

ICI REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2013

(a) SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN ST. ANDREWS, SCOTLAND

The meeting will be held from July 7 to July 11. The call for papers has closed.

The meeting will include an informal ICI session to exchange ideas, provide feedback and the like. Please let me know if you plan to participate.

For [more information about the I-SBL](#).

Future I-SBL meetings:

- Vienna, Austria; July 6-10, 2014
- Buenos Aires, Argentina, July 20-24, 2015

(b) SBL MEMBERSHIP

There has been some decline in SBL membership from ICI countries. To be a member is a way of “owning” the Society and it is important for the future of the Society. Please keep in mind that membership for ICI countries costs only \$15 for a full membership and \$10 for students. Moreover, if a colleague or a student wishes to be a member but this is too much of an expense, a financial solution will be found. The point is obviously not “revenue” but participation and representation in the Society. Please encourage your colleagues and students to join the SBL.

Please ask them to visit the Online Books page for the ICI membership form <http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/onlinebooks.aspx>. They will only be able to view the form if visiting the SBL site from an ICI country. Questions should be directed to sblservices@sbl-site.org.

(c) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS, IVBS and ANEM/MACO

Please encourage your colleagues to submit manuscripts to these two series.

For IVBS please go to <http://ivbs.sbl-site.org/home.aspx>

For ANEM/MACO please go to

http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ANEmonographs.aspx

(d) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW BOOKS ADDED

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

- (1) Beckman, Gary M., Trevor R. Bryce, and Eric H. Cline. *The Ahhiyawa Texts. Writings from the Ancient World, 28.* Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

Twenty-six texts found in the Hittite capital of Hattusa dating from the fifteenth–thirteenth centuries B.C.E. contain references to a land known as “Ahhiyawa,” which most scholars now identify with the Late Bronze Age Mycenaean world. The subject of continuing study and controversy since they were first published in 1924, the letters are still at the center of Mycenaean-Hittite studies and are now considered in studies and courses concerned with Troy, the Trojan War, and the role of both Mycenaeans and Hittites in that possible conflict. This volume offers, for the first time in a single source, English translations of all twenty-six Ahhiyawa texts and a commentary and brief exposition on each text’s historical implications. The volume also includes an introductory essay to the whole Ahhiyawa “problem” as well as a longer essay on Mycenaean-Hittite interconnections and the current state of the discipline.

- (2) Buss, Martin J. *The Changing Shape of Form Criticism: A Relational Approach.* Hebrew Bible Monographs 18. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010.

In this important collection of essays by the leading theorist of form, Martin Buss presents in Part I, *Steps toward a New Form Criticism*, several essays that view forms as complexes of relations that constitute possibilities. This relational approach to form criticism rejects, on the one hand, the idea that reality is at base only particular and, on the other hand, an essentialism that holds that forms are firmly structured and there is a single correct way to classify texts. In Part II, *Interdisciplinary Ideas of Sitz im Leben*, he shows how Gunkel's notion of *Sitz im Leben*, derived from his knowledge of other fields, made an impact on leading figures in several disciplines. They modified the notion, and their analyses became known to a number of biblical scholars. This cross-pollination introduced a new understanding of the notion of *Sitz im Leben* into biblical studies, which, in turn, was noted by scholars in other fields. An appendix to the volume reports relational approaches in several disciplines that provide a stimulus for relational form criticism.

- (3) Lubetski, Meir, ed. *New Seals and Inscriptions, Hebrew, Idumean, and Cuneiform.* Hebrew Bible Monographs 8. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2007.

This collection of 15 papers is a significant addition to our textual evidence for the world of the Bible: it presents over 50 inscriptions, tablets and seals from the

collections of Shlomo Moussaieff, in Hebrew, Idumean, and cuneiform. Most of these texts are being published here for the first time. Contents: David Noel Freedman, The Almost Perfect Fake and/or the Real Thing; Ada Yardeni, A Note on a Qumran Scribe; Peter van der Veen, Gedaliah ben Ahiqam in the Light of Epigraphic Evidence; Martin Heide, Impressions from a New Alphabet Ostrakon in the Context of (Un)provenanced Inscriptions: Idiosyncrasy of a Genius Forger or a Master Scribe?; Bezalel Porten and Ada Yardeni, The House of Baalrim in the Idumean Ostraca; Bezalel Porten and Ada Yardeni, Why the Unprovenanced Idumean Ostraca Should be Published; Edward Lipinski, Silver of Ishtar of Arbela and of Hadad; Richard Hess, Aspects of Israelite Personal Names and Pre-exilic Israelite Religion; André Lemaire, New Inscribed Hebrew Seals and Seal Impressions; W.G. Lambert, A Document from a Community of Exiles in Babylonia; Meir Lubetski, Two Egypto-Israelite Seals; Chaim Cohen, The Yehoash Tablet; Kathleen Abraham, An Inheritance Division among Judeans in Babylonia from the Early Persian Period; Meir Lubetski, The Seal of a Royal Servant of the Judahite Monarchy; Meir Lubetski, A Personal Seal: Shrh ben Zephaniah

- (4) McGowan, Andrew B. and Kent Harold Richards, eds. *Method and Meaning: Essays on New Testament Interpretation in Honor of Harold W. Attridge*. Resources for Biblical Study 67. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

Never before has there existed a more diverse set of possibilities for understanding the canonical texts of the New Testament, other early Christian literature, and the history of the emergent Christian movement that was to become the church. Harold W. Attridge has contributed authoritatively to many of the disciplines that underlie approaches to these questions: textual criticism, exegesis, comparative literary and historical studies, and numerous other areas. In honor of his work, this volume seeks to draw many of these methodological threads together. Readers will find discussions of both new and traditional methods of New Testament study, with numerous examples indicating how these approaches work and what insights they yield.

The contributors are Gary Anderson, David Aune, James Charlesworth, Adela Yarbro Collins, John Collins, James Elliot, Eldon Jay Epp, Philip Esler, Craig Evans, Everett Ferguson, Sean Freyne, Gabriela Gelardini, Mark Goodacre, Rowan Greer, Richard Horsley, Judith Lieu, Francisco Lozada, Edgar McKnight, Elaine Pagels, PHEME Perkins, Richard Pervo, David Rhoads, James Robinson, David Runia, Thomas Stegman, Thomas Tobin, Joseph Tyson, and James C. VanderKam

- (5) Sneed, Mark R. *The Politics of Pessimism in Ecclesiastes: A Social-Science Perspective*. Ancient Israel and Its Literature 12. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.

Scholars attempt to resolve the problem of the book of Ecclesiastes' heterodox character in one of two ways, either explaining away the book's disturbing qualities or radicalizing and championing it as a precursor of modern existentialism. This volume offers an interpretation of Ecclesiastes that both acknowledges the unorthodox nature of Qoheleth's words and accounts for its acceptance among the canonical books of the Hebrew Bible. It argues that, instead of being the most secular and modern of biblical books, Ecclesiastes is perhaps one of the most religious and primitive. Bringing a Weberian approach to Ecclesiastes, it represents a paradigm of the application of a social-science methodology.

- (6) Salzman, Michele Renee and Michael Roberts, trans. *The Letters of Symmachus: Book 1*. Writings from the Greco-Roman World 30. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011

This first introduction to, commentary on, and translation into English of the first book of the letters of Quintus Aurelius Symmachus shows the leading orator and statesman of the fourth-century Roman Senate deeply engaged in conversation with the leading men of the empire. The book highlights the influence of the late Roman aristocracy that flourished in the century after Constantine and demonstrates that it did not become powerless in the face of the new Christian elite. Shared goals united the late Roman elites far more than religion divided them, helping explain the relatively nonviolent and gradual conversion of the western Roman aristocracy. One hundred and seven letters—nuanced to match the recipient's personality, status, and interest—discuss literature, religion, politics, and shared pleasures, and provide a unique window into the private lives of Rome's leaders, pagan and Christian, in late antiquity.

(e) JSTOR INITIATIVE

JSTOR has initiated a program to offer free, read-online access to individual scholars and researchers. A January 2013 [press release](#) announces the expansion of the program to 1,200 journals. For more information, please click [here](#).

(f) SALE OF PRINTED SBL BOOKS

Almost all new, recent, and backlisted SBL and Brown Judaic Studies titles are available to SBL members at a thirty percent discount during the spring sale. To order books, [download](#) the order form, then mail, fax, or phone your order by May 31. If you prefer to order at the SBL Store, make sure to use the promo code SPG2013 at checkout to receive your discount.

(g) 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>

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

July 7-11

SBL International Meeting

To be held in St. Andrews, Scotland. (As mentioned above, the meeting will include an informal ICI session to exchange ideas, provide feedback and the like). [More information](#)

July 30- Aug 2

EABS Annual Meeting

Annual Meeting of the European Association of Biblical Studies

Hosted by the University of Leipzig, Leipzig, Germany

[More information](#)

August 2013

8/4–8/9 International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (IOSOT)

The 21st Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (IOSOT) will take place at the University of Munich, Germany. As usual it will be joint with the Congresses of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS, 1.-3. of August), of the International Organization for Qumran Studies (IOQS), the International Organization for Masoretic Studies (IOMS), the International Organization for Targum Studies (IOTS) and the International Syriac Language Project (ISLP). [More Information](#)

(h) 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.

Ehud

Ehud Ben Zvi, SBL - International Cooperation Initiative