



LXXSA *OTSSA*

SASNES, LXXSA AND OTSSA ANNUAL MEETINGS

Hosted by the Department of Old and New Testament Studies,

Faculty of Theology and Religion,

University of the Free State

30 August - 3 September 2021, Virtual

Programme and Abstracts

Registration is open. There is no conference fee this year

Registration link: <https://events.ufs.ac.za/e/meetingregistrations>

PROGRAMME

DAY 1 – Monday 30 August 2021 - SASNES				
Session 1: 8:00-10:15 Session Chair: M.A.E. Dockrat				
Start	End		Name	Title
8:00	8:30		Prof Rantoa Letšosa (Dean)	Word of Welcome
8:30	8:55	Paper 1	T.J. Makutoane and A.S. Motsei	Linguistics and typological grammar: The case of Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho verbal systems
8:55	9:20	Paper 2	M. Joubert	The 1983 Afrikaans Bible: An evaluation of the translation within the socio-religious context of South Africa.
9:20	9:45	Paper 3	T.J. Houston	Narrative frames applied to a new Bible translation project: deciding to translate the book of Genesis among the Mozambican Yaawo
9:45	10:15	Discussion		
10:15	10:30	Break		
Session 2: 10:30-12:15 Session Chair: T.J. Makutoane				
10:30	10:55	Paper 4	G. Mushayabasa	Violence in the prayers to Yahweh: Framing JUSTICE and SECURITY in the Psalms of the Tanak and the Peshitta
10:55	11:20	Paper 5	L. Bergh	To be with or not: variety among translations concerning Afrikaans prepositional emotional causality constructions
11:20	11:45	Paper 6	M.J Maluleke	The impact of Xitsonga Bible Translation on the Vatsonga social system.
11:45	12:15	Discussion		
12:15	13:00	Lunch		
Session 3: 13:00-14:45 Session Chair: Cynthia Miller-Naudé				
13:00	13:25	Paper 7	J. Scheumann	The Use of Waw with Multiple Appositives
13:25	13:50	Paper 8	L. de Regt	Rhetorical use of syntactic and pragmatic features in Joshua
13:50	14:15	Paper 9	R. Holmstedt and R. Krohn	The Structure of Biblical Hebrew Verse
14:15	14:45	Discussion		
14:45	15:00	Break		
Session 4: 15:00-16:45 Session Chair: Jacobus Naudé				
15:00	15:25	Paper 10	J. Cook	DATING THE HEBREW BIBLE – A REVIEW OF How old is the Hebrew Bible? A Linguistic, Textual and Historical Study, R. Hendel and J Joosten, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2018.
15:25	15:50	Paper 11	S.L. Pitcher	An Alternate Classification Schema for the ʿāmê hammiqrāʾ of the Tiberian Masoretic Text
15:50	16:15	Paper 12	K. Chau	Phonological Parallelism in Biblical Hebrew Poetry
16:15	16:45	Discussion		
16:45	18:15	Dinner		

Session 5: 18:15-20:00 Session Chair: Kevin Chau				
18:15	18:40	Paper 13	B. A. S. Patel	The development of Quranic Orthography (rasm) and how it differs from Arabic Literature
18:40	19:05	Paper 14	M.A.E. Dockrat	Jesus and the Torah, Quranic (Surah 5:46) and Biblical (Matthew 5:17) statements
19:05	19:30	Paper 15	M. Akhalwaya	The 'Black Flag Ḥadīth' in Sunni Muslim Eschatology: Between Authenticity and Interpretative Approaches.
19:30	20:00	Discussion		

PROGRAMME

DAY 2 – Tuesday 31 August 2021 - SASNES				
Session 1: 8:00-10:15 Session Chair: G. Mushayabasa				
Start	End		Name	Title
8:00	8:25	Paper 16	A. Evans	The princes in 4QSongs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, Songs Six and Eight: are they angelic or human?
8:25	8:50	Paper 17	J. Gericke	Semitic Languages and the turn to religion in Continental philosophy
8:50	9:15	Paper 18	G. Park	House of Exorcism in Prov 21:9 under the consideration of Ugaritic Incantations. Ugaritic Incantations and House of Exorcism in Prov 21:9
9:15	9:40	Paper 19	T. Notarius	Middle Voice in Ugaritic in the ancient Northwest Semitic context
9:40	10:15	Discussion		
10:15	10:30	Break		
Session 2: 10:30-12:15 Session Chair: R.M. van Dijk-Coombes				
10:30	10:55	Paper 20	P.S. Vermaak	The LEOPARDS' FIELD exposed in the region of ÇATALHÖYÜK archaeological site in ancient Turkey
10:55	11:20	Paper 21	G. Lier	Masks in Bible, Targum, and Talmud: An Investigative Study
11:20	11:45	Paper 22	I. Cornelius	Masks in the Southern Levant: Finds and Functions
11:45	12:15	Discussion		
12:15	13:00	Lunch		
Session 3: 13:00-14:45 Session Chair: Chair: J. Gericke				
13:00	13:25	Paper 23	R M van Dijk-Coombes	Inana/Ištar and the Gardener: Sexual Assault and Subversion
13:25	13:50	Paper 24	J. Nitschke	A Glass Pendant of Harpokrates from Tel Dor, Israel
13:50	14:15	Paper 25	Michela Piccin	Alternative Perspectives from the Far South: Ancient Near Eastern Studies (including Egypt and Semitic Languages) in South Africa
14:15	14:45	Discussion		
14:45	15:00	Break		

Session 4: 15:00-16:45 Session Chair: A. Evans				
15:00	15:25	Paper 26	M. Le Roux	The legend of Isis in Messene and the ancient Near East.
15:25	15:50	Paper 27	S. Harris	Anuket, Reshep and the Golden Gazelles: Symbolism of two New Kingdom Diadems
15:50	16:15	Paper 28	L. Swart	Food and Food Offerings in the 21st Dynasty Books of the Dead
16:15	16:45	Discussion		
16:45	18:00	Dinner		
Session 5: 18:00-20:30				
18:00	19:30	SASNES - Business meeting		
19:30	20:30	Van Selms Lecture		

PROGRAMME

DAY 3 – Wednesday 1 September 2021 - LXXSA				
Session 1: 8:00-10:15 Session Chair: Peter Nagel				
Start	End		Name	Title
8:00	8:30		Prof Rantoa Letšosa (Dean)	Word of Welcome
8:30	8:55	Paper 1	C Armel Otabela	Reassessment of the κρυφή variant in Exod 11:2
8:55	9:20	Paper 2	B. Beeckman	Theologica Variatio? An Examination of the Variation in the Greek Rendering of יהוה and אלהים in LXX Proverbs
9:20	9:45	Paper 3	B. Bonanno	τὸ δικαίωμα ἔμπροσθεν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραήλ (Ruth 4,7): An Analysis of the Greek Rendering of the Hebrew Legal Aspects for Characterising the Greek Translator's Translation Technique
9:45	10:15	Discussion		
10:15	10:30	Break		
Session 2: 10:30-12:15 Session Chair: Gideon Kotze				
10:30	10:55	Paper 4	J. Cook	Greek Philosophy and the Bible
10:55	11:20	Paper 5	E. De Doncker	“From Your Mouth to God’s Ears”: LXX’s treatment of God’s ears in the Pentateuch
11:20	11:45	Paper 6	A. Evans	A Semantic Comparison of the Conclusion of LXX Tobit and Semitic 4QTobit
11:45	12:15	Discussion		
12:15	13:00	Lunch		
Session 3: 13:00-14:45 Session Chair: Gideon Kotze				

13:00	13:25	Paper 7	E. Dafni	Women's Rights as Human Rights in Ancient Near Eastern, Asia Minor, Ancient Greek and Ancient Israelite Law Collections and their Adaption and Transformation in the Septuagint
13:25	13:50	Paper 8	D.T. Mangum	Do Bashal and Hepsō Really Mean “Boil”? A Case Study in the Semantics of Biblical Hebrew and Septuagintal Greek
13:50	14:15	Paper 9	P. Nagel	The Reference to YHWH in Lamentations and Job: Some Remarks
14:15	14:45	Discussion		
14:45	15:00	Break		
Session 4: 15:00-17:15 Session Chair: Peter Nagel				
15:00	15:25	Paper 10	C. Recalcati	Joseph's Cup in Gen 44:2-17: An Egyptian Foreseer only in the LXX Text?
15:25	15:50	Paper 11	G.O. West	In Search of an Economic Remnant: 1 Kings 12:1-18, 2 Chronicles 10:1-18, 3 Reigns 12:1-18, and 3 Reigns 24:12:24p-t
15:50	16:15	Paper 12	P.J. Jordaan and S. de Beer	What Light can Greimas shed on the Narrative in 2 Maccabees 3?
16:15	16:40	Paper 13	H.F. van Rooy	The headings of the Psalms in Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus
16:40	17:15	Discussion		
17:15	18:30	Dinner		
Session 5: 18:30-20:00				
18:30	20:00	LXXSA - Business meeting		

PROGRAMME

DAY 4 – Thursday 2 September 2021 - OTSSA				
Session 1: 8:00-10:15 Session Chair: Lodewyk Sutton				
Start	End		Name	Title
8:00	8:30		Prof Rantosa Letšosa (Dean)	Word of Welcome
8:30	8:55	Paper 1	D. Firth (Invited paper)	A World Gone Wrong: Structural Violence in Psalms 9-14
8:55	9:20	Paper 2	J. Spoelstra	Sanctuary Schematics in the HB and Temple Ideology in the DSS: A Proposal
9:20	9:45	Paper 3	J. Gericke	Old Testament scholarship and the theological turn in Continental philosophy
9:45	10:15	Discussion		
10:15	10:30	Break		
Session 2: 10:30-12:15 Session Chair: Doniwen Pietersen				
10:30	10:55	Paper 4	H-G. Wüch	The use of the Infinitive absolute in the book of Jeremiah

10:55	11:20	Paper 5	M. Terblanche	Jeremiah 50-51 (MT): catalyst for the growth of a symbol for an oppressive empire
11:20	11:45	Paper 6	W. Retief	Circumscribing the Egyptian Prostitute. The Rhetorics of Intertextuality, Metaphor and Gender in Jeremiah 46:3-12 with a focus on 46:11.
11:45	12:15	Discussion		
12:15	13:00	Lunch		
Session 3: 13:00-14:45 Session Chair: Doniwen Pietersen				
13:00	13:25	Paper 7	A. Coetsee	The Rhetorical Structure and aim of Deuteronomy 4:32-40: The Blending of Historical, Liminal, Sensorial and Relational Themes
13:25	13:50	Paper 8	L. Jonker	Holiness Theology in the Empire: Exploring the Political Rhetoric of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah
13:50	14:15	Paper 9	M.D. Kebaneilwe	Religious Misogyny and Evil Postulations of Women: The Case of Ezra-Nehemiah
14:15	14:45	Discussion		
14:45	15:00	Break		
Session 4: 15:00-16:45 Session Chair: Steve van der Walt				
15:00	15:25	Paper 10	J. Claassens	Channeling Unresolved Trauma: Contemplating the Value of Postcolonial Trauma Theory for Reading the Book of Jonah
15:25	15:50	Paper 11	K. Chau	The Metaphor of Ezekiel's Three-stage Boiling Pot (Ezekiel 24:1-14): "Cooking" with Poetry, the Holiness Code, and Texts (LXX vs. MT)
15:50	16:15	Paper 12	A. Evans	"Joint Human-Angelic Praise" In Og Daniel and 4QSabbath Shirot Early Evidence Of Merkebah Mysticism?
16:15	16:45	Discussion		
16:45	18:30	Dinner		
Session 5: 18:30-20:00				
18:30	20:00	OTSSA - Business meeting		

PROGRAMME

DAY 5 – Friday 3 September 2021 - OTSSA				
Session 1: 8:30-10:15 Session Chair: Lodewyk Sutton				
Start	End		Name	Title
8:30	8:55	Paper 13	S. Fischer (Invited paper)	Elihu's theological approach
8:55	9:20	Paper 14	J. Dickie	What "persuades" God to respond to the psalmist's cry? Use of rhetorical devices related to "vows of future praise" in some psalms of lament

9:20	9:45	Paper 15	H. Bosman	The Naked Truth or Prophecy as Folly? A performative interpretation of Isaiah 20
9:45	10:15	Discussion		
10:15	10:30	Break		
Session 2: 10:30-12:15 Session Chair: Steve van der Walt				
10:30	10:55	Paper 16	O.O. Berekiah & S.K. Olaleye	An inter-textual reading of Genesis 2:15 and Mark 10:23-27 from an African perspective of dignity of labor.
10:55	11:20	Paper 17	E.E. Meyer	The fear of contagion and the power of priests
11:20	11:45	Paper 18	D. Pietersen	The Nexus of Debt, Wealth and Land in Deuteronomy 15: South Africa
11:45	12:15	Discussion		
12:15	13:00	Lunch		
Session 3: 13:00-14:30 Session Chair: Lodewyk Sutton				
13:00	13:25	Paper 19	M.M. Kondemo	In search of biblical role models for Mongo women: A bosadi reading of the characters of Vashti and Esther
13:25	13:50	Paper 20	L. Howes	The Hebrew-Aramaic Noun כֶּבֶד and Its Usage in the Tanakh
13:50	14:10	Discussion		
14:10	14:30	CLOSING		

SASNES ABSTRACTS:

Muhammad Akhalwaya (University of Johannesburg)

Title of paper: The ‘Black Flag Ḥadīth’ in Sunni Muslim Eschatology: Between Authenticity and Interpretative Approaches.

Abstract:

A collection of predictions or malāhim (apocalyptic reports) by the Prophet Muhammad (c. 570 – 632 CE) preserved in Sunnī Muslim hadith literature deal with his prophesies regarding several ishārāt (predictive events) that will precede the Day of Resurrection (qiyāmah). One of these predictions is the so-called “Black Flag” traditions (ḥadīth, plural ’aḥādīth). It is found in collections of Sunnī Muslim religious traditions, such as the compilations by al-Tirmidhī (d. 892) etc.

These apocalyptic reports and their symbolic meaning have been intensively reflected upon throughout Muslim history, resulting in elaborate analyses and expositions by early scholars (e.g., al-Marwarzī) as well as later commentators (e.g., Ibn Kathīr, (d.1373) in the genre of Islamic eschatology.

This paper will analyse the debates surrounding the Black Flag traditions (aḥādīth) from the view of their influence on traditional Muslim theological theory. For this purpose, a study of the earliest reception of the ḥadīth through classical texts will be undertaken along with the reasoning behind the authentication of each position, as well as the socio-ideological aspects which may have influenced the divergent stances. The focus will be on a typology of academic approaches ranging from strictly applying the rules applicable for weighing the chain of narrators (isnād) and the contents of the ḥadīth to amongst others popular approaches such as a general and uncritical acceptance of the traditions, acceptance by specific authorities and the mystical attractiveness of a tradition.

Luna Bergh (University of the Free State [Business School])

Title of paper: To be with or not: variety among translations concerning Afrikaans prepositional emotional causality constructions

Abstract:

This paper emanates from Cognitive Linguistics research (Bergh (in press); Bergh 2016; Messerschmidt & Bergh 2011) concerning the Afrikaans prepositions *met* ('with') and *van* ('of') in view of systematising Afrikaans prepositional use in emotional causality examples. The purpose of the paper is to determine pattered variety among translations concerning Afrikaans prepositional *met*-and *van*- emotional causality constructions. The Cognitive Linguistics analysis in this paper concerns variety of use across languages from corpora in ancient, multilingual, Near Eastern settings with translated examples of the said prepositions. Vivid examples from the Bible book of Daniel are highlighted for illustration of the construction. It is concluded that the way in which emotional causality profiled in the respective language provides clarity regarding how the expression is conceptualised. Key words: emotional causality; companions; Afrikaans prepositions *met* ('with') and *van* ('of'); Cognitive Linguistics

Kevin Chau (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: Phonological Parallelism in Biblical Hebrew Poetry

Abstract:

Scholars have noted for some time how Biblical Hebrew poetry's structures of equivalence and contiguity are controlled at different linguistic levels: semantic, syntax, morphology, and phonology. However, in biblical poetry sonic echo (phonological parallelism) is arguably the hardest to evaluate because of its seemingly subjective nature. A person may identify a rhyme, and at some level it indeed possesses some quantifiable measure of phonological parallelism, but questions

remain as to whether that rhyming is coincidental or intentional and how it may pertain to the poetry's structure and meaning. Many instances of sonic echo are additionally hard to evaluate because the phonologically paralleled elements are often not perfectly matched but "near rhymes." Nevertheless, though less prominent than semantic and syntactic parallelisms, phonological parallelism in biblical poetry indeed occurs, often contributes as a major feature to parallelism, and occasionally significantly controls how the poetry conveys its meanings. In literary studies, the many forms of sonic echo have been long identified: rhyme in its narrow sense (repetition of cVC; dog vs. fog), alliteration (Cvc), assonance (cVc), consonance (cvC), frame rhyme (CvC), back rhyme (CVc), and rich rhyme (CVC). By employing articulator-based feature theory (AFT), this paper describes and evaluates these forms of sonic echo through the concepts of place of articulation (e.g., labial [mem] vs. dental [taw]) and manner of articulation (e.g., +/- voice; dalet [+] vs. taw [-]). Employing AFT provides precise means for evaluating the strength of these different forms of sonic echo, especially in those instances where the echoing is not perfectly matching but involving sonically-similar phonemes. By analyzing the different forms of sonic echo through AFT, it is possible to present defined controls for evaluating the seemingly subjective nature of sonic echoes and for describing complex sonic echoes (e.g., an echo involving rhyme in the ultima syllable and also assonance in the penultimate syllable). The latter half of this paper focuses on how sonic echoes in their different forms operate in biblical poetry (primarily Ps 22, Ezek 24.1-8, and Lam 3). It presents a hierarchy for explaining how the different forms of sonic echo in poetry are employed differently. It concludes with close readings of select sonic echoes, illustrating their roles in contributing to poetic rhythm, parallelism, metaphor, and poetic closure.

Johann Cook (Stellenbosch University)

Title of paper: **DATING THE HEBREW BIBLE – A REVIEW OF** How old is the Hebrew Bible? A Linguistic, Textual and Historical Study, R. Hendel and J Joosten, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2018.

Abstract:

This book is an adventurous project by two well-known scholars who have been occupied with textual criticism of the Bible in the broad sense of the term for decades. It is at the same time a joint venture. Hendel took responsibility for Chapters 1, 2, 8 and Appendix 2, while Chapters 3 to 7 and Appendix 1 are predominantly Joosten's handiwork. Moreover, they reviewed and revised each other's contributions, so that they are both responsible for the whole. The study is published in the Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library under the editorship of John J Collins. These scholars represent a broad scholarly and theological tradition, and the book is suitable for the student, the specialist and the layperson.

The authors deal with the following issues

1. ALL THINGS CHANGE – LANGUAGE AND METHODOLOGY

2. KINDS AND CAUSES OF LINGUISTIC CHANGES

3. HOW TO HANDLE LINGUISTIC CHANGES?

4. LITERARY ALLUSIONS

5. PSEUDO-CLASSICISMS, BIBLICAL HEBREW AND QUMRAN HEBREW

6. TEXTUAL AND LINGUISTIC HISTORY

7. THE REVISIONIST MODEL

CONCLUSION

The experiment by Hendel and Joosten may be deemed a successful one. All the goals formulated by the authors seem to be accomplished. However, I am not sure that the views of Young and Rezetko received a fair share of attention. The least one can say is that surely the last word has not been spoken on this topic. I, for one, was convinced by the way the authors demonstrated that linguistic-based research has implications for the dating of texts.

Izak Cornelius (Stellenbosch University)

Title of paper: Masks in the Southern Levant: Finds and Functions

Abstract:

Wearing masks has become part of our daily lives – thanks to Covid – but humans have been wearing masks since earliest times, for various reasons, whether ceremonial, cultic, or practical. Some of the earliest masks known, go back to the Southern Levant. These masks were either made of stone or clay. The paper will look at examples from the Stone Age that originated from the Judaeian Desert, especially the mask found in situ in the Nahal Hemar cave. The next case study will be clay masks, particularly two found in situ at Hazor. The masks will be compared with other examples from Western Asia and other parts of the ancient world, and even with more contemporary contexts. The research problem to be addressed is: how were these masks made and what were the functions? Were they literally worn by people and for what purposes?

M.A.E. (Ashraf) Dockrat (University of Johannesburg)

Title of paper: Jesus and the Torah, Quranic (Surah 5:46) and Biblical (Matthew 5:17) statements

Abstract:

Jesus and his view of the Torah are important issues in both the Qur'an and Bible. Two verses that treat the same subject albeit in different ways are Surah 5:46 and Matthew 5:17. Surah al-Ma'idah 5:46 states, 'And We sent ... Jesus the son of Mary confirming (muṣaddiqan) that which came before him in the Torah'; while according to Matthew 5:17 Jesus declared as regards the Law and the Prophets, 'I have not come to abolish (katalusai) them but to fulfil (plērōsai) them'. Each statement will be analysed separately, focusing on the verbal expressions muṣaddiqan (Surah al-Ma'idah 5:46) and plērōsai (Matthew 5:17) within lexical context, setting in literature and presumed setting in life as well as jurisprudential and theological milieu. Qur'anic and Biblical information thus obtained will be juxtaposed to show alternative emphases, while seeking possible similarities, in orientation when portraying Jesus', the Torah and his relationship to the said legal corpus.

Renate Marian van Dijk-Coombes (North-West University)

Title of paper: Inana/Ištar and the Gardener: Sexual Assault and Subversion

Abstract:

There are two Mesopotamian mythological narratives in which Inana/Ištar is involved sexually with a gardener. In Inana and Šukaletuda Inana is raped by the gardener Šukaletuda while she sleeps in his garden. In a famous scene from the Gilgameš Epic, Gilgameš insults Inana by recounting her past lovers and her treatment of them. One of these lovers is Išullānu, the gardener of her father, Anu. This paper will analyse the possible links between these two episodes from a feminist literary critical perspective.

Annette Evans (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: The princes in 4QSongs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, Songs Six and Eight: are they angelic or human?

Abstract:

The pervasive ambiguity in 4QSongs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (SOSS) presents a major problem: when are the activities described in this text performed by angels and when by humans? This paper builds on research on Songs One, Seven, Twelve, Thirteen, and Knowledge in SOSS that hypothesized that as the liturgy proceeds through the thirteen songs of SOSS a gradual transition takes place in the human participants. In Song Six the seven chief princes initially bless God and then proceed to bless "all councils in the sanctuary, and those who have knowledge of eternal things", "whose way is perfect", "who wait for Him ... for a return of His gracious compassion". Song Seven, in the middle of the liturgy, describes angelic messenger activity arising from the throne of God, based on Ezekiel's merkebah chapters. After Song Seven, a dramatic change takes place. In Song Eight those who do the blessing are no longer "chief" princes, but

“deputy” princes. The hypothesis of this article is that these deputy princes are the “people of discernment” introduced in Song One, who, having persevered in joint exaltation of God with the “holiest of holy ones”, have been transformed to be enabled to become “god-like” messengers of God, to convey God’s compassion to those “who wait for Him”. This paper refers to recent cognitive neuroscience insights in order to, to some extent, support Fletcher-Louis’s proposal of an “angelomorphic” identity for these participants in the SOSS liturgy.

Jaco Gericke (North-West University)

Title of paper: Semitic Languages and the turn to religion in Continental philosophy

Abstract:

In recent decades, a number of studies have remarked on the future of “Semitic Languages” in South Africa. Current changes to the role and status of the field at universities suggest that we might be preparing for a future in academia that may no longer exist long before the end of the 21st-century. Of course, contexts and concerns differ, and the objective of this paper is not to argue or imply that anyone to abandon what they are doing or take up any of the new directions the field can take. Instead, a number of still unconstructed academic (and other) locations, forms, roles and interests for reinventing “Semitic Languages” will simply be identified as lying just below the imaginary horizon of some future possible worlds in front of the text. Not to be confused with already existing varieties of post-modern approaches, the change in research focus involved is so radical that it cannot yet be conceived of except as a residual anomaly of the current paradigm. These unnamed roads not (yet) taken nevertheless represent sensible and creative alternative levels of academic and scholarly existence in the aftermath of the so-called ‘turn to religion’ in some currents of late 20th-century Continental philosophy (of religion).

Stephanie Harris (Independent Researcher / National Research Foundation)

Title of paper: ANUKET, RESHEP AND THE GOLDEN GAZELLES: Symbolism of two New Kingdom Diadems

Abstract:

Early dynastic and Pharaonic art abounds with images of a variety of fauna that inhabited the Nile valley and the adjacent desert environment. Despite its aridity, the land beyond the green and pleasant Nile valley teemed with bountiful wildlife. Antelope and deer species were often depicted, giving some indication of their popularity not only as subjects depicted on the stone walls of Old Kingdom mastaba reliefs but in later periods also regularly appearing in a variety of guises in tomb wall frescoes. The antelope motif was popularly interpreted in various decorative elements in the minor arts with an astounding degree of accuracy and realism. These include decorative homeware pieces, personal beauty-related items and amuletic objects. Antelope designs were also delicately incorporated into

prized items of jewellery. Protomes of gazelles and other clearly identifiable antelope species appear on two visually striking diadems known to belong to minor New Kingdom elite or royal women. There is clear artistic evidence of similar diadems being worn during this period. Interpretations of antelope on two New Kingdom diadems does not appear to have been haphazardly interpreted or randomly selected. Although there is strong evidence of complex and underlying symbolism, many interpretations proffered are generally speculative and controversial but nevertheless encompass the complex relationships found in the ancient Egyptian belief system. This paper investigates the symbolism and iconography of these motifs associated with the Egyptian goddess Anukis and the Canaanite deity Reshep/Reshef.

Rob Holmstedt and Rachel Krohn (University of Toronto and Trinity College [Queensland, Australia])

Title of paper: The Structure of Biblical Hebrew Verse

Abstract:

Michael O'Connor's 1980 [1997] opus, *Hebrew Verse Structure*, is a tour de force that sets out a compelling analysis of the principles constraining the formation of Biblical Hebrew verse. Its brilliance notwithstanding, O'Connor's work has been poorly understood, due in part to the technical nature of his analysis; this was compounded by O'Connor's terminology, which was drawn from 1970s generative transformational linguistic theory. In this paper, we revise and extend O'Connor's essential model and demonstrate the adequacy of our model on Habakkuk 3 (which O'Connor analyzed in his monograph) and Psalm 51 (which he did not).

Tobias J. Houston (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: Narrative frames applied to a new Bible translation project: deciding to translate the book of Genesis among the Mozambican Yaawo

Abstract:

This paper demonstrates the usefulness of narrative frame theory in planning for new Bible Translation projects and in the formulation of an appropriate translation brief. Upon that foundation, this paper applies narrative framing to the Yaawo context of northern Mozambique. It identifies one of the most pertinent contextual frames in particular: Islam and the influence of the Arabic language on Yaawo society. With Islam and Arabic in mind, a rationale is given concerning the decision to initiate a new translation of the book of Genesis in the Mozambican Yaawo context before other books of the Hebrew Bible or New Testament. A brief discussion concerning the translation of the Hebrew name “ḥiddeqel” (“Tigris” river) as “Dijlah” in Genesis 2:14 and “qāyin” and “hebel” (“Cain” and “Abel”)

as “Qabil” and “Habil” in Genesis 4 concludes the paper. These examples show how the choices made in a new Mozambican Ciyaawo translation reflects an appropriate understanding of the Yaawo narrative frames and how they adhere to the translation brief.

Morné Joubert (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: The 1983 Afrikaans Bible: An evaluation of the translation within the socio-religious context of South Africa.

Abstract:

Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) initiated an Afrikaans Bible translation in 1914 and by 1925 Afrikaans was recognised as an official language. The Old Afrikaans Bible (OAB) was released in 1933 and it played an important role in the standardisation of Afrikaans, but also in the growing Afrikaner nationalism and the legitimisation of apartheid policies.

The New Afrikaans Bible (1983) (NAB) and its influence on the identity of the Afrikaner people stands in stark contrast with the OAB. The structuration theory of Giddens showed that social structures are flexible. The capacity to influence the social structures is described as ‘agency’ and it is implicated that any member, organisation or institution of a society has the ability to create change. The NAB functioned as such an agent of change in a country where a new political narrative emerged. This new translation was released in the context of turmoil in the South African society. Resistance against the apartheid government grew and it was clear that the time for a democratic dispensation was at hand. The vocabulary of the NAB supported reconciliation, righteousness and social justice and these themes were debated in theological circles. The ‘Narrative Frame Theory’ of Mona Baker is utilised to evaluate the narrative framework of the 1983 Afrikaans Bible. The analyses of the linguistic framework with vocabulary as focal point will highlight the differences between the OAB and the NAB. Examples from the Old Testament will serve as illustration and it will be supplemented by some New Testament examples.

Gudrun Lier (University of Johannesburg)

Title of paper: Masks in Bible, Targum, and Talmud: An Investigative Study

Abstract:

The current global picture is dominated among other things by the mandatory wearing of masks. Research by A. David Napier (1986) on masks shows that they appear in conjunction with categorical change, predominantly during transitional periods. Napier (1986, 16) found that “mask users or their observers or both attest to some change in conjunction with a mask’s presence.” This paper seeks to investigate various types of masks in biblical times and the age of formative

Judaism, and the purpose for which they were entertained. It also probes whether the ancient purpose(s) for the use of masks is emulated in the modern context or whether there has been a change from Ancient times.

T.J Makutoane and A.S Motsei (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: Linguistics and typological grammar: The case of Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho verbal systems

Abstract:

The current paper is part of an ongoing research project on linguistic and typological grammar, which will be on a much broader scale and reach greater heights because it will be incorporated into a digital humanities project involving the complete revision and updating of the classic grammar of Biblical Hebrew written 40 years ago by Waltke and O'Connor (1990). The project's primary purpose is two-folded. First, it challenges the prevailing view concerning language teaching. Western terminology (which is ultimately derived from Latin) teaches Biblical Hebrew and other foreign languages to African students. In simpler terms, the research will set the stage for decolonising the teaching of any foreign language in Africa, including Biblical Hebrew. Second, it also challenges a prevailing view among scholars of Biblical Hebrew, even African scholars, that Biblical Hebrew is far removed from African languages. However, African languages have some features which are closer to Biblical Hebrew than Western languages are. Therefore the research question that the current paper is seeking to address is: How can we best explore the notion that African languages, for the sake of this paper Sesotho, have some typological features closer to Biblical Hebrew? The research project will use linguistics and typological grammar to explore the typological features of Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho to determine precisely how they are similar and how they are different. In this paper, the typological features of the verbal systems of Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho will be explored. The paper is based on the theoretical framework of language typology. It is outlined as follows: Introduction, Defining language typology, Hebrew and Sesotho verbal systems, how the verbal systems of Hebrew and Sesotho fit typologically, and conclusions.

M.J Maluleke (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: The impact of Xitsonga Bible Translation on the Vatsonga social system.

Abstract:

As an agent of change, the Xitsonga Bible Translation (XBT) has heralded a new dawn on the Vatsonga social system. On one hand the 1929 version of the Xitsonga Bible Translation has united different clans into an ethnic group. Through language engineering, this version has harmonized a variety of dialects into a single language and unified its orthography. In this way, it succeeded into enhancing the Xitsonga Cultural Identity. On the other hand, the 1989 version of the

Xitsonga Bible Translation has strengthened the Xitsonga Cultural Identity by standardizing the language, thus encouraging the national government to select it as one of the national official languages of South Africa in 1994, (see Maluleke 2017 for details on Xitsonga Cultural Identity). This paper seeks to argue that the Xitsonga Bible Translation was instrumental in revitalizing and modernizing the Xitsonga Social System in general.

The book of Exodus modernized the moral standard, enabled and maximized the people's understanding of the rule of law. Furthermore, the books of Proverbs further strengthened the Vatsonga indigenous wisdom traditionally and substantially sharpened their analytic minds: "Masungulo ya vuthlari I ku chava Xikwembu" ("the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Knowledge") (Prov 1:7), "Wena lolo, yana ka vusokoti, u xiya mikhuva ya byona, uta thlariha" ("you sluggard, go to the ants, consider their ways and you will be wise") (Prov 6: 6). The values of justice, respect, modesty, humility, and discipline were highlighted as Xitsonga readers hungrily consumed the scriptures. The Bible translation enterprise began with the Swiss missionaries who, in addition to organising and promoting the Bible translation and evangelism, promoted the development of education and healthcare among the Vatsonga. As the Vatsonga acquired knowledge and skills in building, carpentry, bricklaying, etc. They went on to teach the next generation in form of cross pollination. The development of the Xitsonga language, the development of social systems and the development of practical skills are inextricably related. Today, the Vatsonga walks tall in the street of their native land as a patriotic and cultured South African, who can participate in the affairs of the world.

Godwin Mushayabasa (North-West University)

Title of paper: Violence in the prayers to Yahweh: Framing JUSTICE and SECURITY in the Psalms of the Tanak and the Peshitta

Abstract:

The concepts of Justice and security form a major theme of many of the prayers that we find in the psalms. They are interweaved with what can be thought to be suggested remedies to injustice. These remedies often seem to be quite violent and ruthless in their nature. From a modern day perspective, these often violent might be qualified as crimes against humanity. In this paper I am going to look at how violence was framed in both the Hebrew Bible and the Peshitta translation, which would also naturally be compared to the way that justice and security was perceived in the contemporary cultures of the ANE. In the final place the sensitive issue of violence in these texts is viewed from the perspective of modern day civil rights where certain actions found in the Psalms might be qualified as crimes against humanity.

Jessica Nitschke (Stellenbosch University)

Title of paper: A Glass Pendant of Harpokrates from Tel Dor, Israel

Abstract:

A dark blue glass pendant in the form of Harpokrates (Egyptian Hr-pa-khered, or “Horus the Child”) was found in a Late Hellenistic context at Tel Dor during the course of the 2009 excavation season. It belongs to a category of mold-made glass pendants that were mass-produced in the Late Hellenistic period. Similar glass pendants in the shape of Harpokrates have been recovered from Late Hellenistic contexts during excavations at Yavneh Yam and Delos, and numerous more examples without provenance can be found in museum collections world-wide. Images of the Egyptian child deity are known from the Levant and Phoenician world since at least the early Iron Age, and became widely popular across the Mediterranean in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Yet, the glass pendants have not traditionally figured much in discussions of Harpokrates imagery. This paper attempts to rectify this, situating the glass pendants and specifically the Dor example within the history of Harpokrates objects in Egypt, the Phoenician world broadly, and the Levant.

Tania Notarius (Hebrew University; University of the Free State)

Title of paper: Middle Voice in Ugaritic in the ancient Northwest Semitic context

Abstract:

Ugaritic demonstrates a diversity of templates (binyanim) associated with the non-active semantics. The N-stem operates as middle voice, promoting Patient (commonly inanimate) to the syntactic position of subject and deriving “inchoative” stative verbs, unaccusative verbs of motion and change, anticausatives, symmetric reciprocals, and (medio)-passives verbs. The Gt-stem marks co-referentiality and affectedness, endorses an animate Agent as the syntactic subject, and functions as autobenefactive, direct reflexive, indirect reflexive, asymmetric reciprocal with a commitative preposition, and denominative. The N-stem and Gt-stem function differently in poetry and prose – two literary registers consistently contrasted diachronically and dialectally. The N verbs are middle voice and anticausative both in prose and poetry, while the (medio)-passive is an explicitly “prosaic” usage. The Gt-stem autobenefactive function is proportionally distributed in the both registers, while the direct reflexive, indirect reflexive, reciprocal, and denominative are exclusively poetic; the anticausative or resultative interpretation of the Gt-verbs is very rarely in sentences with an inanimate subject and available only in prose. This distribution co-opts with the data from the later Northwest Semitic languages: The N-stem becomes passive voice in the Canaanite languages, particularly in Phoenician and biblical Hebrew, while it practically disappears from the Aramaic branch. The Gt-stem dies out in the Canaanite languages although still functional in Moabite but becomes the main middle voice category in Aramaic gradually crawling into the sphere of passive voice. The present paper will track this historical-linguistic development, concentrating on the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic factors. The dichotomy between the language of Ugaritic poetry and prose is depicted in the diachronic

and dialectal perspective. The data about the Northwest Semitic languages in the Late Bronze and Early Iron ages are represented as part of the same historical-linguistic continuum.

Grace Park (University of the Free State/Freie Universität Berlin)

Title of paper: House of Exorcism in Prov 21:9 under the consideration of Ugaritic Incantations Ugaritic Incantations and House of Exorcism in Prov 21:9

Abstract:

The phrase *bêt ḥāber* in Prov 21:9 (= Prov 25:24) has been subject to numerous debates, generating a wide range of interpretations. For example, some read it as a “shared house” on the basis of the Hebrew *ḥeber* (“association”), but for others it is a “common house” derived from *ḥāber* (“companion”). It has also been interpreted as a “noisy house(hold)” on the basis of the Akkadian noun *ḥubūru* (“noise”), which may be related to Ugaritic *bt ḥbr* (“storehouse”) or Akkadian *bīt ḥubūri*. However, I suggest that *bêt ḥāber* in Prov 21:9 should be understood as a “house of exorcism” based on (i) the role of the exorcist (*ḥbr*) in Ugaritic incantations, who casts out demons by reciting incantations; (ii) the fact that the Hebrew word *ḥāber* occurs together with an exorcist in Deut 18:11 (*ḥōber*) and Ps 58:6 (*ḥōber*). The interpretation of *bêt ḥāber* in Prov 21:9 as a “house of exorcism,” which is compared to a quarrelsome wife, also lines up nicely with the description of a quarrelsome wife elsewhere in Prov 19:13 and 27:15, who repeats words of rebuke like an exorcist casting out a demon.

B. A. S. Patel (Al Tawheed Foundation)

Title of paper: The development of Quranic Orthography (*rasm*) and how it differs from Arabic Literature

Abstract

Muslims believe that the Quran, as recited today, is the revealed word of Allah (God). The Quran was revealed in Arabic to Muḥammad over a period of twenty-three years. The actual words were recited to Muhammad by Jibrīl (Gabriel). Thus, the actual Quran recited today is as revealed by Allah.

There are several words written in one way in the Quran but written differently in conventional usage, eg: *صلاة* (*ṣalāh*) and *صلاة*

Both the words are pronounced the same and mean the same. however, the former is used in the Uthmanic script, and the latter, in conventional Arabic literature.

The following questions arise:

1. What is the original orthography of the differing words?
2. Why do the two systems differ?
3. Is it allowed to modify Quranic orthography to match conventional Arabic?

4. How does the Uthmanic script accommodate the variant recitals of the Quran?

This paper will address these issues in light of the opinions the al-Muqni‘ of al-Dānī (d.444/1053) and ‘Aqīlah al-Atrāb of al-Shāṭibī (d. 790/1388)

Michela Piccin (North-West University)

Title of paper: Alternative Perspectives from the Far South: Ancient Near Eastern Studies (including Egypt and Semitic Languages) in South Africa

Abstract:

Recently, there has been increasing interest in reconstructing the disciplinary history of Assyriology and the history of the Ancient Near East around the world. The most recent attempts, though praiseworthy, do not embrace every part of the world. To that end, this paper aims to make a small step forward in reconstructing the borders of this topic. This paper primarily considers the salient stages of the development of Assyriology in South Africa. Therefore, this paper discusses the links it has established with other related subjects, notably Egyptology and Semitic languages. The research routes of the founding fathers as well as the history of the major South African journals that widely disseminated the findings of Ancient Near Eastern studies will both also be considered. Consequently, this paper provides an excellent opportunity to reflect upon the inherent purpose of our disciplines, as well as on the opportunities and challenges we face. Having studied their predecessors’ achievements over the centuries, modern scholars face the considerable responsibility of passing on this legacy to future generations while upholding the highest scientific standards as yet achieved around the world.

Sophia L. Pitcher (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: An Alternate Classification Schema for the Ṭa‘āmê hammiqrā’ of the Tiberian Masoretic Text

Abstract:

The traditional four-grade hierarchical classification schema that assigns the disjunctive ṭə‘āmîm to one of four groups (e.g. D0, D1, D2, D3) based on their relative pausal strength is rooted in Wickes’ 19th century formalization of the Law of Continuous Dichotomy (LCD). The LCD describes the ṭə‘āmîm as constituting pausal melodies that continually divide the verse into largely binary segments until no further divisions can be made. There is no firm consensus on which ṭə‘āmîm comprise these groups or their hierarchical order, if any, within a given group—particularly as the grade number increases. Prior to the emergence of these hierarchical schemas, the earliest treatises on the ṭa‘āmê hammiqrā’ classified the disjunctive ṭə‘āmîm into three groups based on the features of pitch that they represent. This paper provides an alternate classification schema for the ṭa‘āmê hammiqrā’ of the twenty-one Prose Books. Unlike the LCD-based schemas, this alternate schema is rooted in a cross-linguistic prosodic analysis. Particularly, it treats the ṭa‘āmê hammiqrā’ as a prosodic orthography, where the

תּוֹאֲמִים are identified as pitch accents that mark the prosodic phrase structure of an utterance. These pitch accents are classified as belonging to one of three Tone Groups according to the historical descriptions of their relative pitch values and the features of iconicity that their orthographic symbols represent

Lénart de Regt (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: Rhetorical use of syntactic and pragmatic features in Joshua

Abstract:

In the course of my involvement with some translation projects, translating Joshua has turned out to be much more interesting than I anticipated, not least in the area of how certain sentences function rhetorically in the context of the passage and indeed the book as a whole, and how this is marked by specific syntactic and pragmatic features, such as the use of specific verb forms, particles, and marked word order. I will present a number of examples. Paying close attention to these features enriches our understanding of the text of Joshua and it improves translation of Joshua as a text.

Magdel le Roux (Unisa)

Title of paper: The legend of Isis in Messene and the ancient Near East.

Abstract:

Since 2012, the Department of Biblical and Ancient Studies at UNISA, joined Prof Themelis' team in the excavation project undertaken at the site of ancient Messene. In 2015, we began excavating the area believed to be the Temple of Isis and Sarapes. The work became more fascinating as the excavation progressed and more of the architecture of the temple was revealed. Because of the department's excavations in Greece and Israel, and studies in the history of ancient Near East, interest in the goddess Isis gained traction. Subsequently, the following research has been conducted on the similarities between Isis and her temple/s and other goddesses as well as the changing views/personalities that Isis took on. Due to the nature of the water channel of the temple at ancient Messene, the role of water in the worship of Isis is also explored.

P S (Fanie) Vermaak (University of South Africa)

Title of paper: The LEOPARDS' FIELD exposed in the region of ÇATALHÖYÜK archaeological site in ancient Turkey

Abstract:

Since the first excavations at Çatalhöyük by James Mellaart (1960's) up to Ian Hodder's excellent excavations (since 1993) and extensive analyses by a variety of specialists over several decades, the main question could never be sufficiently answered: "Why here?" This presentation relates to Ian Hodder's "Mysterious Attraction" (2006) on this extraordinary Neolithic site. It is the purpose of this presentation to indicate that the picture of the "Leopards' Field" between Çatalhöyük and the mountain Dogan provides the clue to the setup and construction of the Neolithic community in the central Konya plain in Turkey. Various references and artefacts relating to leopards in Konya region in Turkey and more specifically on the archaeological site of Çatalhöyük. Ecological issues will also be addressed with a symbiosis between the environment and the human occupation over period of about 1400 continuous years within almost twenty occupation levels.

Jesse Scheumann (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: The Use of Waw with Multiple Appositives

Abstract:

In Biblical Hebrew, a three-item list with a waw only before the last item is syntactically ambiguous between coordination and apposition. For example, is "the commandment" in (1) distinct from "the statutes and the judgments" (coordination), or does it encompass them (apposition)?

(1) "And this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments" (Deut 6:1).

In constructions like (1), semantics and prosody are decisive. But syntax plays a role as well. In a typical apposition example like (2), multiple appositives are usually iterated into the structure without the use of waw.

(2) And Potiphar, Pharaoh's official, the commander of the guard, an Egyptian man, bought him (Gen 39:1).

In fact, waw has a limited usage within apposition, demonstrated in (3)–(4). This paper argues that the structure of (3) is distinct from (1), and the structure of (4) is distinct from (2).

(3) "And now, pick up your implements, your quiver and your bow" (Gen 27:3).

(4) And the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah (Gen 11:29).

The waw within the apposition examples of (3)–(4) maintains its prototypical conjunctive use. The motivation for the limited use of waw will help disambiguate examples like (1) as being cases of either coordination or apposition. It will also cast doubt on whether waw ever has an explicative use, even though such a view continues to be advanced in standard lexica, grammars, and journal articles.

Lisa Swart (Middle Tennessee State University)

Title of paper: Food and Food Offerings in the 21st Dynasty Books of the Dead

Abstract:

The importance of food and food offerings in the Ancient Egyptian mortuary culture cannot be understated. Food security was a significant source of anxiety for the deceased. From the earliest evidence of grave goods to the Ramesside Period, food and its perpetual production was either provided in material form, and, or represented on tomb walls. From the 21st Dynasty, the deceased were interred in undecorated tombs. They were also completely identified with the god Osiris, completing a theological shift that had begun in the 12th Dynasty. Afterlife landscapes from the Book of the Dead, and other funerary texts were mapped onto coffin surfaces and papyri in a seeming explosion of iconographic forms, emphasizing the Solar-Osirian unity. These became the focus of mortuary theology at the time, and substituted for the lack of tomb decoration. A hollowed-out Osiris statuette, containing the Book of the Dead papyri, emerged as a replacement of the funerary cult. As such, the coffin, accompanying Books of the Dead papyri and shabtis provided the only means of regeneration and sustenance for the deceased. Here, we see that food production was relegated to the Field of Iaru and the shabtis. Over the course of the 21st Dynasty, scenes of food, the production thereof, and food offerings in the Book of the Dead papyri become increasingly abbreviated. It is within this context the paper will examine the role food, food production and food offerings played within the individual papyri, and the manner in which they were represented.

LXXSA ABSTRACTS

Claude Armel Otabela (UCLouvain – KU Leuven)

Title of paper: Reassessment of the κρυφῆ variant in Exod 11:2

Abstract:

The adverb κρυφῆ in Exod 11: 2 is a plus of the LXX with regard to the Hebrew witnesses. It is generally considered to be an addition of the LXX translator. In this vein, Bénédicte Lemmelijn has shown that there is nothing in the plagues narrative that could provide contextual support for this mention. Nonetheless, Daniel Gurtner and Lemmelijn agree with John William Wevers that by adding this adverb, the LXX intended to make explicit what was implicit in the Hebrew text. Thus, Lemmelijn concluded that it is a “synonymous” variant, because “speaking into the ear” (~[h ynzab]) connotes in her view the idea of secrecy. Even more, Nina Collins sees in this addition a reflection, in the LXX, of an ancient tradition of an exit from Egypt through a secret escape and fraudulently borrowed

goods. The present paper draws attention to contextual and semantic elements that challenge this alleged synonymy while the so-called tradition of an exodus-flight is now subject of great questioning.

Bryan Beeckman (UCLouvain – KU Leuven)

Title of paper: *Theologica Variatio? An Examination of the Variation in the Greek Rendering of יהוה and אלהים in LXX Proverbs*

Abstract:

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the theology of the different Septuagint (LXX) books. In an attempt to examine whether the LXX of Proverbs attests a different theology than the Masoretic Text (MT), I have recently analysed the pluses in LXX Proverbs containing ὁ κύριος (*Revue Biblique* [forthcoming]) and ὁ θεός (*Louvain Studies* 43/4 [2020]). The results of these studies have indicated that the LXX translation of Proverbs attests a more nuanced theology than its Hebrew counterpart. However, these studies only focus on the attestations of κύριος and θεός in the LXX of Proverbs without a Hebrew counterpart in MT and do not examine the rendering of Hebrew divine names into Greek. It is generally accepted that the Greek equivalents of יהוה and אלהים are respectively κύριος and θεός. However, in LXX Proverbs יהוה is rendered 18 times by θεός and אלהים three times by κύριος. In order to come to a more precise understanding of the translation technique of the LXX translator, this paper will try to formulate an answer to the reason behind this variation in Greek translation equivalents by examining the usage of κύριος and θεός for יהוה and אלהים in LXX Proverbs and especially those instances where the translator deviates from the standard procedure. By doing so, this examination might also shed some additional light on the theology of LXX Proverbs.

Beatrice Bonanno (UCLouvain – KU Leuven)

Title of paper: *τὸ δικάϊωμα ἔμπροσθεν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραήλ (Ruth 4,7): An Analysis of the Greek Rendering of the Hebrew Legal Aspects for Characterising the Greek Translator's Translation Technique*

Abstract:

The Septuagint (LXX) of the book of Ruth is considered a literal and relatively precise translation of the Hebrew text. However, divergences or variants with respect to the Masoretic text (MT) can be identified by looking at the details in the text. Those variants, if not inconsistent, could be explained as a translator's choice to achieve better clarity, or to add particular nuances or to bring innovations at the narrative level of his text. This is, for instance, the case in the legal aspects which run through the fourth chapter of the book of Ruth. This paper will therefore register and present the data linked to the legal aspects in the MT and their Greek rendering in the LXX. Consequently, the equivalence between the Hebrew legal aspects and their Greek rendering will be examined and evaluated.

Through this analysis, this paper aims to offer a more nuanced characterisation of the translation technique of the Greek translator of the LXX Ruth, and to gain a clearer understanding of the nuances, innovations, and/or specificities of the LXX text.

Johann Cook (Stellenbosch University)

Title of paper: Greek Philosophy and the Bible

Abstract:

Under the rubric “Bible” is understood Hebrew and Greek Bibles. Scholars hold deviating views as to the impact that Greek philosophy and more specifically Platonism had on the Bible in the broad sense outlined above. There are at least two positions on whether the creation stories of Genesis 1 and 2 were construed under Platonic influence, especially under the impact of the treatise of Plato, the *Timaeus*. Viewpoints vary drastically as to the extent that perspectives taken from the *Timaeus* have in fact been applied in the creation stories. On the one hand, the following scholars can be placed in this group, Martin Rösel, Evangelia Dafni, Russell Gmirkin (he calls himself a post-Maximalist) and Joachim Schaper. Dafni and Gmirkin exhibit rather extreme perspectives, in that they find evidence of direct contact between the Greek and Hebrew traditions. On the other hand, there are also minimalists who find it difficult to accept that the Greek translators would have had the freedom to interpret freely. Two prominent scholars in this regard are Albert Pietersma and Raija Sollamo. This paper will test the theories of Russel Gmirkin who has come up with novel ideas on the issue under discussion. He has formulated his views in a number of monographs, of which the latest, that has just appeared, is entitled *Plato’s Timaeus and the Biblical Creation Accounts: Cosmic Monotheism and Terrestrial Polytheism in the Primordial History*. He has an interesting view on the development of textual material. The Septuagint plays a determinative role in his theories. He, for example, thinks it possible that the same people were responsible for the Hebrew and Greek Pentateuchs. From a text-historical perspective this is problematic. He also offers innovative interpretations the Septuagint as earliest text for reconstructing of event. The Library of Alexandria fulfils a special role in Gmirkin’s constructions.

Ellen De Doncker, (UCLouvain – KU Leuven)

Title of paper: “From Your Mouth to God’s Ears”: LXX’s treatment of God’s ears in the Pentateuch

Abstract:

Against the backdrop of recent research concerning the Septuagint-theology (Ausloos and Lemmelijn, 2020), ideological characteristics of LXX are examined. One of these characteristics concerns LXX’s presumed anti-anthropomorphic tendency, where the Greek would avoid/attenuate bodily language attributed to God (Rösel, 2006). The Greek translator would have been influenced by a tendency to spiritualize anthropomorphic conceptions of God (Fritsch, 1943). Replies have

been written, stating there is no anti-anthropomorphic tendency in LXX (Orlinsky, 1944; Wittstruck, 1967). As a result, there is ongoing debate whether the Septuagint intentionally avoids anthropomorphisms. Following Ausloos (2020), who showed that no univocal presentation of LXX's treatment of anthropomorphisms is possible, I intend to explore the anthropomorphisms considering God's ears in the Pentateuch. These occur in Numbers 11:1.18; 14:28 (substantive $\mu\tau\kappa$) and in Deuteronomy 1:45 (verb $\mu\tau\kappa$). Strikingly, in LXX-Numbers 14:28, the reference to the ears is rendered, while this is not the case for the other occurrences. Two main questions arise. 1) Are divergences in LXX due to a different Vorlage, reflected in one of the other textual witnesses; due to the translation technique of the Greek translator; or due to ideological (anti-anthropomorphic) intentions? 2) Why does the Septuagint render God's ears once, while the reference to God's ears is lacking in other LXX-verses? In order to answer these questions, I will apply text-critical methods, and pay attention to translation technique, thereby hoping to shed a new light on the ongoing debate regarding LXX's treatment of anthropomorphisms in the Pentateuch.

Evangelia Dafni (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

Title of paper: Women's Rights as Human Rights in Ancient Near Eastern, Asia Minor, Ancient Greek and Ancient Israelite Law Collections and their Adaption and Transformation in the Septuagint

Abstract:

Understanding women's rights as human rights has a history. Mesopotamian, Hittite, Ancient Israelite and Greek legal text sources allude to a variety of what we consider women's rights today. Women's rights give meaning to women's dignity, form the background of all socio-historical and cultural processes in a global religio-political scene under powerful rulers. A new exploration of the means by which women's rights were constructed, enforced, disregarded, violated or finally destroyed, and the roles they played in the Ancient Near Eastern, Hittite, Israelite and Greek legal cultures requires sources of reliable, representative, abundant, and diverse forms of expression. This kind of source material is provided by legal collections. Legal collections are a specific feature of the Ancient Near Eastern legal traditions. However, they have not been so far adequately investigated with regard to women's rights. The broad thematic spectrum and the distribution in space and time make legal collections an excellent source for a comprehensive investigation of the sociocultural and religio-political construction and role of women's rights, especially in connection with developments caused by contacts between different ethnic groups (Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, Hittites, Hebrews / Jews, and Greeks) with a great variety of religious, political, and philosophical ideas. The innovative aspects of the present research are as follows: a) systematic collection and analysis of terms and expressions related to the history of women's dignity and rights; b) combined diachronic and synchronous study of women's rights as human rights; c) analysis and comparison of material in different languages from the multicultural environment of

Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Levant and the Greek Archipelago. Special attention will be paid to the Septuagint adaption and transformation of Ancient Near Eastern and Greek imagery and terminology regarding women rights as human rights in the Hellenistic-Roman world.

Annette Evans (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: A Semantic Comparison of the Conclusion of LXX Tobit and Semitic 4QTobit

Abstract:

At the beginning of the twentieth century the shorter Greek version of the book of Tobit, GI, which is included in the Catholic Bible, was thought to be the oldest version. It was defined as “a lesson on almsgiving and its redeeming powers”. Since the discoveries of the Semitic copies of Tobit at Qumran, GI is recognized to be a reworking of the longer version GII, most probably originally written in Aramaic, between 225 and 175 BCE. In all versions of Tobit the theme of almsgiving is introduced as specifically directed to Jewish kinsmen, but in general, toward the end, is to be directed to all poor. Although the surface context of the narrative of Tobit is the Jewish tradition of proper observation of mitzvot and sacrifice and eventual reward, the various versions contain varying degrees of ancient Near Eastern wisdom, and an ironic, subversive reflection of hypocritical righteousness. This paper questioned why the endings vary markedly in different versions. To try to find answers, firstly a semantic comparison was made between GI and GII, and secondly, between GI and the most complete Aramaic version 4Q196.

Pierre J Jordaan and Sanrie de Beer (North-West University)

Title of paper: What Light can Greimas shed on the Narrative in 2 Maccabees 3?

Abstract:

The narrative of the clash between Helodorus and Onias on the Jerusalem in 2 Maccabees 3 has been scrutinized by various scholars in different ways. Depending on their point of departure each one has come to a different conclusion on the nature of the conflict. Bikerman in 1932 blamed the fight on Jewish infighting while Tchericover in 1959 thought the cause was disenfranchisement of the population around the temple. Greimas had a unique way of looking at narratives specifically focusing on the values that gave birth to a narrative. This approach has not yet been applied to 2 Maccabees 3. Hopefully new insights on the nature of the conflict will emerge.

Douglas T. Mangum (University of the Free state)

Title of paper: Do Bashal and Hepsō Really Mean “Boil”? A Case Study in the Semantics of Biblical Hebrew and Septuagintal Greek

Abstract:

The meaning of any given lexical item emerges from an analysis of its contextual usage, but with biblical languages, often a traditional gloss will be accepted as if it were the clear “meaning” of a lexical item. Lexicons and dictionaries rarely go all the way back to a fresh analysis of the actual usage of a lemma, so the traditional meaning is rarely reconsidered. Those learning biblical languages accept the lexicon’s judgment without stopping to reflect on how the lexicon reached its conclusion. The acceptance of a traditional gloss as the meaning then gets assumed as more and more texts are read, reinforcing the assumption that the meaning is the gloss learned early on as the “equivalent” for that lexical item. This study focuses on the Biblical Hebrew root בָּשַׁל , *bāšal*, and the Greek $\epsilon\psi\omega$, *hepsō* (and related words), both traditionally understood to denote the activity of preparing food by boiling in liquid. These lexemes appear in the Hebrew Bible in some exegetically challenging texts, so clarifying the range of meaning may help to illuminate the interpretation of difficult passages. The full context of the usage of these lexical items in the Hebrew Bible and Septuagint is examined using cognitive semantics with the goal of identifying the semantic and pragmatic clues that point to the conceptual meaning evoked by these lexical items in Biblical Hebrew and Greek. The point is to do the fresh re-analysis of the data to reevaluate traditional assumptions about the meanings of these words.

Peter Nagel (Stellenbosch University)

Title of paper: The Reference to Yhwh in Lamentations and Job: Some Remarks

Abstract:

Upon reading a Greek Version of Lamentations and Job in comparison to its Hebrew counterpart, one is immediately struck by the peculiarities, alternatives, and variants when reference is made to Yhwh. I immediately ask the question why here and why now. The conceptual linguistic literary character of the alternating terms used to call Yhwh to mind is obviously of interest, but what I am particularly curious about is whether these idiosyncrasies are brought about by the theologies embedded in these texts or do these terms, in some way or form, determine the theologies. In other words, do scribes have an idea about Yhwh, and a term associated to that idea, and does this reveal the theological intent and/or bias of a scribe? What this study will aim to do is to investigate each peculiar, variant, and alternative as to come to a fuller understanding whether these references to Yhwh is determinative for the theologies they reveal.

Camilla Recalcati (UCLouvain – KU Leuven)

Title of paper: Joseph’s Cup in Gen 44:2-17: An Egyptian Foreseer only in the LXX Text?

Abstract:

As demonstrated by Lefort in 1928, the Greek of the LXX shows several features that can be attributed to Egyptian influences whether they are coming from Hellenistic Egypt and connected with Macedonian and κοινή Greek or indigenous influences deriving from demotic and from Egyptian culture and language in a broader sense. Against the backdrop of recent lexical studies on the Greek of the LXX (e.g., Lee: 1983; Leonas: 2005; and the first publication of HTLS 2020), the paper will analyse the word κόνδου recurring in the Greek version of Gen 44:2-17. The objective of the paper will be to examine the word κόνδου in the LXX version, not as a mere translation of the word גביע – the latter occurs only four times out of the seven occurrences of κόνδου – but as deriving from Ptolemaic Egyptian cultural and lexical influence. Firstly, the lexical problem will be tackled in connection with the analysis of documentary evidence from Ptolemaic Egypt that could prove an Egyptian influence for the word, which has its first occurrence in Hellenistic times. Both papyri and inscription will be examined in this regard. Moreover, thanks to the lexical analysis, a hypothesis will be advanced, that has only partially been presented by Vergote (1959) and Lange (2001), that the Greek translator had been strongly influenced in portraying Joseph as an expert of lecanomancy, a form of divination that was not attested in Egypt before Hellenistic marking a strong difference between the divinatory form presented by the MT and the LXX.

Herrie van Rooy (North West University)

Title of paper: The headings of the Psalms In Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus

Abstract:

In the Ambrosian codex of the Syro-Hexapla marginal readings related to the headings of some of the Psalms occur. The importance of these variants for the history of the Greek and Syriac Psalm headings still need to be discussed. This paper will undertake such a comparative study. These notes do not occur for all headings and only rarely do variants from all three occur (such as in Psalm 7). The following Psalms have variants: 3-15, 17-23, 28, 29, 33, 35, 37-41, 43-58, 60-69, 75-80, 82-84, 86, 87, 91, 97, 99, 101-103, 107, 110, 111, 119-122, 126, 130, 131, 138-141 and 144. These headings will be compared to that of the LXX and the Syro-Hexapla. For the purpose of this presentation I will only look at three matters, namely the rendering of the technical term jxnml in the three, the references to name of David and some instances where the LXX has a substantial plus, such as in Psalm 98 (97), 104 (103), 43 (42) and 56 (55).

Gerald O. West (UKZN)

Title of paper: In Search of an Economic Remnant: 1 Kings 12:1-18, 2 Chronicles 10:1-18, 3 Reigns 12:1-18, and 3 Reigns 24:12:24p-t

Abstract:

This paper attempts to discern an economic narrative remnant amidst the dominant ethno-religious narrative concerning the division of the united monarchy. Historical-critical comparison of the MT and LXX highlights the source critical dimensions of the stories of the division of the united monarchy after the death of Solomon. This is clearly a moment of ideo-theological contestation, as the four variant accounts demonstrate. However, within each of the larger ‘division of the kingdom’ narratives there is an economic component. My specific interest is to identify and delimit the economic exploitation narrative remnant within each of the two variant accounts in the MT and the two variant accounts in the LXX. I use historical-critical analysis to identify the four variant narratives, then literary-narrative analysis in order to delimit an economic narrative remnant (1 Kings 12:1-18, 2 Chronicles 10:1-18, 3 Reigns 12:1-18, and 3 Reigns 24:12:24p-t). I then turn to socio-historical ideo-theological analysis of each variant, discerning their ideo-theological agendas. Finally, I argue that an economic-oriented remnant narrative provides accessible but critical resources with which to engage South Africa’s contemporary post-colonial economic struggle.

OTSSA ABSTRACTS

Olugbemiro O. Berekiah & Samuel K. Olaleye (University of Ibadan)

Title of paper: An inter-textual reading of Genesis 2:15 and Mark 10:23-27 from an African perspective of dignity of labor.

Abstract:

The synoptic gospels unanimously reported an instance when Jesus declared “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God” (Mathew 19:24; Mark10:25; Luke 18:25). This statement shocked His disciples in an age when the culture of labor-for-wealth is deeply ingrained in their philosophy of life. The question then arises, “is it sinful to own or acquire riches?” This paper therefore attempts and ideological critical appraisal of this statement employing an ecocentric interpretation of dignity of labor in Gen 2:15, informed by some African oral traditions, as the ideological framework. It was deduced through the principle of hermeneutic spiral that there is an inter-textual connection between Gen 2:15 and the literary periscopes represented by Mark 10:23-27, which is not readily discernible on the literary level, but on the ideological level. Also, it was inferred that the ideals enshrined in the statement is deeply engrained in African culture, and forms the ideological basis of certain oral traditions. The study posits that Jesus was not condemning riches earned through gainful employment but the tendency to disrupt the ecological and sociological balance of the earth community through unbridled quest to acquire wealth and insatiable desire for luxury goods which were seen as symbols of affluence.

Hendrik Bosman (Stellenbosch University)

Title of paper: The Naked Truth or Prophecy as Folly? A performative interpretation of Isaiah 20

Abstract:

The last quarter of the eighth century BCE in the ancient Near East was characterized by growing resistance against the hegemony of the Assyrian Empire. Ashdod, a prominent Philistine city-state, staged a rebellion against Assyria with the hope that Egypt (Ethiopian Dynasty) would support them. In 711 BCE Ashdod was defeated by Sargon II with no support from Egypt / Ethiopia. The prophet Isaiah then performed a symbolic act, walking around (almost?) naked and barefoot for approximately three years – an act that must have been perceived as sheer folly since public nudity was not only frowned upon, but also forbidden. This contribution attempts a performative interpretation of Isaiah 20 that will not only focus on the deed itself but also contemplate the effect the symbolic act had on its audience. The (almost?) naked prophet probably simulated the precarious position of prisoners-of-war – not only as a warning to far off Egypt / Ethiopia but especially to its immediate audience (Jerusalem and the Southern Kingdom of Judah). In conclusion, the question will be posed: how do you interpret (even preach on?) a symbolic act that was both foolish and disruptive? To what extent is interpretation (and preaching?) itself, folly? In any context of asymmetric power relations (then and now), interpretation (and preaching?) should ultimately be more than the employment of good rhetoric to captivate the audience, but rather be the catalyst that unsettles and disrupts power (within and beyond academic and believing communities), even if it is considered folly.

Kevin Chau (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: The Metaphor of Ezekiel's Three-stage Boiling Pot (Ezekiel 24:1-14): "Cooking" with Poetry, the Holiness Code, and Texts (LXX vs. MT)

Abstract:

The extended metaphor of besieged Jerusalem as a boiling pot of stew in Ezek 24:1-14 appears in a three-part structure. In vv. 3b-5, the pot is filled and cooked with select meats and cooked, in vv. 6-8 the pot is declared filthy and this imagery is juxtaposed with that of blood spilled upon rock, and in vv. 9-13 the pot and its contents are given over to fire. This three-part structure presents two main questions: how is the extended metaphor as a whole understood through its subsections and how is each subsection to be understood on its own. For vv. 3b-5, I examine how the poetry contributes to the positive portrayal of the cooking pot and Jerusalem, which ultimately serves as the conceptual foundation for how the other two sections' specific pot metaphors build upon it. For vv. 6-8, I examine the seemingly odd juxtapositions of the imageries of the filthy pot, bloody city, and blood shed upon bare rock. Specifically, I propose how the imagery of God's shedding of Jerusalem's blood upon bare rock serves as the poetic climax of this section and how this imagery is to be understood in light of Lev 17:1-13 (Holiness Code) as means for describing God's anger with Jerusalem. In vv. 9-13, I focus upon the text-critical issues in relation to this section's specific

metaphor. In light of how the LXX and MT present the details of this section's pot metaphor quite differently in several instances, I examine how these differences present radically different metaphorical portrayals of Jerusalem and consider how these differences may have arisen in each text.

Juliana Claassens (Stellenbosch University)

Channelling Unresolved Trauma: Contemplating the Value of Postcolonial Trauma Theory for Reading the Book of Jonah

Abstract:

In recent years, trauma hermeneutics has become a popular lens for reading the Hebrew Bible that emerged in the shadow of a succession of empires, with scholars like Elizabeth Boase and Sarah Agnew, and also Irmtraud Fischer, turning their attention to the book of Jonah. In addition, given the fact that much of the trauma reflected in the biblical text can be said to be the result of imperial invasion, forced migration, and the harsh imperial policies and practices inflicted by one powerful empire after another, also postcolonial biblical criticism serves as an important conversation partner in this ongoing discussion on the nature and significance of trauma hermeneutics for reading a prophetic book like Jonah.

I propose that there are a number of theoretical perspectives concerning postcolonial trauma theory that are valuable for the ongoing conversation on what it means to read Jonah in the context of colonization, both ancient and modern. Reading the book of Jonah through the lens of postcolonial, or decolonial trauma theory may help us not only to grow in our recognition of the painful reality of the unresolved trauma of colonization reflected in the book of Jonah that has triggered painful memories for multiple reading communities since, but also find ourselves becoming part of an ongoing process in which traumatized individuals and communities, together with the traumatized prophet, may explore possibilities for resilience, recovery, and growth.

Albert Coetsee (North-West University)

Title of paper: The Rhetorical Structure and aim of Deuteronomy 4:32-40: The Blending of Historical, Liminal, Sensorial and Relational Themes

Abstract:

Deuteronomy 4:32-40 is viewed by various scholars as the climax of Moses first speech. Rich in historical reflection and subsequent theological deductions, the passage is profound. While the general structure (4:32-35; 4:36-39; 4:40) and rhetorical aim of the passage (4:35,39) is appreciated by most, few have reflected on its intricacies. This paper argues that the rhetorical structure and aim of Deuteronomy 4:32-40 is much more profound than meets the eye, blending liminal, sensorial, relational and historical (lived experience) themes.

The paper starts by investigating the occurrence, use and function of these four themes in the structure of the passage. This forms the bulk of the investigation. Next, the paper presents a new and comprehensive interpretation of the rhetorical structure of the passage based on the blending of these four themes. Finally, the paper reflects on the multifaceted rhetorical aim of the passage in the light of its structure."

June Dickie (University of KwaZulu-Natal)

Title of paper: What "persuades" God to respond to the psalmist's cry? Use of rhetorical devices related to "vows of future praise" in some psalms of lament "

Abstract:

Psalms of lament characteristically include affirmations of trust and sometimes a vow to praise God in the future. This paper questions the motivation behind such vows by looking carefully at whether future praise is conditional on God's positive response, and what other rhetorical devices are linked to the promise (or vow) he makes. First, attention is given to the nature of praise and lament psalms (as two expressions of the covenant relationship) with a particular focus on the power dynamic. The notion that lament could be a means to correct an unbalanced power relation opens the door to view "the vow" in a way disruptive to "official theology". Second, principles of Persuasion Theory are applied to the vow in lament psalms, and other rhetorical strategies that the psalmist might have used are discussed. Third, five biblical psalms of lament are considered, with particular attention to their use (or not) of a vow and other persuasive tactics.

Although the motivation behind another's action can never be fully determined, this study draws attention to some of the strategies that may be operative when the psalmist seeks to influence God to act. A vow of future promise is often one tactic, but it may serve a hidden agenda. Other persuasive tactics are also frequently used, which relate to drawing in a larger community (as witnesses or additional praise-givers). But Ps 88, the most extreme lament, highlights that holding on to the covenant relationship is the psalmist's most critical means of persuasion.

Annette Evans (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: Joint Human-Angelic Praise" In Og Daniel and 4QSabbath Shirot Early Evidence Of Merkebah Mysticism?

Abstract:

The NETS translation of the OG of Daniel 3:24-25 (91-92) states "And it happened that when the king heard them singing hymns ... Nabouchodonosor, the king was astonished. And he rose quickly and said to his friends, 'Lo I see four men unbound and walking in the fire ... and the appearance of the fourth is the likeness of a divine angel'." Chazon sees this instance of joint human-angelic praise as the beginnings of a broad multi-faceted phenomenon of the idea of human access to divinity. The Theodotion version has "a divine son" instead of "a divine angel". Later, in OG Daniel 7:9-18 the narrator describes a divine setting in which

thrones (note plural) are set. The “Ancient of Days”, takes his seat on one of the thrones. Another throne is apparently intended for “as it were a son of man.”. A text found at Qumran and Masada, 4QSongs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, which was probably written during the same historical period as OG Daniel, also portrays joint human-angelic praise by a hierarchy of deified beings variously described as priestly, princely, and angelic, and also mentions multiple thrones. In view of the ambiguity of terminology for divine beings[AE1] in both these texts, this paper considers the possibility that concern with human access to the divine realm underlies both texts. A priestly origin has been proposed for the phenomenon of joint human- angelic praise, which may be part of the trajectory which led to merkebah mysticism.

David Firth (Trinity College Bristol / University of the Free State)

Invited Paper

Title of paper: A World Gone Wrong: Structural Violence in Psalms 9-14.

Abstract:

The paper provides a reading of Psalm 9-14 that takes seriously their place within the Psalter while also exploring the theme of structural violence, a dimension of the study of violence that is less well represented in the literature than other forms. The paper explores how the boundary marking statement of ‘there is no God’ in Psalms 9-10 and 14 provides a context in which to provide a theological reading of structural violence.

Stefan Fischer (University of the Free State)

Invited paper

Title of Paper: Elihu’s theological approach

Abstract:

Elihu's speeches are not speeches in the literal sense, but a learned treatise on wisdom topics. Elihu is introduced as a dynamic figure whose appearance comes as a surprise. The editor must have had a reason to introduce him. Through his self-introduction, his name and his genealogy, Elihu is obviously a young Israelite who stands in contrast to the three friends of foreign origin. An analysis of Elihu's speeches reveals that he intends to complement and correct the friends. A critical examination shows that his intention is only partially successful. This is an example of the assumed superiority of younger Israelite wisdom over older foreign wisdom. This paper will examine five aspects of Elihu's theology. This is Elihu's art of argumentation - Job as a case study (1). Elihu's understanding of retribution as active intervention (2), a pedagogy of suffering (3), divine grace (4) and God's majesty (5).

Jaco Gericke (North-West University)

Title of paper: Old Testament scholarship and the theological turn in Continental philosophy

Abstract:

In recent decades, a number of studies have remarked on the future of OT scholarship in South Africa. Current changes to the role and status of the field at Universities suggest that we might be preparing for a future in academia that may no longer exist by the end of the 21st-century. Of course, contexts and concerns differ, and the objective of this paper is not to argue or imply that anyone to abandon what they are doing or take up any of the new directions the field can take. Instead, a number of still unconstructed academic (and other) locations, forms, roles and interests for reinventing OT scholarship will simply be identified as lying just below the imaginary horizon of some future possible worlds in front of the text. Not to be confused with already existing varieties of post-modern biblical criticism, the change in research focus involved is so radical that it cannot yet exist except as a residual anomaly of the current paradigm. The unnamed roads not (yet) taken all nevertheless represent sensible and creative alternative academic and scholarly approaches to the OT texts in the aftermath of the so-called ‘theological turn’ in some currents of late 20th-century Continental philosophy (of religion).

Llewellyn Howes (University of Johannesburg)

Title of paper: The Hebrew-Aramaic Noun רב and Its Usage in the Tanakh

Abstract:

In the Tanakh, the noun רב (“chief”) does not appear on its own in the absolute state, but is exclusively used as part of construct formulations. In this paper, I will examine these constructions in order to answer the following questions:

- What can be learnt, if anything, from the lexical meaning, etymology and textual application of the *nomen rectum*? (The *nomen rectum* is the noun that follows a construct noun as part of a Semitic phrase or construction. The first construct noun in that phrase is known as the *nomen regens* and will always be רב in our case.)
- Does the *nomen rectum* feature in the singular or plural, and what impact does this have on its understanding?
- Should the person signified through the noun רב be included in the group represented by the *nomen rectum*?
- Is the *nomen rectum* always representative of a group of people, or could it give expression to something else as well? And if so, to what?

- Where on the implied hierarchy does the individual behind רב־fall? Is she at the top of the hierarchy with absolute authority, at the bottom of the hierarchy with no authority, or somewhere in the middle?
- Does the term give expression to the relationship between the *nomen regens* (רב) and her inferiors or between the *nomen regens* and her superior(s)?

Louis Jonker (Stellenbosch University)

Title of paper: Holiness Theology in the Empire: Exploring the Political Rhetoric of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah

Abstract: The Persian period (539-332 BCE) was a period of intense and variegated theological discourse in ancient Yehud. Particularly the late Persian period, from around the end of the fifth century BCE to the time of Alexander's conquests, became a melting pot of differing traditions, with many rejoinders of old debates taking place in order to create a new existence under Persian imperial rule. The theological debates of the time were deeply entrenched in the political discourses of the time. The political theology of the time, particularly since the proclamation of a separate Persian province Yehud, sometime in the middle of the fifth century BCE, was characterized by intense engagements about the role of the Temple and cult in Jerusalem within the context of the multiformity of Yahwism (with sanctuaries on Mount Gerizim, and most-probably also at other sites like Khirbet el-Qom), and within the political, military and economic influence sphere of the Achaemenid empire. Furthermore, the literary growth processes of this time period show tendencies towards merging certain traditions of old, while the luxury of different theological views (based on earlier disputes among the clergy) was no longer desirable in the imperial context which required peace and order. These tendencies can be observed in a variety of literature formations of the Achaemenid era. These can (and should) all be studied in order to inform and enrich our definitions of political theology inductively. However, for the sake of delimiting the present contribution to a manageable length, the focus will be on the Holiness legislation (H, as a post-exilic extension of the Priestly materials), and how that influenced the book Chronicles and the literary formation of Ezra-Nehemiah. The question that will be investigated here will not only focus on how the theology of H influenced the formation of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah respectively, but will also dwell on what political implications these variegated engagements with the Holiness legislation had in the late Persian period.

Mmapula Diana Kebaneilwe (University of Botswana)

Title of paper: Religious Misogyny and Evil Postulations of Women: The Case of Ezra-Nehemiah

Abstract:

The post-exilic/Persian period was a pivotal time in Israel's history. The returnees were faced with the difficult task of reconstructing/rebuilding their homeland. They also had to deal with issues of reaffirming themselves as a people of Yahweh; their very self-identity. The book of Ezra-Nehemiah is a recounting of the events of this crucial time. Importantly, however, the book weaves a specific ideology into the very fabric of its story. Thus it is moulded history: history told from a perspective that is overwhelmingly patriarchal as well as theological. In this paper I endeavour to argue that there is apparent misogyny in the story of Ezra-Nehemiah which is done in the name of Religion. The text advocates for the removal of foreign wives and their children in order to separate the Israelite community from potential evil and religious contamination. Apparently, the despicably acts of injustice to women and their children was intended to set aside the returnees as a pure and clean people of Yahweh. The worrisome thing however, is that only the foreign wives and their helpless children were dismissed and regarded as a threat. The text does not make any mention of men, whether foreign or not who might have been husbands and fathers to the wives and their children, respectively. Consequently, the women and children were victimized in the name of Religion. Reading, the text as a Motswana woman I see acts of outright misogyny.

Marthe Maleke Kondemo (Stellenbosch University)

Title of paper: In search of biblical role models for Mongo women: A bosadi reading of the characters of Vashti and Esther

Abstract:

The Old Testament clearly subjected the woman to the will and protection of her husband but she was also celebrated for performing important roles as wife and mother. Although the Bible may be oppressive in certain ways it also contains positive examples of liberation for women to emulate. The Bible has examples which promote the right of women to be what God wants them to be, a right which needs to be reclaimed. Therefore, reading the Bible from the point of view of the marginalised and oppressed enables us to find a liberation message. In this paper, one examines the character of Esther and Vashti in the book of Esther as they navigate in a patriarchal context. Though Esther and Vashti operated in high class level, if strategies used by the two queens are combined they can served as role model to be used by Mongo women to affirm new identities and roles.

Esias E. Meyer (University of Pretoria)

Title of paper: The fear of contagion and the power of priests

Abstract:

It is no secret that the priests of the Second Temple period dreamed of a world in which they would have all the power. Kings were no more, prophets were around, but priests decided who was pure and who was impure. Priests manipulated sacrifices and other rituals; priests brought about forgiveness and atonement with YHWH. This article explores the power of priests in texts such as Leviticus 13 and 14 and how the regulations on contagion are the ultimate example of priestly fantasies of power.

Doniwen Pietersen (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: The Nexus of Debt, Wealth and Land in Deuteronomy 15: South Africa

Abstract:

Covenantal laws of YHWH have been put in place for keeping checks and balances and equity in society, particularly also to access wealth of the land to the poor and landless. Where this is not affected, consequently people turn against one another. In this article I intend to show the relationship and interplay between debt, wealth and appropriation of land (which leads to communities flourishing) and cohesion with God and with 'brothers' in Deuteronomy 15. However, these three interplaying- themes do not always appear in one way but rather in different ways in Deuteronomy 15 and has been acknowledged. However, this limitation does not disallow the reader of Deuteronomy 15 to extrapolate contextual hermeneutical inferences. Therefore, I contend that Deuteronomy 15 is also veritable in addressing issues debt, wealth and land in relation to the South African context. A context where access to the wealth of the country for the majority of South Africans is a serious socio-economic problem. I made light of this by drawing the conclusion that the South African socio-economic challenges can be appropriated by taking seriously and observing true religious worship, which include exploring the idea of brotherhood/sisterhood and blessing found in Deuteronomy. This insight came about by means of an exegetical overview of Deuteronomy 15.

Wynand Retief (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: Circumscribing the Egyptian Prostitute. The Rhetorics of Intertextuality, Metaphor and Gender in Jeremiah 46:3-12 with a focus on 46:11.

Abstract:

The title of this paper is purposefully taken over by Mary Shields's 2004 publication in JSOT Suppl 387 [Circumscribing the Prostitute. The Rhetorics of Intertextuality, Metaphor and Gender in Jeremiah 3.1-4.4]. Her objective is to demonstrate how "the rhetorics of intertextuality and metaphor, with particular attention to conventions of gender as they are played with in this text, would yield a coherent and persuasive reading of the whole" (p 162). In my own effort to prove that the term *laššāw*' in Jeremiah actually alludes to idolatry of *haššāw*' "The Vain One" (probably Baal), and not mere futility ("in vain"), the work of

Shields surprisingly supports my own angle on the final occurrence of *laššāw*’ in Jeremiah 46:11, and indeed nudges me to the insight that *laššāw*’ is in essence a metaphor circumscribing the ‘master/s’ (ba‘al / be‘alīm) of ‘the prostitute’. The paper discusses the exegetic process and its conclusions.

Josh Spoelstra (Stellenbosch University)

Title of paper: Sanctuary Schematics in the HB and Temple Ideology in the DSS: A Proposal

Abstract:

The temple schematics in the DSS, i.e. New Jerusalem (4Q554) and Temple Scroll (11QT), has often been comparatively examined with the sanctuary structures in the HB—chiefly, Ezekiel’s temple vision (Ezek 40-48) and the tabernacle complex (Num 2). Typically, in scholarship, the irreconcilable differences between all accounts (regarding size, shape, name-gate ordering, etc.) is underscored, thus rendering a literary conundrum. This paper argues New Jerusalem and Temple Scroll drew from both Ezek 40-48 and Num 2 in different ways, purporting the sect’s theology and ideology which further accords with the life-setting of the Qumran community. These aspects include: (1) the eastern orientation of sacred structures and the compound at Khirbet Qumran, (2) the precise locale of the yahad at the Dead Sea vis-à-vis Ezek 47, and (3) the desert encampment configuration together with its militaristic overtones in Num 1-2 which corresponds to the DSS sect’s apocalyptic expectations as indicated in the War Scroll (4QM). Consequently, the Qumran community indeed saw itself as an alternative priesthood of the forthcoming revived temple of God, even as in the interim they functioned as an alternative sanctuary (4QFlorilegium; 4QMMT).

Marius Terblanche (University of the Free State)

Title of paper: Jeremiah 50-51 (MT): catalyst for the growth of a symbol for an oppressive empire

Abstract: In Jewish as well as Christian literature the figure of Babylon became a symbol for an oppressive empire. This paper considers the manner in which Jeremiah 50-51 (MT) acted as catalyst for the growth of this symbol. Two factors played a major role in this process: Firstly the picture of Babylon that is presented in Jeremiah 50-51 MT. Secondly the placement of the oracles against Babylon in the text of Jeremiah MT.

Hans-Georg Wüch (University of South Africa / University of Pretoria)

Title of paper: The use of the Infinitive absolute in the book of Jeremiah

Abstract:

The Infinitive absolute is a form of the Hebrew verb that more or less has no direct equivalent in the Indo-European family of languages (e.g. German, English, Afrikaans etc.). Its use is widespread in the Old Testament, where we find about 816 verbs in this form. The book that has by far the most occurrences of the Infinitive absolute in the Old Testament is the book of Jeremiah, where we find about 112 cases. Jeremiah therefore contributes to 14% of the uses in the OT. Not only does the book of Jeremiah contain the most uses of the Infinitive absolute, it also demonstrates the most widespread syntactical use of this form. Every manner in which the Infinitive absolute can be used in the Old Testament also occurs here. There is no other OT book where this is also the case.

This paper looks into the different syntactical uses of the Infinitive absolute in the book of Jeremiah and tries to discern what we can learn from these examples for its use in other passages of the OT. Of special interest are the cases where the Infinitive absolute accompanies another finite verb from the same Hebrew root (a so-called *figura etymologica*) and also where yet another Infinitive absolute is added to this combination. How are these passages to be understood and translated? What is the meaning of this feature of language?

The paper draws from original research performed by the author on the Infinitive absolute in the Old Testament and especially within the book of Jeremiah. It also interacts with the interpretation of the meaning of this verbal clause as stated in recent books on Hebrew grammar and syntax.