

ICI REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2013

(a) ICI MEETING AT THE SBL ANNUAL MEETING IN BALTIMORE

Date: Saturday, November 23, 2013

Time: 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Room: Camedon - Sheraton Inner Harbor

Current ICI participants, which include anyone receiving this report, and those who are interested in knowing more about the program are invited to attend this Advisory Board discussion.

We are aware that many of us will not be able to come to Baltimore. If you wish to share concerns, new ideas, and/or feedback on any aspect of the collaboration with us at the meeting, but you cannot do that in person, please send your comments by e-mail to me or to [Leigh Andersen](#) at the SBL and your note will be read at the meeting.

(b) LISTENING AND ENGAGING SESSIONS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SBL

In 2012, SBL experimented with broadcasting two Annual Meeting sessions to two ICI countries via Skype. The participants in Chicago, Hong Kong, and Warsaw, were all very pleased with the opportunity be part of the session and to engage in conversations from their distinct vantage points. Even with some technical glitches, the experiment was deemed a success.

Lessons were learned from the experiment, and with better technology and equipment, we will be transmitting six sessions from the Baltimore meeting in November. We have been working through the ICI Liaison Network to identify groups of students and scholars who are interested in participating in one of the sessions. Currently, we have groups in Bolivia, Brazil, Central Africa Republic, Egypt, Ghana, India, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, South Africa, and Ukraine that will be participating. There are still slots open that can be filled on a first come/first serve basis. We do ask that you commit to gathering ten or more people for the session and that you work with us on testing your Internet connection in advance of the meeting. You will be sent information on the testing and on setting up a test session using the Webex Conferencing system. Sessions will be transmitted on Saturday, November 23 and Monday, November 25. If you are interested in hosting a group at your institution or if you have questions, please contact [Leigh Andersen](#) as soon as possible.

(c) NEW FREE FONT – SBL BibLit

The Society of Biblical Literature is pleased to announce the newest font in the SBL fonts series, SBL BibLit. This font contains Latin, Greek, and Hebrew characters, including the characters suitable for the transliteration of Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean languages. When combined with appropriate software keyboards, SBL BibLit allows for the use of one font for all biblical languages. For more information, please go to <http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/2013FontAnnouncement.pdf>

(d) LIAISON NETWORK

For questions about the liaison network, please contact Tim Langille (tim.langille@gmail.com).

(e) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW BOOKS ADDED

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

- (1) Becking, Bob and Susan Hennecke, eds. *Out of Paradise: Eve and Adam and their Interpreters*. Hebrew Bible Monographs, 30. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010.

This volume explores the afterlives of Eve and Adam beyond the Genesis story. How did they become such a prominent part of mainstream Christian thought and theology—and Jewish and Muslim tradition as well—, and what forms did their story take as it was told and retold? To investigate the traces of Eve and Adam through the centuries is to discover a surprising variety of interpretations.

The chapters of this book come from eleven European scholars. Bob Becking writes on how the identity of the primaeval couple is constructed in Genesis, Geert van Oyen on Eve as a character in the New Testament, Willemien Otten on Adam and Eve in Augustine, Harm Goris on them in Aquinas, Theo Bell on them in Luther. Willem van Asselt examines the Pre-Adamites in the theology of Isaac La Peyrère, Heleen Zorgdrager considers Adam and Eve in the theology of Schleiermacher, Susanne Hennecke focuses on Karl Barth and Luce Irigaray looking at Michelangelo's *The Creation*, Anne-Marie Korte on the Genesis story in a feminist theological perspective, Eric Ottenheim on Eve and 'women's commandments' in orthodox Judaism, and Karel Steenbrink on Muslim interpretations of their story.

- (2) Graham, Susan Lochrie. *The Flesh Was Made Word: A Metahistorical Critique of the Contemporary Quest of the Historical Jesus*. New Testament Monographs, 27. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010.

The 'historical Jesus' still remains elusive. Who was Jesus? What really happened? How can we know for sure? The latest quest for the truth about him comes at a time marked by radical uncertainty and postmodern scepticism about master narratives, along with a loss of confidence in the traditional methods of historical analysis.

In this context, Susan Lochrie Graham approaches the old debates from an entirely new direction. Armed with a 'metahistorical' approach adapted from the work of Hayden White, the philosopher of history, she reads the work of four representative historical Jesus writers: John P. Meier, N.T. Wright, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and John Dominic Crossan. The analysis brings to light the deep literary structures of their portraits, showing the differing plots and rhetorical concepts that shape them, and the types of argument that are deployed by each writer.

This ground-breaking critical investigation exposes the theological and cultural meanings embedded in all historical Jesus writing, showing how narrative forms function ideologically. It concludes with fresh answers to questions both about the methods we use and about the social implications of the contemporary quest of the historical Jesus, and proposes different directions for future research.

- (3) Hock, Ronald. *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Commentaries on Aphthonius's Progymnasmata*. Writings from the Greco-Roman World, 31. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.

This book provides the first translations in English and a preliminary analysis of the commentaries on the chreia chapter in Aphthonius's standard *Progymnasmata*, a classroom guide on composition. The chreia, or anecdote, was a popular form that preserved the wisdom of philosophers, kings, generals, and sophists. Aphthonius used the chreia to provide instructions on how to construct an argument and to confirm the validity of the chreia by means of an eight-paragraph essay. His treatment of this classroom exercise, however, was so brief that commentators needed to clarify, explain, and supplement what he had written as well as to situate the chreia as preparation for the study of rhetoric—the kinds of public speeches and the parts of a speech. By means of these Byzantine commentaries, we can thus see more clearly how this important form and its confirmation were taught in classrooms for over a thousand years.

- (4) Shantz, Colleen and Rodney A. Werline. *Experientia, Volume 2: Linking Text and Experience*. Early Judaism and Its Literature, 35. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.

This collection of essays continues the investigation of religious experience in early Judaism and early Christianity begun in *Experientia, Volume 1*, by addressing one of the traditional objections to the study of experience in antiquity. The authors address the relationship between the surviving evidence, which is textual, and the religious experiences that precede or ensue from those texts. Drawing on insights from anthropology, sociology, social memory theory, neuroscience, and cognitive science, they explore a range of religious phenomena including worship, the act of public reading, ritual, ecstasy, mystical ascent, and the transformation of gender and of emotions. Through careful and theoretically informed work, the authors demonstrate the possibility of moving from written documents to assess the lived experiences that are linked to them. The contributors are István Czachesz, Frances Flannery, Robin Griffith-Jones, Angela Kim Harkins, Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte, John R. Levison, Carol A. Newsom, Rollin A. Ramsaran, Colleen Shantz, Leif E. Vaage, and Rodney A. Werline.

- (5) Sheppard, Beth M. *The Craft of History and the Study of the New Testament*. Resources for Biblical Study, 60. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.

Do professional historians and New Testament scholars use the same methods to explore the past? This interdisciplinary textbook introduces students of the New Testament to the vocabulary and methods employed by historians. It discusses various approaches to historiography and demonstrates their applicability for interpreting the New Testament text and exploring its background. Overviews of the philosophy of history, common historical fallacies, and the basics of historiography are followed by three exegetical studies that illustrate the applicability of various historical methods for New Testament interpretation.

(f) 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.

November 23-26, 2013**[SBL Annual Meeting](#)**

The SBL Annual Meeting is the largest gathering of biblical scholars in the world. Each meeting showcases the latest in biblical research, fosters collegial contacts, advances research, and focuses on issues of the profession. The 2013 Annual Meeting will be held in Baltimore, Maryland. [More information.](#)

June 22-25, 2014**[Meeting of Society of Asian Biblical Studies \(SABS\)](#)**

The next meeting of the SABS will be held from the 22nd to the 25th of June 2014 (arrival 22nd and departure 26th) in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The meeting is jointly hosted by the Church of Christ in Thailand and the McGilvary College of Divinity, Payap University. The theme of the conference is “Violence in the Human and Earth Community - Asian Biblical Response.” For more information regarding this conference go to <http://www.sabs-site.com/>. Please write to [the Secretary](#) for any queries.

July 6-10, 2014**[SBL International Meeting](#) &
[European Association of Biblical Studies Meeting.](#)**

To be held in Vienna. Call for papers opens in October.

(g) PLEASE PASS THE INFORMATION.

It is surprising that we continue to have correspondence from scholars in ICI countries that are just learning about the ICI programs. Please share this newsletter with your colleagues and students and become a liaison for your institution and SBL. Your advocacy for ICI strengthens biblical studies as a discipline and builds relationships in the global community.

Ehud

Ehud Ben Zvi, SBL - International Cooperation Initiative