

ICI REPORT FOR AUGUST 2012

(a) ACLS AFRICAN HUMANITIES PROGRAM

The American Council of Learned Societies is pleased to announce fifty-one fellowship awards to African scholars in the fourth year of the African Humanities Program (AHP), a multi-year initiative of annual, international competitions funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The program is open to humanities scholars in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda.

[2012 African Humanities Program Dissertation Fellows](#)

[2012 African Humanities Program Postdoctoral Fellows](#)

The AHP is inspired by a commitment to advancing the humanities as a core component of higher education in Africa, in the conviction that the humanities are essential to every society's progress and development. To revitalize humanistic study AHP offers fellowships for the completion of Ph.D. dissertations and postdoctoral projects by early-career scholars. Stipends provide a year free from teaching for full time dissertation writing or postdoctoral research and writing.

Applications are evaluated by an international committee of senior scholars from African universities in a rigorous process of peer review.

In addition to fellowships, the AHP has organized public meetings in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda for discussion of new intellectual directions and standards of quality in humanities scholarship, and for workshops in the preparation of applications.

In future years AHP plans to publish the best work completed under terms of its fellowships in the AHP Humanities Publications Series.

Application materials for the 2012-13 competition will be available in early September. See the [competition announcement](#) (PDF) for details. **This year's deadline is 1 November 2012.**

(b) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW PARTNER AND NEW BOOKS ADDED

We are pleased to announce that the agreement with Wiley-Blackwell as a partner in the Online Books program is now in place and we should begin to post W-B titles before the end of the year.

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

Note: We are thankful for those who provided us with suggestions for volumes to include in our depository. We are working on these.

The following books were added since the last report:

- (1) Feder, Yitzhaq. *Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Ritual: Origins, Context, and Meaning*. Writings from the Ancient World Supplement Series, 2. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

This pioneering study examines the use of blood to purge the effects of sin and impurity in Hittite and biblical ritual. The idea that blood atones for sins holds a prominent place in both Jewish and Christian traditions. The author traces this notion back to its earliest documentation in the fourteenth- and thirteenth-century B.C.E. texts from Hittite Anatolia, in which the smearing of blood is used as a means of expiation, purification, and consecration. This rite parallels, in both its procedure and goals, the biblical sin offering. The author argues that this practice stems from a common tradition manifested in both cultures. In addition, this book aims to decipher and elucidate the symbolism of the practice of blood smearing by seeking to identify the sociocultural context in which the expiatory significance of blood originated. Thus, it is essential reading for anyone interested in the meaning and efficacy of ritual, the origins of Jewish and Christian notions of sin and atonement, and the origin of the biblical blood rite.

- (2) Henze, Matthias. *Hazon Gabriel: New Reading of the Gabriel Revelation*. Early Judaism and Its Literature, 29. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

Since its rediscovery a decade ago, the *Hazon Gabriel* or *Gabriel Revelation*, a Hebrew inscription of the first century B.C.E., has attracted considerable attention. The inscription, of which about 87 lines are preserved, written in black ink on a slab of gray limestone, has been compared to the Dead Sea Scrolls. This

book makes accessible in one place all existing editions of the *Hazon Gabriel* together with annotated English translations and offers initial interpretations of the text as a whole, its language, and its most prominent motifs. The essays, primarily from a 2009 conference at Rice University, compare the *Gabriel Revelation* to other literature of the time—the book of Daniel, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the New Testament in particular—to determine its place in early Judaism.

- (3) Liew, Tat-siong Benny, ed. *Postcolonial Interventions: Essays in Hon or of R. S. Sugirtharajah*. Bible in the Modern World, 23. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

This collection of essays, with contributions by many long-term colleagues and collaborators of R. S. Sugirtharajah, Professor of Biblical Hermeneutics in the University of Birmingham, is meant to review, evaluate, celebrate, and honour his many scholarly contributions. The title of the collection signifies that the volume focusses not only on how we read socio-political interventions, but also on how reading can itself be a form of intervention. This focus on reading and intervention is in many ways most fitting, as Professor Sugirtharajah's biblical and theological hermeneutics have indeed been a significant force of intervention. His work has confronted and challenged many to see beyond a parochial mainstream, to perceive imperial and colonial dynamics in the Bible and in biblical studies, and to remain open to the transformative possibilities of reading from new sites as well as with new sights.

- (4) Turner, Laurence A. *Genesis, Second Edition*. Readings: A New Biblical Commentary. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

Working from the conviction that Genesis can be read as a coherent whole, this commentary foregrounds the sophistication of Hebrew narrative art, in particular its depiction of plot and character, and the interpretative possibilities raised by its intertextuality. Apparently simple and independent episodes emerge as complex and interconnected, constantly challenging readers to readjust their assessments of characters and expectations of plot development. Approaching the text predominantly from the perspective of a 'first-time reader', this commentary underscores the narrative's surprises, ironies and innovations.

(c) PUBLICATIONS: IVBS and ANEM/MACO SERIES

Submissions are coming to these two series. We anticipate that the number of published volumes will increase in the relatively near future.

(d) BIBLE ODYSSEY PROJECT

For news on this project, go to <http://www.sbl-site.org/BibleOdysseyNews.aspx>

(e) EVENTS

The SBL maintains a significant list of events taking place anywhere in the globe. For the full list please go to <http://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/events.aspx>. Please provide information on conferences in your region, including calls for papers, to Sharon Johnson at sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org.

Events that may be of interest to you include:

November 17-20 SBL ANNUAL MEETING, Chicago, USA.

December 20-21 BIENNIAL CONFERENCE THE SOCIETY FOR BIBLICAL STUDIES IN INDIA (SBSI)

The Society for Biblical Studies in India (SBSI) will hold its biennial conference in Bangalore, Whitefield at the Ecumenical Christian Center. The Theme for this conference is: Biblical Jubilee: Indian Liberation Hermeneutics. For more information contact [Rev. Dr. K. Jesurathnam](#), Secretary, SBSI.

(f) PLEASE PASS THE INFORMATION

You are encouraged to distribute this report among all those you think might find it helpful. If you are a member of other professional organizations related to biblical studies, we urge you to send our newsletters to those responsible for communication within those groups as well.