

It is my pleasure to distribute the ICI REPORT for October 2009

(a) 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. There is still a significant number of colleagues who have not heard about the initiative.

(b) LET'S TALK

There will be a meeting of the ICI advisory council during the coming meeting of the SBL in November. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 21, 3:30-4:30 PM (Room: Crescent - SH). Everyone in this list is invited to come and share ideas or concerns and to provide feedback. Please write this meeting in your calendars and make every possible effort to come. Your input is absolutely necessary for this initiative.

Those who are unable, for whatever reason, to come to New Orleans may send written comments by e-mail to leigh.andersen@sbl-site.org or saul_olyan@brown.edu or myself (ehud.benzvi@ualberta.ca) and we will bring them up at the meeting.

(b) INTERNATIONAL TEACHING COLLABORATION: LOCAL INITIATIVES

In my previous report I mentioned the local initiative taken by my own University. (For a reminder see below). Please consider whether your institution may launch a similar initiative, and if it does, please let me know. We shall talk further about this type of "local action" at the ICI, face to face meeting in November, but again, if you cannot participate, please feel free to send written comments. Moreover, if you are coming to the SBL meeting in New Orleans and wish to talk with me about this local initiative OR anything related to the International Teaching Collaboration in general just send me an e-mail to ehud.benzvi@ualberta.ca to arrange for a meeting.

Reminder: The University of Alberta has initiated its own "International Cooperation in Teaching in the Field of Biblical Literature, Ancient Israel, Early Judaism and Early Christianity" aimed at developing a "two way learning experience" across and beyond the financial boundaries that limit the scope of many international teaching collaborations. According to the pilot program, qualified (grad. or top undergraduate) students from ICI qualifying countries will be able to apply for registration as visiting (or open) students in classes taught by profs. Braun, Landy and myself. If accepted-- the basic requirements for admission to graduate courses at

the University of Alberta apply--they will become e-learners in the course, but as any other student in the course, they will have to complete the required assignments and will receive the same feedback. If they register as "visiting students," they will also receive official credits from the University of Alberta, as any other student. Funds will be fundraised to pay for the equivalent of full tuition for one student for one course per year.

The same initiative allows now students at the University of Alberta (be them graduate or top undergraduate) in the pertinent areas to take up to two courses relevant to their studies as e-participants in academic institutions in ICI qualifying countries provided that they have received approval from their advisor/supervisor and the Faculty office, before registering to the course.

c) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS

For the list of the books published online as of September 2009 go to http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ICIbooks.aspx

This month the following books were added

(1) Flannery, Frances, Colleen Shantz, and Rodney A. Werline, eds. *Experientia*, Volume 1:

Inquiry into Religious Experience in Early Judaism and Early Christianity. Symposium 40. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2008.

This collection investigates the phenomenon of religious experience in early Judaism and early Christianity. The essays consider such diverse phenomena as scribal inspiration, possession, illness, ascent, theurgy, and spiritual transformation wrought by reading, and recognize that the texts are reflective of the lived experiences of ancient religious peoples, which they understood to be encounters with the divine. Contributors use a variety of methodologies, including medical anthropology, neurobiology, and ritual and performance studies, to move the investigation beyond traditional historical and literary methodologies and conclusions to illuminate the importance of experience in constructions of ancient religion. The contributors are Celia Deutsch, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, Frances Flannery, Crispin Fletcher-Louis, Robin Griffith-Jones, Richard A. Horsley, John B. F. Miller, Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte, Rollin A. Ramsaran, Nicolae Roddy, Alan F. Segal, Colleen Shantz, Steven M. Wasserstrom, and Rodney A. Werline.

(2) Habel, Norman C. and Peter Trudinger, eds. *Exploring Ecological Hermeneutics*. Symposium 46. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008.

What has hermeneutics to do with ecology? What texts, if any, come to

mind when you consider what the scriptures might say about environmental ethics?

To help readers think critically and clearly about the Bible's relation to modern environmental issues, this volume expands the horizons of biblical interpretation to introduce ecological hermeneutics, moving beyond a simple discussion about Earth and its constituents as topics to a reading of the text from the perspective of Earth. In these groundbreaking essays, sixteen scholars seek ways to identify with Earth as they read and retrieve the role or voice of Earth, a voice previously unnoticed or suppressed within the biblical text and its interpretation. This study enriches eco-theology with eco-exegesis, a radical and timely dialogue between ecology and hermeneutics.

The contributors are Vicky Balabanski, Laurie Braaten, Norman Habel, Theodore Hiebert, Cameron Howard, Melissa Tubbs Loya, Hilary Marlow, Susan Miller, Raymond Person, Alice Sinnott, Kristin Swenson, Sigve Tonstad, Peter Trudinger, Marie Turner, Elaine Wainwright, and Arthur Walker-Jones.

(3) Horn, Cornelia B. and Robert R. Phenix Jr., trans. with Introduction and notes. John Rufus: The Lives of Peter the Iberian, Theodosius of Jerusalem, and the Monk Romanus. Writings from the Greco-Roman World 24. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2008.

This book makes available for the first time in English important works by the anti-Chalcedonian historian and biographer John Rufus on Peter the Iberian, Theodosius of Jerusalem, and Abba Romanus, three key figures of the Christian history of Palestine in the fifth and early sixth centuries c.e.

The work offers a new critical edition of the Syriac text; the first-ever published English translation; a substantial introduction to Palestinian monasticism, the christological controversies of the time, and the life and writings of John Rufus; and ample annotations to a Syriac text whose Greek original is no longer available. By providing access to the Christian landscape (literally and metaphorically) in late antique and early Byzantine times, this volume offers a valuable counterbalance from a minority perspective to the biographical and historical writings of the Chalcedonian apologist Cyril of Scythopolis.

(4) Thatcher, Tom and Stephen D. Moore, eds. Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature. Resources for Biblical Study 55. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature

Reflecting on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Alan Culpepper's milestone *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* (1983), *Anatomies of Narrative*

Criticism explores current trends in the study of the Gospel of John as literature. The contributors to the volume represent a wide range of methodological approaches that all explore ways that contemporary readers generate meaning from John's story of Jesus. The book includes an introduction to narrative-critical studies of John; essays on specific themes and passages that focus on interpretation of the text, history of research, hermeneutical approaches, and future trends in research; and a reflective response from Alan Culpepper. Overall, the book seeks to trace the history and project the future of the study of the Bible as narrative. The contributors are Paul N.

Anderson, Colleen M. Conway, R. Alan Culpepper, Robert Kysar, Tat-siong Benny Liew, Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., Stephen D. Moore, Adele Reinhartz, Jeffrey L. Staley, Mark Stibbe, Tom Thatcher, Ruben Zimmermann, and Jean Zumstein.

(d) PUBLICATIONS: IVBS

If you will be in New Orleans, and wish to talk in person with one of the editors of the series please send an e-mail to Monica Melanchthon (monixm@gmail.com). Both Monica and Louis Jonker (lcj@sun.ac.za) are accepting manuscripts for consideration for publication in the series. Please keep in mind that manuscripts for this series do not have to be written in English.

(e) PUBLICATIONS: ANEM/MACO

If you have a manuscript for the Ancient Near East Monograph Series/Monografias Sobre el Antiguo Cercano Oriente (ANEM/MACO) please contact Roxana Flammini (roxflamm@yahoo.com.ar) or Billie Jean Collins (billie.collins@sbl-site.org) or myself (ehud.ben.zvi@ualberta.ca). Keep in mind that Ancient Near East includes Ancient Israel.

(f) EVENTS

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

There are a number of other events that may be of interest to this group, in addition to the SBL Annual Meeting in New Orleans (Nov 21-24, 2009), for instance,

November 2009

11/30 Deadline; Call for Papers

Claiming Conceptual Space. Reimagining the Study of Religion and Theology: Changing Contexts and Social Discourse Huguenot College, Wellington,

Western Cape, South Africa The organizers invite proposals for papers (30 minute presentations which include discussion time) that address the theme of the conference to be held at Huguenot College, Wellington, Western Cape (South Africa), April 6-9, 2010. Proposals for papers are invited to address the issues announced in the conference call. Papers that explore the intersection between religion, theology, and other theoretical domains are particularly invited, as well as papers that reflect on and theorize changed disciplinary practices and their institutionalization in research regimes and scholarly discourses. While related papers are also encouraged, contributions exploring the following themes are particularly invited:

* Conceptuality and construction: the proprium of 'religious discourse' and the nature of 'theology'

* Technologies of transcendental discourses: embodied cognition, the politics of religion, identity, and memorialisation

* Reimagining disciplinary practices: testing the boundaries - intra-, inter-, and transdisciplinarity; thinking out/insider viewpoints

* Conceptualizing from a place: contextualization, relevance, and practices

Proposals should be sent to the organizers: Gerhard van den Heever (e-mail vdheega@unisa.ac.za) or Naas Swart (e-mail iswart@sun.ac.za). Confirmation of acceptance or rejection of proposals will be sent by December 30, 2009.

December 2009

12/30 Call for Papers Deadline

The Society of Asian Biblical Studies (SABS) will hold its next meeting at the Divinity School, Chung Chi College, Chinese University of Hong Kong, June 14-16 2010.

SABS seeks to bring together scholars interested in and committed to Biblical Studies in various contexts of Asia/Oceania, including those in diaspora.

For further information, please contact Monica Melanchthon at styofabs@gmail.com or Tat -siong Benny Liew at bliew@psr.edu

January 2010

1/16- 1/20 4th African Association for the Study of Religion (AASR) Conference in Africa, "Religion, Environment and Sustainable Development" at

Ogsfemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. See AASR site (<http://www.a-asr.org/>) for more information.

June 2010

6/14-6/16 The Society of Asian Biblical Studies (SABS) will hold its next meeting at the Divinity School, Chung Chi College, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

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Call for Papers- deadline is December 30, 2009 (see above)

(g) MEMBERSHIP

Please keep encouraging your colleagues and graduate students to join the Society and to contribute to shaping its future. Students from ICI qualifying countries have to pay only US \$ 10 and scholars from the same countries only US \$ 15 to become full members. Anyone who wish to become a member and for whom this amount represents undue hardship is encouraged to contact Leigh.

Best wishes,

Ehud

Ehud Ben Zvi,

SBL - International Cooperation Initiative