

## ICI REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2012

### (a) ICI FORUM MEETING AT THE SBL ANNUAL MEETING.

Our meeting will take place on Nov. 17, from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM. The room is W473 - McCormick Place. Please come so we may all share our ideas and comments in order to make ICI serve us better.

We are aware that most of us will not be in Chicago. You may still share your ideas and comments at the meeting by sending them to ([leigh.andersen@sbl-site.org](mailto:leigh.andersen@sbl-site.org)) or to me ([ehud.benzvi@ualberta.ca](mailto:ehud.benzvi@ualberta.ca)) and will be glad to bring them to group.

### (b) SBL VISA COORDINATOR

In order to facilitate attendance by those in ICI countries at SBL Congresses, Samantha Spitzner <[samantha.spitzner@sbl-site.org](mailto:samantha.spitzner@sbl-site.org)> has been appointed as the SBL visa coordinator. Samantha will advise members who need visas in order to travel to and participate in the Annual or International Meetings. She will not prepare applications, but will be a source of information to aid members in submitting applications and will provide letters of intent if needed by those participating in the meeting as presenters or board members. For more information, please contact Samantha directly. This appointment is in response to suggestions we received in previous meetings of the ICI forum.

### (c) TWO SESSIONS AT THE SBL ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE SKYPED

Skyping sessions was one of the suggestions we received in previous meetings of the ICI forum. We will experimentally skype two sessions that will take place at the SBL Annual Meeting. Regrettably at this time we can skype only to one site at the time. We are currently closing the technical details with two sites. Each one of these two sites will include a combination of scholars and students from the 'local' area. It is important to stress that enabling a two-way interaction (e.g., ability to ask questions, make comments) is an integral part of the plan.

### (d) TEACHING COLLABORATION INITIATIVE

This is the time to remind students, including graduate students (and their supervisors), of the opportunities created through this initiative, which range from mentoring to

actually taking courses in areas of specialization that may not be available in their home institution, without ever leaving town. For more information:

<http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/ICITeaching.aspx>

(e) 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) Brenner, Athalya and Frank H. Polak, eds. *Performing Memory in Biblical Narrative and Beyond*. The Bible in the Modern World, 25. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

Memory—‘authentic’, manufactured, imagined, innocent or deliberate—becomes remembrance through its performance, that is, through being narrated orally or in writing. And when it is narrated, memory becomes a shaper of identities and a social agent, a tool for shaping a community’s present and future as much as, if not more so, than a near-simplistic recording of past history and a sense of belonging.

In this volume, various aspects of narrated ‘memories’ in the Bible and beyond it are examined for their literary and sociological charge within biblical literature as well as in its cultural afterlives—Jewish, Christian and ‘secular’. From inner-biblical memory shaping claims to contemporaneous retellings, the shifts of tradition to story are explored for ways, means and aims that, authorially intentional or otherwise, become influential in adapting the Bible for the postmodern scene and adapting the postmodern scene to the Bible.

This compilation of articles is the result of a collective research project with participants from the University of Amsterdam and Utrecht University (The Netherlands), Tel Aviv University and Haifa University (Israel), Poznan University (Poland), Bowdoin College and Brite Divinity School (USA).

This is Volume 3 in the subseries Amsterdam Studies in the Bible and Religion.

- (2) Long, Adrian. *Paul and Human Rights: A Dialogue with the Father of the Corinthian Community*. The Bible in the Modern World, 26. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

Unless biblical studies in any generation engages with the concrete issues and concerns of its day, it is likely to paint itself into an irrelevant scholarly corner. In a world shaped by the rhetoric and structures of 'human rights' (though struggling to accept and apply them) it is surprising that biblical scholars have largely failed to engage rights notions. Paul and Human Rights brings a biblical perspective to human rights by constructing a dialogue between them and the Paul of the Corinthian correspondence on key issues of power, equality and social structure.

The concept of human rights would have been alien to Paul, yet his Corinthian letters provide evidence of a sustained interaction with the kinds of issues we talk of in human rights terms. Long here explores Paul's emotive, manipulative language of mimesis, apostleship and fatherhood in conversation with human rights values. Similarly, Paul's social engineering and instructions regarding women and slaves are examined against the backdrop of human rights ideas about social structure and equality.

Unlike some other writers, Long's aim is neither to laud nor denigrate either Paul or human rights. His purpose is to build a dialogue where both can be heard and each can contribute to thinking about the other. In particular, the cruciform, other-orientation of Pauline servanthood provides a framework within which to consider how human rights ideas might continue to shape readings of Paul, and how Pauline perspectives might offer a critical alternative to the limited agenda of much contemporary human-rights thinking.

- (3) Leuchter, Mark A. and Jeremy M. Hutton. eds. *Levites and Priests in History and Tradition*. Ancient Israel and Its Literature Number 9. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

Priestly functionaries occupy a paramount position in the study of the Hebrew Bible. Despite more than a century of critical research, questions still abound regarding social location and definitions of the various priestly groups, the depictions of their origins, their ritual functions, the role of the laity and family religion, the relationship between prophecy and the priesthood, and the dating of texts. Making use of cross-disciplinary approaches, this volume provides a representative look at the state of current research into various aspects of priesthood in ancient Israel.

- (4) Dozeman, Thomas B., Thomas Romer and Konrad Schmid, eds. *Pentateuch, Hexateuch, or Enneateuch: Identifying Literary Works in Genesis through Kings*. Ancient Israel and Its Literature , Number 8. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

The identification of literary works in the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets is a hallmark of the modern historical-critical interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. The theories of a Tetrateuch, a Hexateuch, or a Deuteronomistic History have played a central role in recovering the literary history of the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets. The breakdown of these methodologies in recent research has forced scholars to reevaluate the criteria for identifying literary works in the formation of the Hebrew Bible. The present volume explores anew, without presupposition or exclusion, the criteria by which interpreters identify literary works in these books as a resource for recovering the composition history of the literature. It also brings North American and European approaches to the topic into a common discussion.

- (5) Rowland, Christopher and Christopher Tuckett, eds. *The Nature of New Testament Theology: Essays in Honour of Robert Morgan*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006.

This volume brings together some of the most distinguished writers in the field of New Testament studies to provide an overview of discussions about the nature of New Testament theology.

- Examines the development, purpose and scope of New Testament theology.
- Looks at the relationship of New Testament theology with other branches of theology.
- Considers crucial issues within the New Testament, such as the historical Jesus, the theology of the cross, eschatology, ethics, and the role of women.
- Offers fresh perspectives which take discussion of the subject further in key areas
- Includes a foreword by Rowan Williams.

- (6) Sugirtharajah, R.S., Ed., *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006.

This wide-ranging Reader provides a comprehensive survey of the interaction between postcolonial criticism and biblical studies.

- Examines how various empires such as the Persian and Roman affected biblical narratives.
- Demonstrates how different biblical writers such as Paul, Matthew and Mark handled the challenges of empire.
- Includes examples of the practical application of postcolonial criticism to biblical texts.
- Considers contemporary issues such as diaspora, race, representation and territory.
- Editorial commentary draws out the key points to be made and creates a coherent narrative.

(7) Boer, Roland. *Rescuing the Bible*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007.

What is the future for the Bible, one of the most important books in the world? In this manifesto, Roland Boer explores the idea that the Bible is an unruly and uncontrollable text that has been colonized by church, synagogue, and state.

- Powerfully argues that the Bible needs to be rescued from its abuse by the religious and political right
- Considers the history of revolutionary readings of the Bible, from Gerrard Winstanley to the present
- Urges a role for the Bible in a new "worldly left": an alliance between the religious and secular left that can promote more progressive readings of the text
- Concludes by offering a "political myth" from the Bible that condemns oppression, imagines a better society and celebrates the biblical themes of opposition and chaos.

#### (f) LIAISON NETWORK

The ICI Liaisons list, along with contact information for each liaison, is posted on the SBL web site at <http://www.sbl-site.org/InternationalCoopInitiative.aspx>. If you wish to be part of this initiative and serve as a country or local representative, please contact Tim Langille [tim.langille@gmail.com](mailto:tim.langille@gmail.com).

(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](mailto:sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org).

Events that may be of interest to you include:

November 17-20 SBL ANNUAL MEETING, Chicago, USA.

December 20-21 BIENNIAL CONFERENCE THE SOCIETY FOR BIBLICAL STUDIES IN INDIA (SBSI)

The Society for Biblical Studies in India (SBSI) will hold its biennial conference in Bangalore, Whitefield at the Ecumenical Christian Center. The Theme for this conference is Biblical Jubilee: Indian Liberation Hermeneutics. For more information contact [Rev. Dr. K. Jesurathnam](#), Secretary, SBSI.

(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 Ben Zvi, SBL - International Cooperation Initiative