

SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE ICI REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2016

(a) THE SBL ANNUAL MEETING 2016, SAN ANTONIO

The SBL Annual Meeting which was held in San Antonio, Texas, from November 19-22, 2016 was a huge success. Not only did the editorial boards of ANEM/MACO and IVBS have their annual meetings, but the ICI executive also met as usual. At this meeting, a new executive committee member was welcomed, namely prof Jackie du Toit. As a means of introducing her, we share the thoughts she submitted to the executive when she was approached with some others to indicate how she will be able to contribute:

“I am currently situated in a postgraduate research unit at a South African university - in itself a privileged position. However, I know the challenges of the South African and sub-Saharan African teaching environment well. An important criterium in order to liaise with peers and colleagues as member of the ICI. I have written about my experiences as a young scholar and teacher in the late 1990s, teaching large classes (150-250) of biblical Hebrew students (see <http://www.mhs.no/aotp?21#3>) in a resource poor environment. And I am sensitive to the fact that these challenges transcend the obvious: limited resources, geographic isolation, limited numbers of teaching faculty, large classes, etc. ICI is doing wonderful work in this regard and I would very much like to be part of this. In terms of what I can contribute, I have experience in the support of emerging scholars and the establishment of networks for young scholars from the South. Over the past seven years I have worked with the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Free State, Jonathan Jansen, and two fellow co-directors from the professoriate to develop a very successful programme of support for recent South African PhDs in the first 5 to 8 years post PhD, irrespective of discipline. This includes the establishment of international scholarly networks and mentorship, assistance with funding strategies, international placements and exchanges, and initiatives to sustain rich international networks with leading universities and scholars around the world (e.g. UCLA, Cornell, Harvard, Cambridge, Basel University, University of Innsbruck, etc.). We also initiated writing retreats and writing circles, encourage higher impact publication strategies that would gain Southern African scholars greater exposure in the international academic environment, and the like. The networks we establish are carefully designed to position young scholars for purposes of long term exchange, socialisation and scholarly extension, but most importantly, to allow the South to speak to the North. I can contribute to the existing work of the ICI in all these areas by bringing this experience to bear. I would be interested particularly in finding ways to establish means of liaison, exchange and engagement not so much in terms of conferences (which we found to be of limited use except to cement networks), but to facilitate what the ICI has already established in terms of mentorship, co-teaching, co-supervision, publication opportunities, etc. And perhaps circumventing institutional limitations to explore inventive informal means of establishing the same.”

Jackie will take over the liaison network responsibility from Tim Langille, and will also take care of the teaching exchange initiative. Tim is rotating off the executive at the end of 2016, and we thank him for his great contributions in the past years. We welcome

Jackie aboard and look forward to collaborating with her in these important ICI initiatives.

An ICI **Forum discussion** was also held at the San Antonio meeting. The following is a summary of some of the issues that were reported or discussed at the meeting:

- We received statistics of how many books were uploaded to the ICI book repository during the past two years. During 2015, a total of 45 books were uploaded, and during 2016 a total of 46 books. Thus, more than 90 new and recent titles made available for free to ICI contexts in the past two years. This is surely a huge contribution to scholarship in ICI contexts, and we thank all contributing publishers very much.
- ANEM/MACO has published 15 volumes since the series was started. In 2014, four titles were published, in 2015 also four, and thus far during 2016 two titles. Thank you very much for the editorial board members of this online open-access series who are working hard, and who play a valuable role in making Spanish publications available, in addition to the English titles.
- The accessibility of the ICI book repository is still problematic, and this will be tackled as one of our priority issues during 2017.
- A pilot project will be launched during the 2017 Annual Meeting in Boston to record a selection of conference sessions to make available online. This will come as a replacement for the live and interactive webcasts that we tried out before, but were not very successful.
- Another ICI forum meeting will be held at the international SBL meeting in Berlin (7-11 August 2017) where a panel will discuss the different modes of interaction between more traditional European-American and biblical scholarship from ICI and global south contexts. More information will be shared in future newsletters.
- The 2018 international SBL meeting will be held in Helsinki, Finland, will the meeting will go to Bangalore, India in 2019.
- Discussions will be held during 2017 to assess our present definition of ICI countries (according to an economic measurement). Alternatives will be considered, and feedback will be given at the 2017 forum meeting at the Boston Annual Meeting.

(b) THE SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING 2017, BERLIN

The next SBL International Meeting will take place in Berlin, Germany, from 7-11 August 2017. The Call for Papers opened on 9 November 2016, and will close on 21 February 2017. See this link: <https://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/Internationalmeeting.aspx>

(c) PUBLICATION IN ANCIENT NEAR EAST MONOGRAPHS (ANEM) / MONOGRAFÍAS SOBRE EL ANTIGUO CERCAÑO ORIENTE (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 Alan Lenzi and Juan Tebes. 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

The latest volume in ANEM/MACO is:

Mapping Judah's Fate in Ezekiel's Oracles against the Nations

By Lydia Lee

Ezekiel 25–32 contains some of the most virulent speeches directed against Judah's neighboring nations. Some scholars emphasize that the destruction of the nations in chapters 25–32 signals the upcoming salvation of God's people. Other scholars presuppose that the nations are judged by a separate moral standard and render the judgment executed upon the nations irrelevant to that upon Judah. In this study, Lydia Lee postulates a third way to perceive the rhetorical roles of the nations in Ezekiel 25–32. Unraveling the intricate connections between the oracles against the nations and those against Judah, Lee argues that Ezekiel 25–32 contains a daring message of judgment against not only the foreign nations but also Judah's land, temple, and nation. Lee places Ezekiel 25–32 in a broader context, considering how samples of its early reception within the prophetic book affirm or transform the bleak message about the oblique judgment for the house of Judah. For scholars interested in Ezekiel or the oracles against the nations, this study will offer a new way of thinking about the corpus concerning foreign nations.

To download the book for free, paste the following link into your browser:

https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/9780884141808_OA.pdf

(d) PUBLICATION IN INTERNATIONAL VOICES IN BIBLICAL STUDIES (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](#).

The latest volume in IVBS is:

Reading Ruth in Asia

Edited by Jione Havea and Peter Lau

This monograph contains readings of texts and themes from the Book of Ruth by scholars from Asia. There is a strong mix of postcolonial and contextual flavors in the essays, which together give readers a taste of Biblical Criticism in Asia. Special attention is given to the literary, cultural, gender and minoritized subjects in the Book of Ruth.

To download the book for free, paste the following link into your browser:

http://ivbs.sbl-site.org/uploads/9780884141006_OA.pdf

(e) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW BOOKS ADDED

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

Phoenician Aniconism in Its Mediterranean and Ancient Near Eastern Contexts

Doak, Brian R. *Phoenician Aniconism in Its Mediterranean and Ancient Near Eastern Contexts*. Archaeology and Biblical Studies 21. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015.

The Hebrew Bible contains a prohibition against divine images (Exod 20:2-5a). Explanations for this command are legion, usually focusing on the unique status of Israel's deity within the context of the broader Near Eastern and Mediterranean worlds. Doak explores whether or not Israel was truly alone in its severe stance against idols. This book focuses on one particular aspect of this iconographic context in Israel's Iron Age world: that of the Phoenicians. The question of whether Phoenicians employed aniconic (as opposed to iconic) representational

techniques has significance not only for the many poorly understood aspects of Phoenician religion generally, but also for the question of whether aniconism can be considered a broader trend among the Semitic populations of the ancient Near East.

Bible and Transformation: The Promise of Intercultural Bible Reading

de Wit, Hans, and Janet Dyk, eds. *Bible and Transformation: The Promise of Intercultural Bible Reading*. Semeia Studies 81. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015.

Engage the delightful and inspiring, sometimes rough and rocky road to inclusive and transformative Bible reading: This book offers the results of research within a new area of discipline—empirical hermeneutics in intercultural perspective. The book includes interpretations from the homeless in Amsterdam, to Indonesia, from African Xhosa readers to Norway, to Madagascar, American youths, Germany, Czech Republic, Colombia, and Haitian refugees in the Dominican Republic. The contributors are Digna María Adames Nuñez, Marisol Ale Diaz, Eric Nii Bortey Anum, Esa J. Autero, Kim Barker, Willemien van Berkum, Janet Dyk, Godian Ejiogu, Knut Holter, Louis C. Jonker, Ricardo González Kindelan, Werner Kahl, Rainer Kessler, Ignacio Antonio Madera Vargas, La Rip Marip, Jeff Moore, Manuel Obeso Pérez, John Mansford Prior, Daniel S. Schipani, Fernando F. Segovia, Batara Sihombing, Hans Snoek, Luc Tanja, José Vicente Vergara Hoyos, Charlene van der Walt, Gerald West, Hans de Wit, Taggart E. Wolverton, and Danie van Zyl.

Current Issues in Priestly and Related Literature: The Legacy of Jacob Milgrom and Beyond

Gane, Roy E., and Ada Taggar-Cohen. *Current Issues in Priestly and Related Literature: The Legacy of Jacob Milgrom and Beyond*. Resources for Biblical Study 82. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015.

New directions and fresh insight for scholars and students: The single greatest catalyst and contributor to our developing understanding of priestly literature has been Jacob Milgrom (1923–2010), whose seminal articles, provocative hypotheses, and comprehensively probing books vastly expanded and significantly altered scholarship regarding priestly and related literature. Nineteen articles build on Milgrom’s work and look to future directions of research. Essays cover a range of topics including the interpretation, composition and literary structure of priestly and holiness texts as well as their relationships to deuteronomical and extra-biblical texts. The book includes a bibliography of Milgrom’s work published between 1994 and 2014.

Reincarnation in Philo of Alexandria

Yli-Karjanmaa, Sami. Reincarnation in Philo of Alexandria. *Studia Philonica Monograph 7*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015.

The strong element of Greek philosophy in Philo's thought has been recognized since antiquity, but his relation to the Pythagorean-Platonic tenet of reincarnation has been a neglected, even avoided, topic in research. This book confirms the view common in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries that Philo accepted the doctrine of reincarnation even though he preferred not to speak openly about it. The book shows how allegorization enabled Philo to give a reincarnational interpretation to very different scriptural passages.

Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism, Volume XXVII

Runia, David T., and Gregory E. Sterling, editors. *Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism, Volume XXVII*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015.

The *Studia Philonica Annual* is a scholarly journal devoted to the study of Hellenistic Judaism, particularly the writings and thought of the Hellenistic-Jewish writer Philo of Alexandria (circa 15 BCE to circa 50 CE).

EXCITING DEVELOPMENT: Other Publishers' Resources and Resources in Spanish

Oxford University Press offers free and reduced rate access to dozens of countries. Learn more on their [website](#).

We are also very excited that we have managed – through the facilitation of one of our ICI executive members (Juan Manuel Tebes) – to include some Spanish publications in our initiative. We thank the Instituto Multidisciplinario de Historia y Ciencias Humanas who is willing to make some direct links to free Spanish publications available on the ICI book repository page. See the following [link](#). Links are available there to the following books (in Spanish):

- Excavation reports of Tell el-Ghaba (Egypt)
- Study of Stela of Gebel Barkal (Egypt)
- Proceedings I institute workshop (includes articles on ANE)
- Proceedings II institute workshop (includes articles on ANE)
- Proceedings III institute workshop (includes articles on ANE)

There is also a link to the following Spanish journal:

- Journal of Egyptological Studies

(f) ICI TEACHING COLLABORATION PROGRAM

In order to facilitate the exchange of scholars and institutions in biblical studies across the globe, a teaching collaboration program is run by the ICI. The facility consists of lists of scholars and institutions interested in exchanges that are made available on the SBL website. See: <http://sbl-site.org/educational/ICITeaching.aspx>. If you or your institution is interested in such collaboration, please visit the site and enroll yourself in these lists. For more information, contact [Jackie du Toit](#).

(g) JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE (JBL) ARCHIVE

Take note that an archive with JBL articles from volume 122.1 of 2003 through volume 130.1 of 2011 is available online to people accessing the SBL website from any ICI country. See http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/ICI_JBLarchive.aspx. All articles in those volumes can be downloaded for free!

(h) THE SBL WEBSITE

The SBL website (on the SBL Press page) has a facility where one can search the full text of all SBL books! For this very convenient tool, see:

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

For searching reviews of a vast number of academic publications, see the website of Review of Biblical Literature (RBL) at (you have to log in with your membership number):

<http://www.bookreviews.org/>

(i) 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.

April 9-12, 2017**2017 Annual Meeting of the New Testament Society of Southern Africa (NTSSA)**

Meeting will be held at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. The 2017 NTSSA Annual Meeting will be directed by the subgroup for Pauline Studies. Closing date for proposals: 13 February 2017. Email for more [Information](#)

August 7-11, 2017

2017 SBL International Meeting

Berlin, Germany

<https://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/Internationalmeeting.aspx>

November 18-21, 2017

2017 SBL Annual Meeting

Boston, Massachusetts

<https://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/Annualmeeting.aspx>

(j) 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>

Also remember to check the newly-developed **Bible Odyssey** online portal. See www.bibleodyssey.org. This portal offers wonderful educational resources, but also resources for broader popular audiences. Use this site to popularize our academic studies in faith communities!

Any topics you would like to see Bible Odyssey address? Just send a message to: bow@sbl-site.org

(k) PLEASE PASS ON THE INFORMATION

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 to 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