

SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE ICI REPORT FOR JULY 2015

(a) THE BUENOS AIRES SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING

The 2015 International Meeting took place in Buenos Aires recently. The meeting was hosted by the Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina. About a quarter of the attendees (over 100 scholars) came from various Latin American countries. It was exciting to meet these colleagues who often do not have opportunity to attend the SBL meetings in other parts of the world, and fruitful interchange between biblical scholars from different countries took place in the various sessions. I heard many colleagues saying that this interchange was refreshing and enriching, and that hosting conferences in non-traditional environments has great benefits for fostering global biblical scholarship. All and all, the meeting was a great success (both in terms of the great attendance of over 400 scholars, and the enriching discussions). We thank our colleagues from Buenos Aires who worked hard together with the SBL staff to make this a great success! And who will ever forget all the great food of the opening reception, and the good steaks of Buenos Aires!?

For the first time, the ICI forum meeting took the form of a panel discussion, with inputs by David Clines (biblical scholar and publisher contributing to the ICI book depository), Roxanna Flamini (co-editor of the ICI publication series, ANEM/MACO), Kent Richards (former executive officer of the SBL, and representative of the Nida Institute that sponsored some ICI activities at the Buenos Aires meeting), and Louis Jonker (present chair of the ICI executive). John Kutsko (the present executive officer of SBL) presided over the meeting. Not only was valuable information about the ICI initiatives shared with the more than 50 participants in the panel session, but a fruitful discussion also followed with many good suggestions that will be followed up by the ICI executive at its next meeting in Atlanta. Thank you to all who attended the panel session and who contributed in the discussion.

(b) THE SBL ANNUAL MEETING, ATLANTA

The SBL Annual Meeting will be held from November 21-24, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia. Please note that the deadline for paper proposals has passed now.

[Registration](#) is open now, together with the conference **accommodation reservations**. **The online version of the [program book](#) has been published on the website as well.** For more information, see: <http://sbl-site.org/meetings/AnnualMeeting.aspx>

An **ICI Forum discussion** will be held again. Please join us there to hear what ICI offers to you, and to make suggestions of new initiatives. The meeting will be held on **Saturday, 21 November 2015 at 09h30-10h30AM**. The venue still has to be announced.

Like last year, we hereby supply a list of **accommodation options** that are a little further away from the conference venues, but are more affordable for ICI attendees and of good quality.

Hotel	Address	Price	Website
Savannah Suites Pine St.	140 Pine St. NE, Atlanta, GA	\$46/night	www.savannahsuites.com
The Ashby House	1071 Martin Luther King Dr., Atlanta, GA	\$225/person for 5 night stay	www.theashbyhouse.com
Red Roof Inn & Suites	585 Parkway Drive NE, Atlanta, GA	\$59/night	www.redroof.com/atlanta
AAE Wellesley Hotel & Hostel	1377 Virginia Ave.	\$61/night	www.atl.aeworldhotels.com
Motel 6 Atlanta Downtown	311 Courtland St., Atlanta, GA	\$80/night	www.motel6.com
Castleberry Inn & Suites	186 Northside Dr. SW, Atlanta, GA	\$92/night	www.castleberryinn.com

(c) THE NEXT SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING: SEOUL 2016

The 2016 International Meeting will take place in Seoul from 3–7 July 2016. Watch this space and the SBL website for more information on the Call for Papers etc. Another ICI panel discussion will be held there, and more information will be communicated in due time. This will be another excellent opportunity to interact with our Asian colleagues. We wish the local organizing committee well for the hard work that lies ahead.

(d) BIBLICAL SCHOLARS IN FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES

A decision was taken at the ICI Executive meeting in San Diego in November 2014 that ICI will provide more support to francophone biblical scholars in terms of the following:

- Encouraging **mentoring** relationships (including preparation of manuscripts for publication) between “experts” and younger scholars in francophone countries. This will be facilitated through the existing mentoring channel which is available on the ICI web page (see <https://www.sbl-site.org/educational/ICITeaching.aspx>). Following up on the panel session in Buenos Aires, this facility on the ICI website will in future also be broadened to become a place where services and initiatives can be pooled.
- Providing links to useful French biblical **scholarly resources** through the monthly ICI newsletter. (This will become a regular entry in our newsletter soon. One useful link which can be made available already is the well-known scholar, Thomas Römer’s

classes at the College de France (see <http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/thomas-romer/#course>).

- Including **French and Spanish publications** in the ICI book depository. We are in negotiation with some French publishers to get them on board for this initiative. (The inclusion of Spanish books in the depository was also emphasized in the panel discussion in Buenos Aires, and we will put some effort in getting Spanish publishers on board for this purpose.)

(e) PUBLICATION IN ANCIENT NEAR EAST MONOGRAPHS (ANEM) / MONOGRAFÍAS SOBRE EL ANTIGUO CERCANO 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 Ehud Ben Zvi and Roxanna Flammini (with the assistance of 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:

Disembodied Souls: The Nefesh in Israel and Kindred Spirits in the Ancient Near East, with an Appendix on the Katumuwa Inscription

Authored by Richard Steiner

Biblical scholars have long claimed that the Israelites “could not conceive of a disembodied *nefesh* [soul].” In this book, Richard C. Steiner rejects that claim based on a broad spectrum of textual, linguistic, archaeological, and anthropological evidence spanning the millennia from prehistoric times to the present. The biblical evidence includes a prophecy of Ezekiel condemning women who pretend to trap the wandering souls of sleeping people—a prophecy that has been only partially understood until now because of the obscure technical terms that it contains. The extrabiblical evidence suggests that a belief in the existence of disembodied souls was part of the common religious heritage of the peoples of the ancient Near East.

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

http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/9781628370775_OA.pdf

(f) 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:

Migration and Diaspora: Exegetical Voices of Women in Northeast Asian Countries

Edited by Hisako Kinukawa

The third meeting of the Society of Asian Biblical Studies was held at Sabah in June 2012, addressing the theme of Migration and Diaspora. This book contains five essays written by women from Northeast Asian countries for this occasion. Three are on Hebrew Scriptures and two are on the Christian Testament. All writers used a cultural analysis of their own social locations, and literary, historical, and postcolonial criticism as their methods of reading the texts, even though they may not explicitly mention which criticisms are used.

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

<http://ivbs.sbl-site.org/uploads/IVBS%20PAPERS1.pdf>

(g) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW BOOKS ADDED

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

The Bible in the Public Square: Its Enduring Influence in American Life

Chancey, Mark A., Carol Meyers, and Eric M. Meyers, eds. *The Bible in the Public Square: Its Enduring Influence in American Life*. Biblical Scholarship in North America 27. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014.

Essays from the perspectives of American history, the history of ideas, film studies, visual studies, cultural studies, education, and church-state studies provide essential research for those interested in the intersection of the Bible and American culture.

Features:

- Ten essays and an introduction present research from professors of biblical studies, Judaism, English, and history
- Articles relevant to scholars, students, and the general public
- Analysis of the tensions in American society regarding the Bible and its role in public life.

Sourcebook for Ancient Mesopotamian Medicine

Scurlock, JoAnn, translator. *Sourcebook for Ancient Mesopotamian Medicine*. Writings from the Ancient World 36. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014.

In this collection JoAnn Scurlock assembles and translates medical texts that provided instructions for ancient doctors and pharmacists. Scurlock unpacks the difficult, technical vocabulary that describes signs and symptoms as well as procedures and plants used in treatments. This fascinating material shines light on the development of medicine in the ancient Near East, yet these tablets were essentially inaccessible to anyone without an expertise in cuneiform. Scurlock's work fills this gap by providing a key resource for teaching and research.

Features:

- Accessible translations and transliterations for both specialists and non-specialists
- Texts include a range of historical periods and regions
- Therapeutic, pharmacological, and diagnostic texts

The Old Greek of Isaiah: An Analysis of Its Pluses and Minuses

Van Der Vorm-Crouchs, Mirjam. *The Old Greek of Isaiah: An Analysis of Its Pluses and Minuses*. Septuagint and Cognate Studies 61. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014.

Van der Vorm-Crouchs focuses this translation study on the processes leading to pluses and minuses including linguistic and stylistic aspects (i.e., cases in which elements have been added or omitted for the sake of a proper use of the Greek language), literary aspects (additions and omissions meant to embellish the Greek text), translation technical aspects (e.g., the avoidance of redundancy), and contextual and intertextual exegesis and harmonization. This work also covers the relation between the Greek Isaiah and its possible Hebrew Vorlage to try to determine which pluses and minuses may have been the result of the translator's use of a different Hebrew text.

Features:

- Eleven categories for the pluses and minuses of the Greek Isaiah
- Examination of translation techniques and translator errors
- Use of Joseph Ziegler's critical edition

(h) SBL MEMBERSHIP IN ICI COUNTRIES

Please take note that scholars living and working in ICI countries (for a list of these countries, see <http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/ICICountries.pdf>) pay a reduced membership fee for SBL. See the membership form accompanying this newsletter which should be used to apply for or renew reduced membership.

(i) 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 now 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!

(j) 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.

September 11-13, 2015**Oceania Biblical Studies Association**

Conference will be held at Piula Theological College, Upolu, Samoa, in the beautiful South Pacific.

Email the Secretary for OBSA: Nasili Vaka'uta for more information.

September 24-28, 2015**Society of Biblical Scholars (SBS) & Institute for Biblical Preaching (IBP) in Africa**

(at St. Paul's University, Kenya) This year's SBS conference, and IBP seminar, organized by Hokma House—Centre for Biblical Research (Jos, Nigeria), will be hosted by St. Paul's University (Limuru, Kenya). Paper and panel proposals are invited on the interdisciplinary theme: 'Engaging Scripture, Transforming Culture: Exegesis, Criticism, Hermeneutics, and Theology'. How can biblical exegesis, criticism, hermeneutics and theology shape and contribute more meaningfully to our engagement of the scriptures, esp. in Africa? Presenters and panelists may focus on one or more of these four areas, but will need to be conversant with the history, development and current state of research in each area in order to be able to evaluate the current enterprise of biblical studies, esp. in Africa, and propose major ways forward for the discipline. The second part of the theme explores the role of exegesis, criticism, hermeneutics and theology in transforming culture. Papers outside the theme are welcome! SBS membership is not required to attend or participate in this year's meeting. New members are welcome to apply for membership.

Contact: Rev. Dr. Randee Ijatuyi-Morphé, Director, and Professor of Biblical Studies, ECWA Theological Seminary, Jos, Nigeria (hokmahouse@gmail.com; meetings@hokmahouse.org); Rev. Dr. K. Gatumu, Senior Lecturer, SBS/IBP Liaison at SPU (kgatumu@spu.ac.ke).

(For more information: www.hokmahouse.org).

November 21-24, 2015**2015 SBL Annual Meeting**

Atlanta, Georgia

[More information](#)**December 20-23, 2015****Philosophical Investigation of the Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud and Midrash**

The conference will take place in Jerusalem and will explore "The Questions of God's Perfection." The conference will explore whether understanding God as perfect being is appropriate as a basis for Jewish theology and for religious belief more generally, bringing together perspectives on this question from philosophers, theologians, scholars of Bible and scholars of rabbinic literature. Invited participants will be Oliver Crisp, James Diamond, Jerome Gellman, Lenn E. Goodman, Moshe Halbertal, Yoram Hazony, Brian Leftow, Berel Dov Lerner Alan Mittleman, David Shatz, Eleonore Stump, Alan Torrance, Shmuel Trigano, and Howard Wettstein. Scholars wishing to present papers at the conference should submit abstracts of 500-1,000 words together with a current CV to meiravi@herzlinstitute.org

[Call for Papers](#)**July 3-7, 2016****2016 SBL International Meeting**

Seoul, South Korea

[More information](#)**September 4-9, 2016****2016 Meeting of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (IOSOT)**

For the first time in its more than 50-years history the IOSOT will convene on African soil in 2016. The triennial meeting will take place at the University of Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa. Updates and more information will be posted on the [official website](#). Register there with your e-mail address to receive automatic updates and the Call for Papers. Questions contact: [Prof Louis Jonker](#)

November 19-22, 2015**2016 SBL Annual Meeting**

San Antonio, Texas

[More information](#)

(k) 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!

(l) 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