

It is my pleasure to distribute the ICI REPORT for August 2010.

(a) ICI LIAISON NETWORK

ICI is organizing a Liaison Network to promote awareness of the resources and opportunities made available through the ICI to scholars, teachers, and students. We have recently asked SBL members living in qualifying countries to become official ICI liaisons. Dr Nathaniel Levtow of the University of Montana, Missoula, (Nathaniel.Levtow@mso.umt.edu) has graciously offered to coordinate the efforts of the ICI Liaisons and has called for volunteers to act in this capacity. Over fifty people have already answered his call and volunteered their time to this endeavor. You may still contact him, if you have not done that already.

(b) FEEDBACK

It has been about three years since ICI was established. We would like to receive some feedback about what has been working in your area and, as importantly, what has not and why. We would welcome practical suggestions to addressing issues affecting access to the opportunities and resources that have emerged through our collaboration and we would welcome working with local ICI liaisons to implement them. Needless to say, we would also welcome new ideas. You may provide feedback by sending an e-mail to Leigh Andersen (leigh.andersen@sbl-site.org) or to me (ehud.benzvi@ualberta.ca)

(c) TEACHING COLLABORATION INITIATIVE

A new school year is about to begin in the many countries. 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 on 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>

(d) PUBLICATIONS: International Voices in Biblical Studies (IVBS)

<http://ivbs.sbl-site.org/home.aspx>

The series recently published Knut Holter and Louis C. Jonker (eds.) *Global Hermeneutics? Reflections and Consequences* and is receiving new submissions.

Please visit the site and consider submitting your work for consideration for publication in the series and please encourage colleagues and appropriate graduate students to do the same.

May I stress that the series publishes works in English AND in any other language for which its editors can find qualified peer reviewers. Moreover, *one* of the goals of IVBS is to provide a central place where scholars in different regions of the world may publish works furthering scholarship in biblical studies—including material meant for teaching undergraduates—in languages for which commercial publication of this type of material may be unfeasible.

(e) PUBLICATIONS: Online Books – Continuous Efforts
(<http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/onlinebooks.aspx>)

For the updated list of the freely-accessible books that have been published online please go to http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ICIbooks.aspx

(This page will have a new and more user friendly look in the coming days.)

We have been told time and again about the importance of this initiative. We are committed to do our best to *substantially* expand the collection by bringing in additional publishers in the near future. We hope to have some good news in the coming months.

(f) PUBLICATIONS: Online Books – New books added
(<http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/onlinebooks.aspx>)

The following books were added since the last report:

- (1) De Troyer, Kristin. *Rewriting the Sacred Text: What the Old Greek Texts Tell Us about the Literary Growth of the Bible*. Text-Critical Studies 4. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.

Although most treatments of the historical development of the Hebrew Bible focus almost exclusively on Hebrew witnesses, Old Greek witnesses paint a picture of the growth of the Bible that is both fascinating and diverse. Four different patterns of development are examined and evaluated in this study: a rewritten Hebrew biblical text; a pre-Masoretic biblical text; a rewritten Greek biblical text; and a lost Hebrew *Vorlage*. Readers who think that the Bible was composed in Hebrew and then translated into Greek and other language in a more or less linear fashion will be surprised to see the complex course that many biblical witnesses

traveled between original composition and inclusion in the Jewish or Christian canons of Scripture.

- (2) Kim, Uriah Y. *Decolonizing Josiah: Toward a Postcolonial Reading of Deuteronomistic History*. The Bible in the Modern World 5. University of Sheffield, Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005.

In the prevailing view, the Deuteronomistic History is the first and archetypical Western history, describing the creation of an Israelite state in Palestine as the origin of civilization in the region, a hegemonic culture rendering the other inhabitants of the country homeless in their own land. That view of Davidic domination over greater Palestine, fashioned under Josiah, has been given a modern nationalist reading by contemporary scholars, a reading consistent with the vast array of covert cultural confirmations of Euro-American imperial power.

How is it possible, Kim asks, given the all-encompassing sway of the colonialist reading of the Bible, to understand Josiah in other than colonialist terms? His answer: the historical imagination, making unfettered use of the tools of the critical historian, must be informed by the experience of those who have lived as the other, as the colonized, as not at home in their own land—which means, for Kim, the experience of being Asian American. The intellectual use of this experience creates his distinctive postcolonial perspective, as he draws attention to the connection between Western imperialism and the production of Western knowledge. Specifically, the author reads the story of Josiah intercontextually with the experience of Asian Americans from the space of liminality. This is a passionate postcolonial reading of Josiah that, on one hand, critiques the failure of biblical studies to come to terms with its colonialist legacy and, on the other hand, connects the world of biblical studies to the world at large.

- (3) Runia, David T. and Gregory E. Sterling, eds. *The Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism, Volume XVII, 2005*. Brown Judaic Studies 344. Providence, Brown Judaic Studies, 2005.

The single most important source for Second Temple Jewish exegetical traditions is the three commentaries series written by Philo of Alexandria. Wanting to understand Second Temple Judaism more fully, a group of scholars founded the Philo Institute in 1971 to explore those traditions. The following year they began publication of *The Studia Philonica* as a venue for their research; however, the significance of Philo's work soon captured the interest of a broader group of scholars and quickly opened the journal's pages up to all aspects of Philonic

studies. Six issues were released from 1972-1980 containing twenty-five articles, annual bibliographies, and abstracts of notable publications. The list of contributors is a who's who in Philonic studies in the 1970s and 1980s.

After a lapse of almost a decade, the journal was revived as *The Studia Philonica Annual* that has now been published for over twenty years. The *Studia Philonica Annual* is a scholarly journal devoted to furthering the study of Hellenistic Judaism, in particular the writings and thought of the Hellenistic-Jewish writer Philo of Alexandria (ca. 15 B.C.E. to ca. 50 C.E.). Each year the Annual publishes the most current Philonic scholarship along with an extensive bibliography that is maintained by David Runia.

- (4) Stepp, Perry L. *Leadership Succession in the World of the Pauline Circle*. New Testament Monographs 5. University of Sheffield, Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005.

Since New Testament times, the discussion of leadership succession in the church has always been polemical. But what the New Testament, especially in the Pastoral Epistles, means in speaking of succession deserves a more sober investigation in the light of the literary tradition about succession in the ancient Mediterranean world. How is succession actually depicted in Graeco-Roman texts and in Jewish and early Christian texts of that world?

This book undertakes, for the first time, a thoroughgoing analysis of the evidence, deftly laying out the data from a wide range of Greek and Roman writers. The question then becomes how the early readers of the New Testament, conditioned by prior knowledge of such epistolary and other literary conventions, would have interpreted Paul's relationship with his delegates like Timothy and Titus, and how they would have conceived the ministry portrayed in the Pastorals as passing from a leader to a successor.

Stepp's study has important implications both for our understanding of the ancient Mediterranean world and for our conceptions of ordination and ministry in the New Testament.

(g) PUBLICATIONS: ANEM/MACO

We anticipate the publication of some volumes in the coming months. On the series see <http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/article.aspx?articleId=854>

(h) SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING

The SBL International Meeting took place in Tartu, Estonia, July 25-29. Some of us had the opportunity to meet face to face and to talk about ICI in general and about IVBS. On the personal level, I am so pleased to see the energy and wisdom of those involved in this initiative.

(i) SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST

9/15- 9/17 Old Testament Society of South Africa – 53rd Annual Congress

The Old Testament Society of South Africa will hold its annual congress at the North-West University (Vaal Triangle Campus). The theme for this year's congress is "The Old Testament and Ethics". More information <http://www.otwsa-otssa.co.za/>

11/19- 11/23 SBL Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia

Please submit basic information about events to Sharon Johnson at sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org. 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>

(j) PLEASE PASS THE INFORMATION

Feel free 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.

Best wishes,
Ehud

Ehud Ben Zvi, SBL - International Cooperation Initiative