bible Society/Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (GBS), which has produced the staples that have nourished generations of biblical scholars and translators. On this web page, members who log in will find the reading text (the upper text without critical apparatus) of four GBS editions available in several file formats, including downloadable PDFs and texts viewable via a GBS online platform:

- Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, 5th revised edition
- Septuaginta, edited by Alfred Rahlfs, 2nd revised edition

- Biblical Sacra Iuxta Vulgatum Versionem, 5th revised edition
- UBS Greek New Testament, 4th revised edition

Also available on this web page are links to the SBL Fonts and the SBL Greek New Testament. SBL members can be grateful to the collaborative efforts of Florian Voss (GBS's Senior Editor and International Rights Director) and Felix Breidenstein (GBS's Former Executive Director) for making this partnership a reality and for providing a significant service to SBL members. We hope those who use these texts will likewise express their appreciation and support for GBS."

(h) PLEASE PASS THE INFORMATION.

It is surprising that we continue to have correspondence from scholars in ICI countries that are just learning about the ICI programs. Please share this newsletter with your colleagues and students and become a liaison for your institution and SBL. (Please contact our liaison officer, [Tim Langille](#), if you would like to assist as contact person in your region.) Your advocacy for ICI strengthens biblical studies as a discipline and builds relationships in the global community. Thank you for those who have done so in the past—we also receive letters from people who received the newsletter from someone else.

With best wishes for your Bible scholarship!

Louis Jonker, SBL – International Cooperation Initiative