

PROGRAM

IOSOT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE STUDY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

(25TH CONGRESS) 11–15 AUGUST 2025

IOMS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MASORETIC STUDIES

(30TH CONGRESS) 12 AUGUST 2025

IOSCS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR SEPTUAGINT STUDIES

(19TH CONGRESS) 11–12 AUGUST 2025

IOQS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR QUMRAN STUDIES

(12TH CONGRESS) 11–14 AUGUST 2025

IOVS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR VULGATE STUDIES

(2ND CONGRESS) 14–15 AUGUST 2025

ISLP INTERNATIONAL SYRIAC LANGUAGE PROJECT

12–15 AUGUST 2025





IOSOT BERLIN
2025

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Welcome to Berlin

It is a great honor to welcome you to the 25th Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (IOSOT) at the Humboldt-University of Berlin. The Old Testament Department at the Faculty of Theology is delighted to host this anniversary congress in Berlin, bringing together scholars from around the globe to share and explore new research on the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and related fields.

Alongside IOSOT, we are honored to welcome the congresses of the International Organization for Masoretic Studies (IOMS), the International Organization for Qumran Studies (IOQS), the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS), the International Organization for Vulgate Studies (IOVS), and the International Syriac Language Project (ISLP).

IOSOT is committed to fostering scholarly excellence, international collaboration, and methodological diversity. The congress is open to all engaged in the academic study of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and related fields, and welcomes contributions in English, German, and French.

This congress has been organized by the local committee in Berlin in close consultation with the IOSOT board, which also serves as editorial board of *Vetus Testamentum*. Our special thanks go to Annette Schellenberg (University of Vienna), Editor-in-Chief of *Vetus Testamentum*, for her continuous support when preparing this congress.

We wish you all stimulating discussions, new insights, and enriching encounters throughout the congress. Welcome to Berlin!

Bernd U. Schipper (President of the IOSOT)
Jonathan Jakob Böhm (Congress Secretary)

The Humboldt University of Berlin

The Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin was founded in 1810 as Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität by Wilhelm von Humboldt. He and a select group of contemporaries, among them the philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte and the theologian Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher, were the first to call for the independence of academia, to envision the integration of the natural, social sciences and humanities and to demand the unity of research and teaching.

The university they founded developed into a forum for lively discussion among eminent scholars like the philosopher Hegel, the law professor Savigny, the medical scientist Hufeland and the theologians Hermann Gunkel, Gustav Adolf Deissmann, and Karl Holl.

Following the foundation of the German Empire in 1871, the alma mater became the largest and most renowned university in Germany, home to 29 Nobel Prize winners like Max Planck, Robert Koch, or Fritz Haber. Prominent historical figures like Otto von Bismarck, Heinrich Heine and Karl Marx were students here. Owing to this newly gained attention, Humboldt's ideas spread around the globe and inspired the creation of many universities.

During National Socialism (from 1933 until 1945), the university experienced the most reprehensible period in its history: among its staff and students were many enthusiastic supporters of the National Socialism regime. There are few examples of resistance to the regime or the countless crimes that were committed against humanity. This made a new beginning from the physical and moral ashes all the more difficult in 1945. Yet, as early as 1946, lectures were held again in the heavily damaged main building, albeit under the watchful eyes of the Soviet occupying power. In 1949, the university parted with its old name, Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, and was renamed after the Humboldt brothers Wilhelm and Alexander.

Under the influence of the higher education reforms in the GDR, the content and structure of degree courses as well as the conditions under which research was conducted altered increasingly and reflected the Communist ideology. It was not until German reunification in 1990 that the university could break new ground on the one hand and tie into older traditions on the other.

After the reunification the Faculty of Theology at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, which goes itself back to the founding years in the 19th century, became the home of three formerly independent institutions: the "Sektion Theologie" of the Humboldt University, the "Kirchliche Hochschule Berlin-Zehlendorf" and the "Kirchliche Hochschule Ost" (formerly "Sprachkonvikt" in the GdR).

Today, the Humboldt University with its nine faculties is one of the leading universities in Europe and still tied to principles Wilhelm von Humboldt gave it in 1810.

History of Literature and Religion – Philology and Archaeology: Old Testament Research Profiles at the Faculty of Theology at Humboldt University of Berlin

by Markus Witte*

I did not start criticism; since it had once begun its dangerous game, it had to be carried out, for only what is complete in its way is good. (Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette, *Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, Volume 2, Halle 1807, p. 408)

Independent academic research into the Old Testament in Berlin began with the founding of Friedrich Wilhelm University in 1809/1810 and the establishment of a theological faculty under the direction of Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768–1834). The standard was set thereafter by the appointment of Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette (1780–1849), who had previously worked as an Old Testament scholar in Jena and Heidelberg. Prominent for his seminal study of Deuteronomy (1805), de Wette brought a strong literary-historical orientation to the Berlin Faculty of Theology, combined with an intensive philosophical influence, a special interest in theology as a whole, and a consideration of the concrete world from which the biblical writings originated. During his time in Berlin, de Wette published, among other books, his *Commentar über die Psalmen* (1811), *Lehrbuch der hebräischen und jüdischen Archäologie* (1814) and *Lehrbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in die kanonischen und apokryphischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (1817). The final of these was a frequently published masterpiece of introductory scholarship in terms of both its density of information and its didactic structure.

The conceptual system and hermeneutics that de Wette advocated within Old Testament scholarship, with a simultaneous focus on literary-historical and aesthetic issues, was continued in various ways after his (politically motivated) expulsion from his Berlin professorship in 1819. Friederich August Gotttreu Tholuck (1799–1877), Friedrich Bleek (1793–1859), and Wilhelm Vatke (1806–1882), who worked as private lecturers and adjunct professors, were initial proponents for critical research into the history of Old Testament literature and theology. With his reception of Hegelian philosophy, Vatke in particular had a lasting influence on Julius Wellhausen's (1844–1918) view of the history of the literature and religion of ancient Israel.

Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg (1802–1869), who was then appointed to de Wette's chair, was more notorious for his very conservative exegetical (and dogmatic) orientation and his one-sided ecclesiastical political activities than for his pioneering critical research. Nevertheless, Hengstenberg was one of the first representatives of Old Testament scholarship who attempted to make the archaeological discoveries in Egypt fruitful for the interpretation of biblical texts, and he therefore introduced a research focus to Berlin's Faculty of Theology that continues to the present day. In Hengstenberg's shadow, Konstantin Schlottmann (1819–1887), who worked as a private lecturer in Berlin from 1847 to 1850

* Translated by John W. Rice.

and has largely been forgotten today, wrote a commentary on Job (1851) that is remarkable for its inclusion of Indian and Persian sources. Schlottmann's tragic misjudgment of forged Moabite artifacts and inscriptions, which were purchased by the Prussian Ministry of Culture as supposed new finds and would go down in history as "Pseudo-Moabitica," occurred during his time in Halle (1866–1889).

Berlin's Old Testament scholarship owes a particular flourishing to Hengstenberg's successor, August Dillmann (1823–1894). This founder of modern research into Ethiopian scripture was known for his meticulous philological and exegetical analysis of the Old Testament. Extensive commentaries on Job, Isaiah, and the entire Hexateuch, as well as the posthumously published *Handbuch der alttestamentlichen Theologie* (1895), date from his time in Berlin and are still worth reading today. But the Old Testament scholars working in Berlin alongside and after Dillmann also provided important research impulses. Hermann Leberecht Strack (1848–1922) was deeply influential with his textbooks on Hebrew and Aramaic, his edition of the Hebrew fragments of the Book of Ben Sira (known from 1896 onwards), and his *Kurzgefasster Kommentar zu den Schriften des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, which he published together with Otto Zöckler. His *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, which he compiled together with Paul Billerbeck, provided – despite all its methodological shortcomings – generations of Christian theologians with access to Jewish scripture. This was also made possible by the *Institutum Judaicum Berolinense* founded by Strack in 1883, which was initially intended as part of a Christian mission to Jewish people but developed into a place of research into "postbiblical" Judaism for its own sake, first under Strack himself and then above all under the leadership of Hugo Gressmann (1877–1927).

The Psalms commentator Friedrich Baethgen (1849–1905), Wolf Wilhelm Graf Baudissin (1847–1926), and Hermann Gunkel (1862–1932) were among Strack's closest contemporaries. As an associate professor in Berlin, Gunkel published the influential study on the history of religion *Schöpfung und Chaos* (1895), his foundational commentary on Genesis (1901), and his programmatic sketch of a literary history of the Old Testament (1906). Wolf Wilhelm Graf Baudissin advanced the study of Israelite/Jewish religious history by drawing on the archaeological and epigraphic legacies of Arabia and Phoenicia. He presented a standard work of comparative religious history with the multi-volume work *Kyrios als Gottesname im Judentum und seine Stelle in der Religionsgeschichte*, published posthumously by his student Otto Eißfeldt (1887–1973), and he also wrote a comprehensive *Einleitung in die Bücher des Alten Testament* (1901), which was independent of the slowly emerging "Wellhausen School."

The strong profile of Old Testament scholarship in Berlin grounded in the history of religions is then reflected in the works of the aforementioned Hugo Gressmann, who, as a student and friend of Gunkel, belonged to the second generation of the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*. With his focus on the history of tradition and his understanding of Old Testament scholarship as part of cultural studies, Gressmann initiated a paradigmatic change in Old Testament scholarship. His *Altorientalische Texte zum Alten Testament* (1909, ²1926) and *Altorientalische Bilder zum Alten Testament* (1909; ²1927) were a critical and serious response to the "Babel-Bible controversy" triggered by the Berlin Assyriologist Friedrich Delitzsch (1850–1922). They had a formative influence on

Old Testament scholarship. Works such as *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (ANET) and *The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament* (ANEP), *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments* (TUAT, TUAT.NF), *The Context of Scripture* (CoS), and *Die Ikonographie Palästinas / Israels und der Alte Orient* (IPIAO) were all built on this foundation. The collection *Die Levante in historischen Fotografien* (<https://www.theologie.hu-berlin.de/de/professuren/stellen/at/palaestina>), which is still maintained today at the Department of Old Testament Studies at Humboldt University, originated with ca. 2000 glass plate slides that Gressmann himself took or acquired in Israel/Palestine between 1900 and 1920 for academic teaching and public lectures.

In the years that followed, Alfred Bertholet (1868–1951), Ernst Sellin (1867–1946), and Johannes Hempel (1891–1964) left their mark on Old Testament studies in Berlin:

- Bertholet with an approach to religious and cultural history that went even further than Gressmann;
- Sellin through excavations at Ta'anach (Tell Ta'anek), Jericho (Tell es-Sultan) and Shechem (Tell Balata), in the “shadow,” as it were, of Gressmann’s regional studies; finds from Sellin’s excavations in Jericho are now in the Archäologisches Zentrum Berlin.
- Hempel, who had already taken up Gunkel’s program of a genetic and genre-oriented presentation of Old Testament literature before his move to Berlin in 1937 (*Die althebräische Literatur und ihr hellenistisch-jüdisches Nachleben*; 1934; ²1964), as the author of *Ethos des Alten Testaments* (1938; ²1964) and, again as an heir to Gressmann, as editor of the *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* (ZAW).

The collapse of the Third Reich and the partition of Germany led to a political, ecclesiastical, and theological diversification of Old Testament scholarship in Berlin. In the years after 1945, Old Testament research continued at three locations: (1) as part of the Faculty of Theology at the former Friedrich Wilhelm University located in the eastern sector of the city, which was renamed “Humboldt University” in 1949; (2) at the Kirchliche Hochschule in Zehlendorf (West Berlin), which stood in the tradition of the Kirchliche Hochschule that was founded in 1935 by members of the Bekennende Kirche and banned by the Nazis, and which fulfilled the function of a theological faculty in West Berlin; (3) at the Sprachenkonvikt, which was initially founded in 1950 in the eastern part of the city as a residential and learning facility and from 1961 (de facto) and 1989/1990 (nominally) functioned as a Kirchliche Hochschule in East Berlin. At all three institutions, the theologians were heavily involved in the social, ecclesiastical, and economic restructuring following the Second World War, while research opportunities and international contacts were limited, especially for the two institutions located in the GDR. Nevertheless, all three institutions continued to make important contributions to Old Testament scholarship until they merged into a single theological faculty over the course of 1991–1993.

For the Faculty of Theology at Humboldt University, which was sometimes called the “Theology Section,” the work of Leonhard Rost (1896–1979) is worth first mention. As the successor to J. Hempel, who was no longer tenable due to his proximity to Nazism and his anti-Semitic statements in the ZAW in 1942, Rost rebuilt the subject, presented important studies on the Mishnah, and, together with Gerhard Lisowsky, compiled a *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament* (1958; ³1993, new edition 2010), which remained popular for many decades. Then, there are the contributions to the history of Israel and

Old Testament prophecy by Siegfried Herrmann (1926–1999), a renowned Egyptologist and one of the most important students of Albrecht Alt (1883–1956), as well as the works on religious and cultural history by Karl-Heinz Bernhardt (1927–2004) and on the study of Judaism by Ludwig Wächter (1922–2010). Bernhardt represented another unfortunate case of a capital-city theologian entangled within a prevailing ideology – as had already been seen in individual representatives of the Faculty of Theology during the German Empire and then during the period of Nazi rule – through his role as an “Unofficial Collaborator” with the GDR’s Ministry for State Security. Among the Old Testament scholars who received their qualifications at the Faculty of Theology at Humboldt University before the fall of communism and who had a lasting influence on Old Testament research were Winfried Thiel (1940–2024) with his studies on the Book of Jeremiah and Stefan Timm (b. 1944) with his work on the history and regional studies of Israel.

During the partition period, the Kirchliche Hochschule in West Berlin was a place of teaching and research, whether temporary or long-term, for Claus Westermann (1909–2000), Rolf Rendtorff (1925–2014), and Diethelm Michel (1931–1999), among others. Westermann’s Berlin works (1949–1958), including the monographs *Das Loben Gottes in den Psalmen* (1953; 31963) and *Der Aufbau des Buches Hiob* (1956; 31978), stand in the tradition of genre-historical research from W.M.L. de Wette to H. Gunkel, while Michel’s Hebraic studies, such as his *Grundlegung einer hebräischen Syntax* (1977), can be understood as a resumption of the special philological orientation of the subject under A. Dillmann. Fritz Maass (1910–2005) and Rudolf Smend (b. 1932), the master of the history of Old Testament scholarship and introductory studies, as well as Richard Hentschke (1922–2007) and Ludwig Schmidt (b. 1941), also worked at the Kirchliche Hochschule in Zehlendorf before (in the case of Maass, Smend, and Schmidt) being appointed to other faculties.

During the GDR era, the Old Testament was represented at the Sprachenkonvikt by, among others: the Greek scholar and Westermann student Ilse von Löwenclau (1924–2001); Günter Morawe (1929–2005), whose dissertation *Aufbau und Abgrenzung der Loblieder von Qumran* (1957/1961) is one of the earliest Germanophone studies on the Dead Sea Scrolls; Hans-Jürgen Hermisson (b. 1933), who, like Werner H. Schmidt (b. 1935), received his doctorate under R. Rendtorff’s supervision at the Kirchliche Hochschule in Zehlendorf; Gottfried Quell (1896–1976), who came to Humboldt University in 1959 after decades of work at the University of Rostock; Matthias Köckert (b. 1944), whose Leipzig doctoral thesis on the promise texts of Genesis (1983/1988) finally put an end to A. Alt’s thesis of the “God of the Fathers”; for a short time, also Dieter Vieweger (b. 1958).

German reunification brought the three sites of Old Testament research together under the umbrella of Humboldt University. All of the Old Testament scholars who have worked at the Faculty of Theology since then have continued and reemphasized the main areas of research developed over the course of the ca. 180 years prior in different ways: The philological and literary-historical legacy lives on above all in the work of M. Köckert and Markus Witte (b. 1964), the latter with a particular focus on the Septuagint. The focus on the history of Israel in the ancient Near Eastern world has continued through the work of Rüdiger Liwak (b. 1943) and Bernd U. Schipper (b. 1968). Schipper’s work on the Elephantine papyri and Demotic texts also ties in with the special Egyptological tradition of Old Testament

scholarship in Berlin and, through his involvement in the excavation of Tell Keisan, with the archaeological tradition of E. Sellin. Biblical archaeology, which Peter Welten (b. 1936) in particular represented at the Faculty of Theology until his retirement in 2001, is reflected in the Old Testament department's archaeological teaching collection. Among other things, the collection contains artifacts from Welten and his teacher, Kurt Galling (1900–1987), who was a private lecturer in Old Testament in Berlin. It has been successively expanded since 2009, now comprising around 120 exemplary pieces from the Early Bronze Age to the Byzantine period. In conjunction with the Faculty's own Institute for Ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic Religious History, currently headed by Egyptologist and papyrologist Verena M. Lepper (b. 1973), this collection forms a link to the large archaeological museums in the immediate vicinity of the Faculty of Theology. The activities of the institute also reflect the strong interdisciplinary orientation of Old Testament studies, cooperating closely with Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin as well as with important research institutions in the USA, Israel, and South Africa.

The Institut Kirche und Judentum (IKJ) represents the special involvement of Berlin Old Testament scholarship in the advancement of Jewish scholarship, building on the tradition of the Institutum Judaicum Berolinense and its large library. This institute was founded in 1960 at the Kirchliche Hochschule in West Berlin for the purpose of coming to terms with anti-Judaism in theology and the church and for reestablishing Christian-Jewish relations. It was transferred to Humboldt University as an affiliated institute in 1993 as part of the merger of the Faculty of Theology with the Kirchliche Hochschule and has since been headed by the Old Testament scholars R. Liwak (2007–2010) and M. Witte (2010–2015). The intensive collaboration between Old Testament scholarship and Jewish biblical studies is also attested through R. Liwak's work as the Benno Jacob Visiting Professor at the University of Potsdam and his involvement in the edition of the Bible translation by Rabbi Ludwig Philippson (1811–1889). The latter had attended lectures in philosophy in Berlin with Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Henrich Steffens as well as in classical philology with August Boeckh, and with his translation, had followed in the footsteps of the scholar Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), who was active in Berlin and produced the first Jewish translation of the Torah and Psalms into High German in 1783.

Over the past 50 years, the intensive cultivation of Hebrew and other Semitic languages has been in the hands of the faculty's own lecturers, including Helgalinde Staudigel (1919–2007), Gottfried Quell's assistant for many years, Ingrid Riesener (b. 1945), who habilitated at the Kirchliche Hochschule in Zehlendorf, and Johannes Renz (born 1956), to whom the research on the Old Testament owes the multi-volume *Handbuch der Althebräischen Epigraphik* (1995ff.) as well as important lexicographical works. Currently, Josef Tropper (b. 1963), Associate Professor of Semitic Studies and a leading international Ugaritologist, and Meik Gerhards (b. 1970), Lecturer in Old Testament Studies, are responsible for this area. As in the 19th and 20th centuries, Old Testament scholarship in Berlin has recently produced a number of young academics who have been appointed to external professorships, including Christl M. Maier (b. 1962), Henrik Pfeiffer (b. 1964), and Anselm C. Hagedorn (b. 1971).

Looking back over the 215 years of academic research into the Old Testament in Berlin, one element that unites the most diverse hermeneutical, methodological, theological,

and ecclesiastical/political currents is the history of religion and the constant attempt to understand the Old Testament in its cultural contexts and, thereby, to open up its potential for interpreting life in the present. The “comparison of the culture of Israel with the other cultures of the Near East,” which H. Gressmann once defined as the “main task” of Old Testament research (AOT, 21926, p. VII), is, like the critical analysis of canonical and extra-canonical Israelite/Jewish literature, still one of the core activities of Old Testament research in Berlin today.

For selected portraits of the personalities presented here, please refer to the following website:
<https://www.theologie.hu-berlin.de/de/professuren/stellen/at/geschichte-at-berlin>

General Information

Congress Schedule

Monday, 08/11/2025

18:00–21:00 Opening Ceremony and Reception (online registration required, please have your name badge ready for security)
Address: Red Town Hall, Rathausstraße 15, 10178 Berlin

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

09:00–13:00 IOSOT Main Papers I
10:40–11:20 Coffee Break
13:00–14:30 Lunch Break
14:30–16:00 Sessions 21
16:00–16:30 Coffee Break
16:30–18:00 Sessions 22
18:30–21:00 Faculty Reception (online registration required)
Address: Faculty of Theology, Burgstraße 26, 10178 Berlin

Wednesday, 08/13/2025

09:00–13:00 IOSOT Main Papers II
10:40–11:20 Coffee Break
13:00–14:30 Lunch Break
14:30–16:00 Sessions 31
16:30–19:00 Boat Trip on the River Spree (online registration required)
The landing stage of “Stern und Kreisschiffahrt” is located at the corner of Reichstagsufer and Friedrichstraße, 10117 Berlin

Thursday, 08/14/2025

09:00–13:00 IOSOT Main Papers III
10:40–11:20 Coffee Break
13:00–14:30 Lunch Break
14:30–16:00 Sessions 41
16:00–16:30 Coffee Break
16:30–18:00 Sessions 42

18:30–21:00 Berlin Academy Reception (online registration required)
Address: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities,
Jägerstraße 22–23, 10117 Berlin

Friday, 08/15/2025

09:00–12:10 IOSOT Main Papers IV
10:40–11:20 Coffee Break
12:10–13:00 Business Meeting (IOSOT 2028)
13:00–14:30 Lunch Break
14:30–16:00 Sessions 51
16:00–16:30 Coffee Break
16:30–18:00 Sessions 52

Congress Venues, Congress Office, and Livestream

The *academic program* of the IOSOT 2025 will take place in the main building of Humboldt University, as well as in a neighboring building at Hegelplatz. Rooms with the prefix “UL6” are located in the main building (Unter den Linden 6, 10117 Berlin). Rooms with the prefix “DOR24” are located in the university building at Hegelplatz (Dorotheenstraße 24, 10117 Berlin). The Room with the prefix “BUR26” is located in the Faculty of Theology (Burgstraße 26, 10178 Berlin).

Main paper sessions can be attended both in person or online. The sessions will be streamed via Zoom



Special events will be held at the Red Town Hall, the Faculty of Theology, and the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Science and Humanities. The landing stage for the boat trip is located at the corner of Reichstagsufer and Friedrichstraße.

The *book exhibition* is located in the Senate Hall (UL6). Opening hours:
Tuesday, Thursday: 10:00–17:00
Wednesday: 10:00–16:00
Friday: 10:00–14:00

The *congress office* is located in room UL6 1066e. Opening hours:
Monday: 12:30–17:30
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 08:30–16:30
Wednesday: 08:30–14:30
Contact: iosot2025@hu-berlin.de

Attendees with accessibility needs can reach all meeting rooms by elevator.

Using the WiFi

If your academic institution participates in the international Eduroam network, you can access the WiFi network of Humboldt University. Please use your home institution's Wi-Fi configuration.

Others can connect to the “_Free_Wifi_Berlin” network. When you connect to the network for the first time, you will receive a notification, or a browser window will pop up. If the web browser does not open automatically, click on the notification. Alternatively, open a web browser and call up any website (e.g., www.hu-berlin.de). You will then be asked to agree to the terms and conditions. Click on “Verbinden” (connect).

Key to Session and Paper Numbers

Each session and each paper has a unique number. This number indicates its date and time as well as its program affiliation. The numbers can be deciphered as follows:

AB-CCC/D

A: Date

- 1 Monday, 11 August 2025
- 2 Tuesday, 12 August 2025
- 3 Wednesday, 13 August 2025
- 4 Thursday, 14 August 2025
- 5 Friday, 15 August 2025

B: Time

- 0 09:00–13:00* (= IOSOT Main Papers)
- 1 14:30–16:00*
- 2 16:30–18:00*

* Times differ for sessions taking place on Monday

C: Program Affiliation

- IOSOT Main Papers
- 0XX IOSOT Open Sessions
- 1XX IOSOT Thematic Panels
- 2XX IOMS Sessions
- 3XX IOSCS Sessions
- 4XX IOQS Sessions
- 5XX IOVS Sessions
- 6XX ISLP Sessions

D: Paper Number

- 1 Paper 1
- 2 Paper 2
- 3 Paper 3
- 4 Paper 4

E.g., number 22–107 refers to a session taking place on Tuesday, 12 August (“2”) at 16:30–18:00 as part of a thematic IOSOT panel (“1XX”). Number 22–107/2 refers to the second paper in this session.

IOSOT with Children

Parent-child-rooms are located in UL6 2076 and UL6 3093. The rooms are equipped with a workplace, sofa, toys, children’s table and chairs, books, changing table, etc. If the rooms are locked, please contact the congress office.

Furthermore, here are some ideas for families with children in Berlin:

ANOHA – The Children’s World of the Jewish Museum Berlin

An interactive activity space for children of all ages, a “Noah’s ark” themed museum (secure tickets online in advance).

Fromet-und-Moses-Mendelssohn-Platz
10969 Berlin
<https://anoha.de>

Opening Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 9.00–16.00 (last entry at 14.45)
Saturday, Sunday: 10.00–17.00 (last entry at 15.45)

Cost: Free (must purchase/bring non-slip socks for all individuals)

German Museum of Technology

A wide-ranging museum on the development of technology of all kinds. Especially good for older toddlers and school-aged children.

Trebbinerstr. 9
10963 Berlin
<https://technikmuseum.berlin>

Opening Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 9.00–17.30

Saturday, Sunday: 10.00–18.00

Cost:

Adults (over 18 years old): 12 Euro

Youths (under 18 years old): Free

Labyrinth Kindermuseum Berlin

An interactive play space primarily for older toddlers and younger school-aged children.

Osloerstr. 12

13359 Berlin

<https://www.labyrinth-kindermuseum.de>

Opening hours:

Friday: 13.00–18.00

Saturday, Sunday: 11.00–18.00

Cost:

Individuals (anyone over 2 years old): 7 Euro

Family pass (up to 4 individuals): 23 Euro

Children 2 years old and younger: Free

MACHmit! Museum

An interactive exhibit for children of all ages, especially good for toddlers and school-aged children.

Senefelderstr. 5

10437 Berlin

<https://machmitmuseum.de>

Opening Hours:

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 14.00–18.00

Saturday, Sunday: 10.00–18.00

Cost:

Entry each person (from 2 years old and up): 9 Euro

Family (up to 5 individuals): 34 Euro

Program Overview

IOSOT

Monday, 08/11/2025

18:00–21:00 Opening Ceremony and Reception (online registration required)

Opening Ceremony

Chair: Annette Schellenberg-Lagler (University of Vienna)

Words of Welcome: Kai Wegner (Governing Mayor of Berlin), Julia von Blumenthal
(President of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Presidential Address: Egyptian Demotic Papyri and the Hebrew Bible (Bernd U. Schipper)

Opening Reception

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

09:00–13:00 IOSOT Main Papers I

09:00–10:40	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>
IOSOT Main Papers I 20 <i>Chair:</i> Julia Rhyder (Harvard University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom	Geteiltes Leid: Collective Violence and Memory in Biblical Accounts of the Babylonian Conquest (Sonja Ammann)	Wie Abraham nach Hebron gekommen ist – vom schwi- erigen Geschäft der Datierung alttestamentlicher Texte (Jan Christian Gertz)

10:40–11:20 Coffee Break

11:20–13:00	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
IOSOT Main Papers I 20 <i>Chair:</i> Julia Rhyder (Harvard University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom	Cultural Hybridity in Visual Form: Iconographic Traditions of the Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods in the Southern Levant (Katharina Pyschny)	The Contribution of Recent Excavations in Jerusalem to Biblical Historiography (Yuval Gadot)

13:00–14:30 Lunch Break

14:30–18:00 Parallel Sessions

14:30–16:00	<i>Open Sessions</i>		
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Pentateuch 1 21–001 <i>Chair:</i> Andreas Schüle (University of Leipzig) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.101	Connecting themes and concepts between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2–3 (Benjamin Kilchör)	Gen 2,16–17: Das erste Speisegebot in der Tora? Eine intertextuelle Spurensuche (Jonas Brunner)	Gen 6:1–4: A mytho-analytical approach to explaining an enigmatic text (Michaela Bauks)
Former Prophets 1 21–002 <i>Chair:</i> Veronika Bibelriether (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.102	Theophanic Counterparts: A Narratological Study in Characterization and Identity Between the שר־צבא־יהוה (Josh 5:14) and the מלאך יהוה (Exod 3:2) (Derek Frederickson)	Fathers, Daughters, Oaths, and Commitments: An Analysis of the Structure of the Book of Judges and Its Contribution to Understanding the Book's Meaning (Orit Avnery)	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Isaiah 1 21–031 <i>Chair:</i> Reinhard G. Kratz (Georg August University of Göttingen) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.103	A Fresh Approach to Isaiah 22:1b–8a (Hugh Williamson)	Justice and Righteousness in Isa 28–33. A Contribution to the Redaction and Composition History of the Book of Isaiah (Ulrich Berges)	Isaiah 35 Revisited (Ronnie Goldstein)
Psalms 1 21–041 <i>Chair:</i> Beat Weber (Theologisches Seminar Bienenberg) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.205	The Conflict Myth Narrative Structure as a Template for the Ordering of the Hebrew Bible Psalter (Clayton Mills)	War cries and peans in the Psalms (Sophie Ramond)	„Sie strauchelten und fielen ...“ (Ps 27,2). Irreguläre w-SK-Formen in alt-hebräischer Poesie? (Johannes Schiller)
Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther 1 21–043 <i>Chair:</i> NN <i>Room:</i> UL6 3053	I Can Fix Him, No Really I Can: Good Rule in Chronicles (Haley Kirkpatrick)	Qualified Continuity: Idolatry and the Temple Vessels in the Book of Chronicles (Francisco Martins)	Tensions and Assimilations between “YHWH’s Torah” and “Moses’ Torah” in Ezra-Nehemiah (Zhenshuai Jiang)
Religions of Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East 1 21–007 <i>Chair:</i> Felix Hagemeyer (University of Oldenburg) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.201	The Babylonian Oracle Procedure: Theory and Practice (Netanel Anor)	Napishtu of the Gods of Mesopotamia – and the Nephesh of YHWH in the Hebrew Bible? (Desiree Zecha)	A deity list or liturgy? KTU1.102 reconsidered (Shirly Natan-Yulzary)
Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics 1 21–009 <i>Chair:</i> Rebekah Van Sant (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.204	Recent Contributions to the Discussion of Bible and Immigration – An Assessment and a Way Forward (Markus Zehnder)	Hospitality in the Jewish Tradition: Lessons for the Contemporary Church (Chase Rodriguez)	Gen 39 as encounter with consequences. Some notes on vulnerability and ethics of migration (Natalie Klimenko)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

14:30–16:00	<i>Thematic Panels</i>			
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Documented Evidence for Literary Criticism I 21–107 <i>Chair:</i> Juha Pakkala (University of Helsinki) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2093	Documented Evidence and Literary Criticism (Juha Pakkala)	What is a ‘Word’ and a ‘Text’? A Cognitive-Linguistic Critique of the Historical-Critical Method (Raymond F. Person, Jr)	The Absence of “Sectarian Variants” in the “Biblical” Dead Sea Scrolls as Challenge to “Tendenzkritik” (Benjamin Ziemer)	-
Geography and Composition in the Books of Samuel I 21–111 <i>Chair:</i> Jeremy Hutton (University of Wisconsin – Madison) et al. <i>Room:</i> UL6 1070	“Judah” and the Scribal Imagination in the Books of Samuel (Mahri Leonard-Fleckman)	David at Hebron: Reading Samuel Among the Ruins (Daniel Pioske)	In Search of the Early Philistines (Ido Koch)	-
Mystery and Esotericism I (IOQS-IOSOT-Joint Session) 21–114 <i>Chairs:</i> Arjen Bakker (University of Cambridge), Hindy Najman (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2097	Ethicisation of Ritual and Esotericism in the Levi Traditions (Christoph Nihan)	Holiness and Mystery: A Reexamination of their Relation in Priestly Texts (Annie Calderbank)	(A Hymn) Pregnant with Meaning: Life and Death of the inner self in Hodayot Column XI (Christine Rosa De Freitas)	Grasping the Unfathomable: Hidden Knowledge in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (Noam Mizrahi)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Scribal Culture and the Hebrew Bible 1 21–119 <i>Chairs:</i> Nathaniel Greene (University of Aberdeen), Matthieu Richelle (University of Louvain) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094	A Day in the Life ... How to Situate Writing Within the Chaîne Opératoire of Iron Age Vessels (Alice Mandell)	Gab es institutionelle Schulen in der Welt des alten Israel? (Erhard Blum)	The Contribution of Undeciphered Ancient Middle Eastern Scripts to the History of the Alphabet (Madadh Richey)	How old are the Ethiopic letter names? And why does it matter for the study of Northwest Semitic Epigraphy? (Aren Wilson-Wright)
Demotic Egyptian Papyri and the Formation of the Hebrew Bible 21–125 <i>Chair:</i> Bernd Schipper (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2091	Beyond Closure: Transtextuality and Openness in the Ending of the Judean and Egyptian Novella (Joseph Cross)	The many Uses of Demotic and Late-Egyptian Literature for Biblical Research (Meike Röhrig)	Scribal strategies and similarities between Demotic wisdom instructions and Hebrew Proverbs (Robert Kade)	-
Jakob Wöhrle's Contribution to Hebrew Bible Scholarship 21–127 <i>Chair:</i> Ruth Ebach (Université de Lausanne), Friederike Neumann (Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg, Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1072	Pentateuch and Political Interpretation (Mark Brett)	Literary history and the Book of the Twelve Prophets (Anselm Hagedorn)	Israelite History and Archaeology (Oded Lipschits)	-

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

16:30–18:00	<i>Open Sessions</i>		
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Pentateuch 2 22–001 <i>Chair:</i> Andreas Schüle (University of Leipzig) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.101	“That’s What She Said:” A Legal and Narrative Analysis of Hagar and Sarah (Riane McConnell)	Jacob, his sons and the people liv- ing in the land: a troubled relationship (Suzana Chwartz)	-
Former Prophets 2 22–002 <i>Chair:</i> David Toshio Tsumura (Japan Bible Seminary) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.102	... Everyone Did as He Pleased (Jud 17:6; 21:25): Depicting Biblical Chaos (Nili Wazana)	Is there a covenant making in 1 Samuel 10:25? (Michael Avioz)	Military Strategy and Disinformation in 1 Samuel 13–14 (Lena- Sofia Tiemeyer)
Isaiah 2 22–031 <i>Chair:</i> Reinhard G. Kratz (Georg August University of Göttingen) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.103	Incantation Parodies in the Book of Isaiah (Juliane Eckstein)	You are my witnesses (Isaiah 43:9): Between Trial Witnesses and Covenant Keepers (Orit Malka)	Ways Through the Wilderness: Poetics and Problematics in the Study of Isaiah (Rebekah Van Sant)
Psalms 2 22–041 <i>Chair:</i> Beat Weber (Theologisches Seminar Bienenberg) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.205	Polyphony of Existential Interpretations in Psalms 35–41 (Judith Gärtner)	Dressing up Yhwh as Warrior in Psalm 76 (David Ray)	An un(w)holy stone leading to Spiritual transforma- tion. Reading Mark 12:1–12 in the light of Psalm 118:22–23 (Lodewyk Sutton)
Chronicles, Ezra- Nehemiah, Esther 2 22–043 <i>Chair:</i> NN <i>Room:</i> UL6 3053	Ezra 2 as Grafted and Molded Ways of Thinking with a Twist (Kristin Joachimsen)	Temple Restoration in Ezra 1–6: How does it contribute to the cultic-political debates of the late Persian and early Hellenistic peri- ods? (Louis Jonker)	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Religions of Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East 2 22–007 <i>Chair:</i> Davide D'Amico (University of Lorraine) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.201	Playing for God? Scenic Processes in Divine-Human Communication: A Case Study of /שחקן צחק Pi'el and Jer 27f (Judith Filitz)	Sukkot and the Kingship of God (Oliver Dyma)	On the language of the concept of praise God in the Hebrew Bible: A critical synthesis of the state of the art (Marcus Joubert)
Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics 2 22–009 <i>Chair:</i> Thomas Hieke (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.204	Decolonizing Western Biblical Hermeneutics – a potential Project? (Benedikt Collinet)	Contextually reading the Bible in the context of Homophobic Hate Crime in South Africa (Charlene Van der Walt)	Traumatisierter Exulant oder prophetische Idealgestalt? Ezechiels Zeichenhandlungen (Andrea Beyer) [for the abstract see 51–033]

16:30–18:00	<i>Thematic Panels</i>			
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Documented Evidence for Literary Criticism 2 22–107 <i>Chair:</i> Juha Pakkala (University of Helsinki) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2093	Changing Places: Reading David's Last Words in Different Contexts (Cynthia Edenburg)	Manuscript Evidence on the Editing of the Book of Ezekiel (Reettakaisa Sofia Salo)	-	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Geography and Composition in the Books of Samuel 2 22–111 <i>Chair:</i> Jeremy Hutton (University of Wisconsin – Madison) et al. <i>Room:</i> UL6 1070	1 Samuel and Its Geographie(s) of Belonging (Ekaterina Kozlova)	The place names of the second part of the Biblical account of David (Wolfgang Zwickel)	-	-
Mystery and Esotericism 2 (IQS-IOSOT-Joint Session) 22–114 <i>Chairs:</i> Arjen Bakker (University of Cambridge), Hindy Najman (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2097	Unsearchable Light: The Quest for Knowledge in 4Q392 (“Works of God”) and Second Isaiah (Ruthanne Brooks)	In Praise of Darkness – rituals of mystery and initiation from Ancient Egypt (Robert Kade)	The Spirit of the Sofer and the Gathering of the Lost Tribes: Scriptural Mysteries in the Pesher on Psalms (4Q171) and 4 Ezra (Florian Neitman)	Secrets of Prayer: Esotericism in the Book of Daniel (Sarah Wisialowski)
Scribal Culture and the Hebrew Bible 2 22–119 <i>Chairs:</i> Nathaniel Greene (University of Aberdeen), Matthieu Richelle (University of Louvain) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094	Paleographic networks: Towards automated paleographic dating (Eythan Levy, Silas Klein Cardoso)	Statistical Analysis of Orthographic Use Patterns in the Isaiah Scroll (Barak Sober)	The Multimodality of Royal Inscriptions: The View from Ancient South Arabia (Mario Tafferner)	Scribes and/ as Ritual Specialists: Writing Prayer in the Iron Age Levant (Spencer Elliott)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Theorizing Transmission and Textuality in Biblical Literature 22–121 <i>Chair:</i> Jacqueline Vayntrub (Yale University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1072	Josiah's Books: Depicted and Actual Transmission in 2 Kings 22–23 (Tim Hogue)	Textualization, New Mediations of Material Religion (Ingrid Lilly)	Now and Forever: Textual Transmission and the Poetics of Change (Francis Borchardt)	-
Perspectives and Prospects on a Scroll Approach to the Formation of the Hebrew Bible 22–124 <i>Chair:</i> Joseph Cross (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2091	Prospects and Problems for a Scroll Approach (Drew Longacre)	A Scroll Approach to the Books of the Prophets (Nathan Mastnjak)	How Long Can Egyptian Texts on Papyrus Get (Joachim Quack)	Response (David Carr)
The Berlin-Chicago-Beersheba excavations at Tell Keisan (Israel) 22–128 <i>Chair:</i> Aren Maeir (Bar-Ilan University) <i>Room:</i> BUR26 013	Excavations at Tell Keisan: Tracing Phoenician Development and Mediterranean Interactions (Gunnar Lehmann)	The absolute chronology of Tell Keisan: initial radio-carbon results from the Late Bronze through early Iron Age strata (Lyndelle Webster)	A Petrographic Characterization of Iron Age IIA Pottery from Tell Keisan and Horbat Rosh Zayit in Western Galilee (Charles Wilson)	Sheep and Goat Mobility at Iron Age IIC Tell Keisan through Sequential Oxygen, Carbon and Strontium Isotope Analyses (Stefanie Eisenmann)

18:30–20:00 Faculty Reception (online registration required) with the opening of the exhibition:

Archaeology in the Digital Age: The Berlin-Chicago-Beersheba excavations at Tell Keisan

Wednesday, 08/13/2025

09:00–13:00 IOSOT Main Papers II

09:00–10:40	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>
IOSOT Main Papers II 30 <i>Chair:</i> Nili Samet (Bar Ilan University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom	Miriam and the Cushite Woman: Africana Biblical Hermeneutics and the Quest for Liberation after Liberation (Kenneth Ngwa)	Dalit Feminist Hermeneutics and Biblical Interpretation (Monica Jyotsna Melanchthon)

10:40–11:20 Coffee Break

11:20–13:00	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
IOSOT Main Papers II 30 <i>Chair:</i> Nili Samet (Bar Ilan University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom	Measuring Variance in Textual Traditions (Frédérique Michèle Rey)	The Temple Scroll as a Continuation of Priestly Thought (Molly Zahn)

13:00–14:30 Lunch Break

14:30–16:00 Parallel Sessions

14:30–16:00	<i>Open Sessions</i>		
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Pentateuch 3 31–001 <i>Chair:</i> Julia Rhyder (Harvard University) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.101	The Literary Profile of the Priestly Writing: A New Perspective (Hila Dayfani)	The seven + one Sequence in Lev 9:1 and the End of Priestly Writing in Lev 8:35–36. Textual and Literary Criticism Study (Domenico Lo Sardo)	The Role of Inference in Reading the Pentateuchal Priestly Work (Jeffrey Stackert)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Former Prophets 3 31–002 <i>Chair:</i> Veronika Bibelriether (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.102	The Death of Saul: The Biblical Double Narrative (1Sam 31:1–6 and 2Sam 1,5–10) and Its Reception (Daniela De Panfilis)	An Incestuous Congress: The Case of Two Siblings Tamar and Amnon (2 Sam 13:1–22) (Luis Quinones-Roman)	-
Book of the Twelve 1 31–034 <i>Chair:</i> Kirsten Schäfers (University of Bonn) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.103	Hosea 1's Use of Exodus (Derek Bass)	Vom Ort des ungestörten Beisammenseins zum Haus der Sklaverei. Die Exodus-Bezüge in Hosea (Szabolcs- Ferencz Kató)	Puns, Ambiguities and Rhizomorphic Text Structures in the Book of Hosea (Anna Maria Bortz)
Chronicles, Ezra- Nehemia, Esther 3 31–043 <i>Chair:</i> Louis C. Jonker (Stellenbosch University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3053	Räume, Grenzen und Grenzüberschreitun- gen im Esterbuch (Lara Mayer)	Dan 8:27 is Dan 7:28b (David Forward)	The Literary Role of the Philistines in the Book of Chronicles (Itzhak Amar)
Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature 1 31–005 <i>Chair:</i> Florian Oeppling (Tel Aviv University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3075	The Origins and Functions of the Additions to Old Greek and Theodotion Daniel 3 (Michael Segal)	Was Nabouchodonosor alone or only a (hu) man? ὥς ἀνὴρ εἰς in Jdt 1:11 as the Expression of Quality (Martina Korytiaková)	On Ideal Rulership. Simon's Eulogy in 1 Macc 14:4–15 (Barbara Schmitz)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

<p>Religions of Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East 3 31-007 <i>Chair:</i> Martti Nissinen (University of Helsinki) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.201</p>	<p>The Collective Godhead the Deity IL and the History of Israelite Religion (David Toshio Tsumura)</p>	<p>The Art of Not Collapsing: Zion as the Center of the World (Matthew Arakaky)</p>	<p>Visual Power Networks: The Semiotics of the Solar Imagery in the Iron Age Levant (Bruno Biermann/ Dylan Johnson)</p>
<p>History of Ancient Israel within the Ancient Near East 1 31-008 <i>Chair:</i> Shuichi Hasegawa (Rikkyo University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3059</p>	<p>How views of the afterlife influenced the adoption of death penalty laws in ancient Israel compared to Egypt (Alex-David Baldi)</p>	<p>Die Renaissance der biblischen Statthalter im politischen Diskurs des späten 2. Jh. v. Chr. (Sarah Schulz)</p>	<p>The Origins of the Amalekite Ban (Yair Segev)</p>
<p>Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics 3 31-009 <i>Chair:</i> Rebekah Van Sant (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.204</p>	<p>The relationship between HB/OT theology and philosophy (Jaco Gericke)</p>	<p>Realistic Hamartology and Narrative Theodicy: Remarks on the Origin of Human Violence and Free Will in Gen 4 (Jörg Lanckau)</p>	<p>“They are in the morning like grass that is renewed” (Ps 90:5): Vegetable Anthropology in the Hebrew Bible (Tobias Häner)</p>

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

14:30–16:00	<i>Thematic Panels</i>			
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Apocalyptic Thinking in Antiquity 31–102 <i>Chair:</i> Moritz Adam (University of Zurich) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1070	A Utopian Imagination? Exploring the Intersection of Utopia and Apocalyptic Thought in Second Temple Judaism (Madhavi Nevader)	Revealing Plato: Platonic Influence Upon the Origins and Development of Apocalyptic (George Athas)	The Apocalyptic Job: On the Contribution of Job's Latest Editors (Urmas Nömmik)	The Parasitic Apocalyptic: Instability of Genre in Job, 4 Ezra, and Daniel (Mateusz Kusio)
Boschwitz on Wellhausen: Interdisciplinary Book Review Panel 31–105 <i>Chair:</i> Bernard M. Levinson (University of Minnesota) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1072	Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anselm Hagedorn (Osnabrück University) • René Bloch (University of Bern) • Cynthia Edenburg (Open University of Israel) • Daniel Weidner (Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg) • Paul Michael Kurtz (University of Ghent) 			
Labor as an approach to the Persian Empire in the Southern Levant 31–112 <i>Chair:</i> Jason Silverman (University of Helsinki) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094 14:30–16:00	SOURCE-IT: forced labour and indirect taxation in the Southern Levant (Lucia Cerullo, Filippo Pedron, Mitchka Shahryari, Daniele Soares)	Towards Rethinking Economy and Society in the Persian Levant through Informal Taxation and Bourdieu (Jeremy Land, Jason Silverman)	The Babylonian perspective: a response to papers on sources and methods in the WORK-IT project on informal taxation in the Southern Levant during the Achaemenid period (Odette Boivin)	Response: Informal Taxation in Context (Rhyne King)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Myth and Mythmaking 31–115 <i>Chair:</i> Guy Darshan (Tel Aviv University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2091	Myth and Mythmaking Across Media: Theoretical Considerations and a Case Study (Christoph Uehlinger)	Late Developments of the Storm-god vs. Sea in the Eastern Mediterranean: Echoes from Ascalon, Jaffa and Beirut (Noga Ayali-Darshan, Guy Darshan)	Saul, David and the Myth of the Servant (Christopher Metcalf)	-
Representation and Idealisation of Power 31–125 <i>Chairs:</i> Robert Kade, Yannik Ehmer (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2093	Joshua the Law-bearer: Torah as Imperial Power in the Conquest Narrative (Sophia Johnson)	Representing the King When Requesting It (Hananel Shapira)	Gender and Power in Translation in Daniel 5 (Aubrey Buster)	Foreign Powers in the Service of Royal Propaganda: Memory and Ideology in the Hasmonean Representation of the Persian Period and the Roman Empire (Davide D'Amico)

16:30–19:00 Boat trip on the River Spree (online registration required)

Thursday, 08/14/2025

09:00–13:00 IOSOT Main Papers III

09:00–10:40	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>
IOSOT Main Papers III 40 <i>Chair:</i> Markus Witte (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom	Isaiah in Asia (Maggie Low)	Can Body-Imagination Help Us to Overcome Epistemological Injustice when We Encounter Job? (Katherine Southwood)

10:40–11:20 Coffee Break

11:20–13:00	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
IOSOT Main Papers III 40 <i>Chair:</i> Markus Witte (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom	How Are We Meant to Understand the Story of Ruth? (Ed Greenstein)	Das Urdeuteronomium und sein historischer Ort (Reinhard Müller)

13:00–14:30 Lunch Break

14:30–18:00 Parallel Sessions

14:30–16:00	<i>Open Sessions</i>		
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Pentateuch 4 41–001 <i>Chair:</i> David Carr (Union Theological Seminary) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.101	Linguistic Dating and Pentateuchal Criticism as Complementary Methods: The Case of a Priestly Inclusio (Exod 40:34–38; Num 9:15–23) (Nili Samet)	The Composition of the Torah in the Book of Exodus (Reinhard Achenbach)	Deuteronomy and the Pentateuch: A Re-Evaluation of Their Literary-historical Relation (Stefan Schorch)
Former Prophets 4 41–002 <i>Chair:</i> David Tsumura (Japan Bible Seminary) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.102	Personal Names in the Biblical ‘United Monarchy’ Prose and Lists: Do They Reflect the Same (Onomastic) Reality? (Shira Golani / Mitka Golub)	The Solomon Accession Narrative: Contours, Artistry, Politics (Raanan Eichler)	Solomon’s enthronement in the light of ANE enthronement rituals (Peter Dubovsky)
Book of the Twelve 2 41–034 <i>Chair:</i> Kirsten Schäfers (University of Bonn) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.103	Die Fremd-völkerpolemik im Buch Hosea (Christoph Levin)	Am 3–6 neu aufgelegt. Das judäische Profil von Am 6,1–7 (Kristin Tröndle)	Four Visions and a Narrative: Remarks on the Redaction History of Amos 7:1–8:3 (Bob Becking)
Wisdom Literature 1 41–042 <i>Chair:</i> Annette Schellenberg-Lagler (University of Vienna) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.205	Is Job Among the Wise? Rethinking the Concept of Wisdom in the Book of Job (Rachel Frish)	Sapientia Discursiva – The Hermeneutics of Sapiential Thinking (Yannik Ehmer)	The “Death of the Self” in the Book of Lamentations: A Philosophical Account (Pia Regensburger)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

<p>Religions of Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East 4 41-007 <i>Chair:</i> Adrian Marschner (Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.201</p>	<p>Prophecy and the Brain: A Neuroscientific Perspective on the Prophetic Ritual in Ancient Israelite Religion (Ville Mäkipelto)</p>	<p>Prophetic Bodies in the Ancient Near East (Martti Nissinen)</p>	<p>“From the Strong Came Something Sweet”: Sweetness as an Indicative of Authentic and Reliable Oracles in Ancient Israel (Luiz Gustavo Assis)</p>
<p>Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics 4 41-009 <i>Chair:</i> Sarah Wisialowski (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.204</p>	<p>Glad Tidings of Divine Fury?: The Value of Trauma Theory for Reading Nahum 1 (Juliana Claassens)</p>	<p>Murderous Intent? Toward a New Poetics of Violence in Biblical Law (David Lambert)</p>	<p>The Legal Language of Esther: An Exploration of the Hermeneutics of Interpretation in the Traditions of Esther (Rahel Lampérth)</p>
<p>Reception History 1 41-010 <i>Chair:</i> Hannes Bezzel (Friedrich Schiller University Jena) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3053</p>	<p>Law, History and the Spirit of the Age. Biblical Politics beyond the Hebrew Republic (Daniel Weidner)</p>	<p>Amos in Reception: Elusive and yet Pervasive (Paul Joyce)</p>	<p>The Legacy of 19th-Century Travelogues of the Holy Land in the Historiography of Ancient Israel in the 20th Century (Emanuel Pfoh)</p>

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

14:30–16:00	<i>Thematic Panels</i>			
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Between Foreign Politics and Scribal Theology: Prophecy Concerning the Nations I 41–103 <i>Chairs:</i> Meike Röhrig (Humboldt University of Berlin), Helge Bezold (Evangelische Akademie Frankfurt) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3075	Political Threat and Scribal Interpretation: Jeremiah's Emergence as Prophet to the Nations (Christl Maier)	The Importance of the OAN in Jeremiah (Jordan Davis)	Against the nations? Outward-oriented and inward-oriented perspectives in the oracles against the Ammonites, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines in Ezekiel 25 (Markus Saur)	Philistia, Phoenicia and Edom in the Oracles Against the Nations (Yigal Levin)
Brothers and Aliens: Negotiation of Identities in the Ancient World I 41–106 <i>Chairs:</i> Ruth Ebach (University of Lausanne), Cynthia Edenburg (The Open University of Israel) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095A	Emic and Etic Approaches to Constructions of Israelite Ethnicity (Mark Brett)	Complex Tribal Identities: Aramaeans and Patriarchal “Israel” without the Bible (Adrianne Spunaugle)	-	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Digital Humanities and Computational Approaches to the Bible I 41–108 <i>Chair:</i> Frédérique Rey (University of Lorraine) et al. <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094	Natural Language Processing, AI, and the Origins of the Ethiopic Bible (Timothy Lee)	Toward a Visual Exegesis: Interpreting Distant Reading Results in Biblical Scholarship (Timo Glaser)	Uncovering Old Testament Intertextuality in Coptic Literature: A Computational Analysis using TRACER and Passim (So Miyagawa)	Unlocking the Potential of Open Old Testament Research Data: An HTR Workflow for Coptic Manuscripts (Eliese-Sophia Lincke)
Empathy and body-imagination in the study of the Hebrew Bible I 41–109 <i>Chairs:</i> Alexandra Grund-Wittenberg (Philipps University of Marburg), Katherine Southwood (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2093	Reading the Minor Prophets From the Body (Johanna Stiebert)	Words travel worlds – Empathy in the shared history of the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint (Nancy Rahn)	The compassion of God in the Old Testament – not just a feeling, but an action! (Achim Behrens)	-
Ezekiel and the Priestly Texts of the Pentateuch I 41–110 <i>Chairs:</i> Reettakaisa Sofia Salo (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg), Walter Bühner (Ruhr University Bochum) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3059	Ezekiel's Alignment with Leviticus: The Case of the Purity Laws (Christophe Nihan)	Between Lev 21 and Num 19: A Text-historical Analysis of the Instruction on Corpse Impurity (Ezek 44:25–27) (Martin Tscheu)	Assessing the Relationship between Ezek 44 and Num 16–18 (Michael Lyons)	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Monumentality and the Hebrew Bible 1 41–113 <i>Chair:</i> Eric Jarrard (Wellesley College) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1072	The Judean Tomb as a Communal Monument (Alice Mandell)	Monuments and the Torah in Israel and Judea (Simeon Chavel)	The Ark of Yhwh as a material and Imaginary Monument (Thomas Römer)	-
The State of Archaeology and Inscriptions in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Persian Period 1 41–120 <i>Chair:</i> James D. Moore (Ohio State University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1070	“Galilee of the Nations”: the Western Upper Galilee as a Phoenician Borderland (Hayah Katz)	Evidence for Phoenician Magic: An inventory of excavated amulets from Persian period Levantine contexts (Helen Dixon)	From the Iron Age to the Persian Period: Preliminary Results of the Excavations at Tell Bleibil in the South-Eastern Jordan Valley (Alexander Ahrens)	-
Writing Commentaries on Psalms 1 41–122 <i>Chairs:</i> Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher (Catholic Private University Linz) and Marianne Grohmann (University of Vienna) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2097	International Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament (Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher, Marianne Grohmann)	The Jewish Publication Society Bible Commentary (Benjamin Sommer)	Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament (Innocent Himbaza, Sophie Ramond)	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Israel and Egypt in the Persian and Hellenistic Periods I 41–126 <i>Chair:</i> Jonathan Jakob Böhm (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2091	The Persian Period Transport jars from House k/G of the “Judaic/Aramaic quarter” of Elephantine in the Egyptian Museum Berlin (Stefanie Eisenmann, Gunnar Lehmann, Sabine Kleiman)	ΙΣΠΑΕΛΕΙΤΑΙ: The birth and evolution of early Samari(t) an identity between the Persian and Ptolemaic empires (Gad Barnea)	Iconographic Evidence: Display for the living, display of the dead: the Egypto-Levantine mortuary stelae in context (Melanie Wasmuth)	-
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16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

16:30–18:00	<i>Open Sessions</i>		
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Pentateuch 5 42–001 <i>Chair:</i> Anne Calderbank (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.101	Rites of passage in Numbers 6 and 8 (Esias Meyer)	The Double Water-from-a-Stone Narratives and Bekhor Shor’s Innovative Reading (Jonathan Jacobs)	The ‘Contagiousness’ of Forbidden Worship in the Pentateuchal Imagination (Jesse Mirotznik)
Former Prophets 5 42–002 <i>Chair:</i> Veronika Bibelriether (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.102	The blood of Nabot and the wine of the vine: the stakes and risks of land ownership in 1 Kings 20–22 (Emanuelle Pastore)	Politics in Judah? Royal mothers and “the people of the land” in the book of Kings (Rachelle Gilmour)	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Book of the Twelve 3 42–034 <i>Chair:</i> Kirsten Schäfers (University of Bonn) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.103	The Prophet as Hired Worker? The Role of Wages in Zechariah 11 (Anita Dirnberger)	Mournful Judah (Zech 12:10–14) (Noam Mizrahi)	Zech 13:7–9; 14:2–5, Onias III, and the Trials of the 160s (Torleif Elgvin)
Wisdom Literature 2 42–042 <i>Chair:</i> Markus Witte (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.205	“What Brightens the Eye Gladdens the Heart; Good News Puts Fat on the Bones” (Prov 15:30): The Interrelationship between Body and Soul in Aphoristic Rhetoric (Tova Forti)	The Body and the Immaterial Person in Proverbs and Egyptian Iconography (Emily Page)	The Dark Side of Wisdom in Proverbs: An Intersectional Persecution (Mark Sneed)
Religions of Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East 5 42–007 <i>Chair:</i> Adrian Marschner (Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.201	Priester als Universalgelehrte? (Florian Oepping)	The High Priest – How High Is His Standing? (Hananel Shapira)	-
Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics 5 42–009 <i>Chair:</i> Sarah Wisialowski (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.204	Human and Divine Emotions in the Hebrew Bible: Jealousy as a Test-Case (Ariel Seri-Levi)	Staying in the sanctuary – a danger to life (Edgar Kellenberger)	De la célébration des fêtes bibliques à la réflexion sur la légitimité des traditions abrahamiques: ancienneté, messianité et foi en Dieu (Yolande François)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Reception History 2 42–010 <i>Chair:</i> Hannes Bezzel (Friedrich Schiller University Jena) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3053	“A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping.” Rahel’s tomb and Rahel’s tears, and the appropriation of text and land (Johanna Erzberger)	Hld 1,2 in zwei mittelalterlichen Quellen (Manuela Gächter)	-
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16:30–18:00	<i>Thematic Panels</i>			
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Between Foreign Politics and Scribal Theology: Prophecy Concerning the Nations 2 42–103 <i>Chairs:</i> Meike Röhrig (Humboldt University of Berlin), Helge Bezzel (Evangelische Akademie Frankfurt) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3075	Justice for the Fugitive: Foreign Politics and Scribal Theology in Isaiah 16:3–5 (Alicia Hein)	“All nations over whom my name has been proclaimed” (Am 9:12). The Levantine Restoration in the Masoretic Text of Amos 9 and Its Extension to All Nations in the Septuagint (Hervé Gonzalez)	“... and It Shall Consume the Palaces of Ben-Hadad” (Am 1:4b; Jer 49:27b): The Formation and Historical Background of Jeremiah 49:23–27 and the Oracles Against the Nations (Friederike Neumann)	Responses: Anselm Hagedorn (Session 1), Terry Iles, (Session 2)
Brothers and Aliens: Negotiation of Identities in the Ancient World 2 42–106 <i>Chairs:</i> Ruth Ebach (University of Lausanne), Cynthia Edenburg (The Open University of Israel) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095A	Khnum is against us”: The Rise and Fall of Hananiah and the Persecution of the Yahwists in Egypt (ca. 419–404 BCE) (Gad Barnea)	Revisiting the ‘lists of pre-Israelite nations’ in the Enneateuch in Light of Recent Research on Identity Discourses in the Persian period (Stephen Germany)	-	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

<p>Digital Humanities and Computational Approaches to the Bible 2 42–108 <i>Chair:</i> Frédérique Rey (University of Lorraine) et al. <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094</p>	<p>Visualizing Overlooked Syntactic Alternatives in the Greek New Testament (Tony Jurg)</p>	<p>Out of Darkness, Light: Illuminating Biblical Hebrew with Interpretable Machine Learning (David Smiley)</p>	<p>Quantitative Approaches to Biblical Translations : Comparing the Syriac and Hebrew Verbal Systems in Genesis (Matthias Benabdellah)</p>	<p>The Concept of Love in the Latin Vulgate (Eva Elisabeth Houth Vrangbæk)</p>
<p>Empathy and body-imagination in the study of the Hebrew Bible 2 42–109 <i>Chairs:</i> Alexandra Grund-Wittenberg (Philipps University of Marburg), Katherine Southwood (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2093</p>	<p>Feel the Power! Body-imagination and the senses in Hebrew Bible Royal Texts (Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme)</p>	<p>Upstanding Speech, Upstanding Bodies: Ephemerality and Endurance in Biblical Textuality (Jacqueline Vayntrub)</p>	-	-
<p>Ezekiel and the Priestly Texts of the Pentateuch 2 42–110 <i>Chairs:</i> Reettakaisa Sofia Salo (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg), Walter Bühner (Ruhr University Bochum) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3059</p>	<p>The Ezekiel Priestly Covenant: Between Fatalism to Agency (Gili Kugler)</p>	<p>Ezekiel and the Priestly Texts of the Pentateuch: Current Debates and Future Directions (Reettakaisa Sofia Salo/ Walter Bühner)</p>	-	

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Monumentality and the Hebrew Bible 2 42–113 <i>Chair:</i> Eric Jarrard (Wellesley College) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1072	Cutting in Line: Achaemenid Monumental Architecture in the Book of Esther (Timothy Hogue)	Jeremiah's Sign-Act at Tahpanhes and its Imperial Foundations (Eric Jarrard)	The Enactment of a Monumental Temple Complex in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Judith Newman)	-
The State of Archaeology and Inscriptions in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Persian Period 2 42–120 <i>Chair:</i> James D. Moore (Ohio State University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1070	Epigraphs and Empire: Texts from Persian Mediterranean Coast and Transjordan in the OSU DLATO Project (James D. Moore)	NIR Multispectral Image Fusion Technique for Epigraphic Analysis of Persian and Hellenistic Period Ostraca from Tel Maresha (Ariel Schwarz/ Esther Eshel)	The Aramaic Idumean Corpus in its Imperial Context (Mitchka Shahryari)	-
Writing Commentaries on Psalms 2 42–122 <i>Chairs:</i> Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher (Catholic Private University Linz) and Marianne Grohmann (University of Vienna) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2097	Illuminations Commentary Series (Melody D. Knowles)	Apollos Old Testament Commentary (David Firth)	Biblischer Kommentar. Altes Testament (Friedhelm Hartenstein, Bernd Janowski, Judith Gärtner)	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Israel and Egypt in the Persian and Hellenistic Periods 2 42–126 <i>Chair:</i> Jonathan Jakob Böhm (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2091	Shu, Thoth and Anubis at the Coast. Egyptian Amulets in the Southern Levant during the Persian Period (Laura Gonnermann)	Egyptians in the southern Levant (Jonathan Jakob Böhm)	Was there an Egyptian influence on southern Levantine imagery during the Persian period? An examination of 4th century BCE coins and sealings (Patrick Wyssmann)	-
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18:30–21:00 Berlin Academy Reception (online registration required) with a Panel on:

The Psalms and their reception in Early Christianity

Chair: Corinna Körting (University of Hamburg)

Panelists: Susan Gillingham (University of Oxford), Christoph Marksches (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Science and Humanities)

Friday, 08/15/2025

09:00–12:10 IOSOT Main Papers IV

09:00–10:40	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>
IOSOT Main Papers IV 50 <i>Chair:</i> Carly L. Crouch (Radboud University Nijmegen) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom	Prayer as “Site of Memory” for Israel and Judah: The Psalter of the Sons of Korah Revisited (Jorge Blunda)	“I have opened my doors to the traveler” (Job 31:32): The Social Grammar and Narrative Function of Hospitality in the Hebrew Bible (Anne Katrine de Hemmer-Gudme)

10:40–11:20 Coffee Break

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

11:20–12:10	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
IOSOT Main Papers IV 50 <i>Chair:</i> Carly L. Crouch (Radboud University Nijmegen) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom	Desacralizing Lands and Politics in the Northern Levant (Jan Dušek)	-

12:10–13:00 Business Meeting (IOSOT 2028)

13:00–14:30 Lunch Break

14:30–18:00 Parallel Sessions

14:30–16:00	<i>Open Sessions</i>		
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Pentateuch 6 51–001 <i>Chair:</i> Corinna Körting (University of Hamburg) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.101	Tautological Statements about God in the Book of Exodus: Synchronic and Diachronic Aspects (Rainer Kessler)	Sintflut and Sinai: Genesis 6–8's Allusion to Exodus 24–40 (Zara Zhang)	Slave Transaction, Magic Competition, and Holy War: Three Ways to Read the Plague Cycle (Exodus 7–12) (Zhaoyu Yan)
Jeremiah 1 51–032 <i>Chair:</i> Ian D. Wilson (University of Alberta) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1070	Jeremiah's Archival Body (Ian D. Wilson)	From Textual Criticism to Editorial Work : New Insights in LXX-Jer (Avital Cohen)	Jeremiah 14:10: a Hoseanic Lens on Jer 14:2–12 (Nehara Meinemer)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Ezekiel 1 51–033 <i>Chair:</i> Daniel Seifert (Ruprecht Karl University of Heidelberg) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	-	Turning Back to Justice: A ‘Synoptic’ Comparison of Ezek 18 and 33 (Adrian Marschner)	Some observations on the Hebrew and Greek texts in Ezekiel 40–48 and their religious and cultural background (Siegfried Kreuzer)
Book of the Twelve 4 51–034 <i>Chair:</i> Kirsten Schäfers (University of Bonn) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.103	The Same over All the Earth: Semantic Nuances of מָלָא in Zech 14:9 (Giorgio Paolo Campi)	Some oblique undercurrents in Hab 1 (Anna Mátiková)	The Supposed Literary History of the Twelve Minor Prophets and the Book of Malachi (Isaac Kalimi)
Wisdom Literature 3 51–042 <i>Chair:</i> Yannik Ehmer (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.205	Alienable and inalienable possessions in the narrative frame of the book of Job (Stefan Fischer)	The Rhetorical Function of the Figure Elihu in the Book of Job (Tobias Siegenthaler)	Re-Imagining the Gattung of Job (Hiyab Tsige)
Dead Sea Scrolls 1 51–006 <i>Chair:</i> Florian Oeppling (Tel Aviv University) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.102	The Authority of God’s Law at Qumran (Peter Altmann)	The Temple Tax and the Tyrian Silver Coin Hoard: Considering Currency Debasement and Circulation (Lindsey Davidson)	-
Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics 6 51–009 <i>Chair:</i> Mark Sneed (Lubbock Christian University) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.204	Trial, Temptation, and Ethical Dilemmas in Biblical Narratives: Abraham (Gen 22:1–19) and Jephthah (Judg 11:29–40) (Irena Avsenik Nabergoj)	Joseph, saviour or slave master? (Arie Versluis)	Beyond Eden: Rethinking the AI Dilemma through Insights from the Genesis Creation Narrative (Young Gil Lee)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Reception History 3 51–010 <i>Chair:</i> Lucas Müller (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3053	The Prince of Tyre and the Politics of Early Modern Ezekiel Commentary (Andrew Mein)	Eve in Dystopian Literature (Hanne Løland Levinson)	-
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14:30–16:00	<i>Thematic Panels</i>		
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Anthropology of the Old Testament 1 51–101 <i>Chair:</i> Jürgen van Oorschot (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg) et al. <i>Room:</i> UL6 2097	Leiblichkeit und Weltbezug. Zu einem zentralen Aspekt des alttestament- lichen Personbegriffs (Bernd Janowski)	Berührungen im Spannungsfeld von Sinneswahrnehmung und metaphorischer Kommunikation (Andreas Wagner)	Kontinuität und Wandel – die Suche nach dem Konstanten in der altt. Anthro- logie (Jürgen van Oorschot)
The Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ) Project 1 51–104 <i>Chair:</i> Attila Bodor (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1072	Kritische Würdigung der Edition des Buches Hiob in der Biblia Hebraica Quinta (Markus Witte)	Hapax Legomena in the BHQ Apparatus of 1–2 Samuel (Leonardo Pessoa da Silva Pinto, Craig E. Morison)	Reading Psalm 5:13: Textual and Literary Implications (Innocent Himbaza)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Digital Humanities and Computational Approaches to the Bible 3 51–108 <i>Chairs:</i> Frédérique Rey (University of Lorraine) et al. <i>Room:</i> UL6 2094	Topical Distribution of LXX-versions of Ezechiel the Tragedian (Christian Vrangbæk)	The uBIQUity of Sacred Texts between Past and Future: Methodological Challenges and New Tools (Anna Mambelli)	Resilient Septuagint and uBIQUity: Case Studies of Intertextuality in the Digital Age (Davide Dainese)
Philological and Linguistic Variety in Northwest Semitic Languages 51–117 <i>Chairs:</i> Jonathan Stökl (Leiden University) and Anna Elise Zerneck (Christian Albrecht University of Kiel) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3059	Identifying Northern Hebrew in the Epigraphic Corpus and Hebrew Scribal Culture: A Response to Na'ama Pat-El (Jeremy M. Hutton)	Moab without Meša: Moabite forays from a perspective of doubt (Reinhard G. Lehmann)	-
Resilience: Prayer texts in Poetical Literature 51–118 <i>Chair:</i> Judith Gärtner (University of Rostock) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2093	God is my strength and has become my salvation (Isa 12:2): Resilience transcends trauma (Elizabeth Esterhuizen, Alphonso Groenewald)	From remembering to resilience in the songs of thanksgiving (Judith Gärtner)	“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mk 15:34 // Ps 22:1) – biblical perspectives on resilience in the Passion narratives (Hannah Clemens)

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

16:30–18:00	<i>Open Sessions</i>		
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Pentateuch 7 52–001 <i>Chair:</i> Kishiya Hidaka (University of Oldenburg) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.101	“Stretch out your hand”: The Neo-Babylonian Origin of the Root 𐤕–𐤕–𐤕 in the Holiness Legislation (Lev. 25:25, 35, 39, 47; 27:8) (Tommaso Bacci)	Enjeux de la représentation de la bénédiction en Dt 7,12b–16a (Joël Mambe)	-
Jeremiah 2 52–032 <i>Chair:</i> Ian D. Wilson (University of Alberta) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1070	The Magical Background of Jeremiah's Tripartite Expressions: The Case of “O Land, Land, Land” in Jer 22:29 (Cristiana Conti-Easton)	Disintegrating Israelite Identity in Jer. 42–44: Reverse Exodus, Curse, and Ideology (Keith Pinckney)	-
Ezekiel 2 52–033 <i>Chair:</i> Daniel Seifert (Ruprecht Karl University of Heidelberg) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	Ein Gott, der über Leichen geht. Raumkonzeption in Ez 8–11 (Philipp Seinsche)	Divine Violence and Ezekiel 16: An Analysis of Metaphor (Asia Lerner-Gay)	-
Wisdom Literature 4 52–042 <i>Chair:</i> Yannik Ehmer (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.205	Encomiastic Erotic Speech in LXX-Song of Songs (Evangelia Dafni)	Fürchtet Hiob Gott umsonst? Ja, sogar in seinem Leid (Chayong Ku)	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature 2 52–005 <i>Chair:</i> NN <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.201	The Need to Explain Evil – The Problem of Monotheism in the Enoch Traditions (Mirjam Bokhorst)	Ben Sira, Rhetoric, and Memory in Hellenistic Judaism (Lindsey Davidson)	-
Dead Sea Scrolls 2 52–006 <i>Chair:</i> Florian Oeping (Tel Aviv University) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.102	The “Seekers of Smooth Things” and the “simple people of Ephraim” in 4QpNah: Comments on their relationship (Arie van der Kooji)	Moons and First Fruits: Linguistic and Thematic Divisions in Qumran’s Calendrical Scrolls (Anna Shirav)	-
Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics 7 52–009 <i>Chair:</i> Mark Sneed (Lubbock Christian University) <i>Room:</i> DOR24 1.204	The immutability of God in the book of Deuteronomy (Albert Coetsee)	Women, Life and Death in the Books of Samuel (Christel Koehler)	-
Reception History 4 52–010 <i>Chair:</i> Lucas Müller (Humboldt University of Berlin) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3053	Sheol and Hades in the Hebrew and Greek Psalms (Philipp Brandenburg)	What is his son’s name? (Prov 30:4b). Reception of Prov 30 through the ages (Frederique Dantone)	Gen 30:25–43: Its reception in Rashi’s commentary and in Luther’s translation (Jonathan Hirschberger)

16:30–18:00	<i>Thematic Panels</i>		
	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Anthropology of the Old Testament 2 52–101 <i>Chair:</i> Jürgen van Oorschot (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg) et al. <i>Room:</i> UL6 2097	Emotion und Handlung. Überlegungen zu kulturellen Modellen in der Hebräischen Bibel und im Alten Orient (Sara Kipfer)	Körperwelten – Zum Paradigma des Körpers in der Alttestamentlichen Anthropologie (Christian Frevel)	Kann ein Kuschit seine Haut(farbe) wandeln? Funktionen der optischen Beschreibung von nichtisraelitischen Menschen in der Hebräischen Bibel (Ruth Ebach)
The Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ) Project 2 52–104 <i>Chair:</i> Innocent Himbaza (University of Fribourg) <i>Room:</i> UL6 1072	BHQ Daniel: Preliminary Observations (Marco Settembrini)	The Samaritan Pentateuch in the Biblia Hebraica Quinta (Attila Bodor)	The Forthcoming BHQ Edition of Ezekiel: Some Challenging Aspects of Its Preparation (Matthieu Richelle)

IOMS

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
IOMS 1 21–201 <i>Chair:</i> Yosef Ofer (Bar Ilan University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3059	How did the Masoretes work? The Masoretes' work as reflected in three biblical manuscripts (Yosef Ofer)	The Silent Period of Hebrew Manuscripts (Mordechai Vaintrob)	Proofreading Marks in a 14th Century Ashkenazi Torah Scroll: Erfurt 9 (Staatsbibliothek Or. fol. 1218) (Nehemia Gordon)

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

16:30–18:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>
IOMS 2 22–201 <i>Chair:</i> Yosef Ofer (Bar Ilan University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3059	The Features of the Masoretic Accents as Post-lexical Phenomena: Evidence from Shalsholet and the Yemenite Reading Tradition (Sophia L. Pitcher)	Recovering the Babylonian Recension of the Hebrew Bible: Methodological Considerations (Kim Phillips)

IOSCS**Monday, 08/11/2025****09:00–09:45 Welcome Address by the President / Keynote Lecture (UL6 2093)**

10–301

New Aramaic Text Witnesses for the LXX From the Cairo Genizah and the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus (Christa Müller-Kessler)

09:45–10:00 Coffee Break

10:00–11:30	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Pentateuch 1 11–302 <i>Chair:</i> Alison Salvesen (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095A	Segmentation in the Septuagint Pentateuch: Linguistic, Interpretive, and Cognitive Dimensions (Jean Maurais)	A Section of the Old Greek Text of the Decalogue According to Exodus (P.Oxy 5633) (Kristin De Troyer)	The Samareitikon-Tradition: A Critical Re-Evaluation of the Surviving Fragments in Light of the Historical Transmission of the Samaritan Pentateuch, and Samaritan Translation Culture (Stefan Schorch)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Deuterocanonical Writings 2 11–303 <i>Chair:</i> Theo van der Louw (SIL International) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	Stop Me If You Think You've Heard This One Before: Doublets in the Greek Esther Versions (Joshua Alfaro)	The Outline of I – IV Maccabees in MS Rahlfs 542 (Laurens Breukeleers & Reinhart Ceulemans)	Interpreting Judith Between History, Eschatology, and Fiction (Anna Angelini)
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11:30–13:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Pentateuch 1 12–302 <i>Chair:</i> Alison Salvesen (University of Oxford) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095A	Thirty-Six Cells on Pharos: Epiphanius' Story and the Puzzle of Ex 24:11 LXX (Maria Sokolskaya)	OG Job 11.12a (Claude Cox)	Metathesis in the Septuagint: Different Vorlage or Intentional Transformation (Eszter Csalog)
Deuterocanonical Writings 2 12–303 <i>Chair:</i> Theo van der Louw (SIL International) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	Neither Cultural Veneer nor Systematic Thinking (Raphäelle Berterroitière)	Craftsmanship and Wisdom in the Book of Ben Sira: Text Traditions and Interpretative Perspectives (Bonifatia Gesche)	-

13:00–14:30 Lunch Break

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Prophetic Books 13–304 <i>Chair:</i> Jean Maurais (Acadia University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095A	'The Literal Meaning of the Sacred Text' (Alison Salvesen)	Of Evil Kings and Tax Collectors: Economic Terminology in Old Greek Isaiah (Rebecca Wolfs)	Textual Stratigraphy of the Old Latin Versions of Hosea (Alfio Giuseppe Catalano)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Psalms and Job 13–305 <i>Chair:</i> Kristin De Troyer (Paris Lodron University of Salzburg) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	Die Psalterkatenen- handschrift Codex Hierosolymitanus S. Crucis 96 (Rahlf's-Hs. 1070) als Epitome hexaplarischer Les- arten (Felix Albrecht)	Psalm-Headings in Book IV of the Greek Psalter: With Special Emphasis on LXX Ps 92(1 (Gert J. Steyn)	The Earliest Greek Reception of LXX Job (Stephen M. Bay)
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16:00–17:00 Annual General Meeting IOSCS

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Lexical and Linguistic Studies I 21–306 <i>Chair:</i> Reinhart Ceulemans (KU Leuven) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3071	The Septuagint Use of θλίβω and θλίψις – Preliminary Observations (Eberhard Bons)	Ὅσιος and Cognates in the Septuagint (Dries De Crom)	Septuagintal Sycophants: συκο- φάντ- in the Septuagint and in Post-Classical Greek (Maximilian Häberlein)
Textual Criticism and Revisions I 21–307 <i>Chair:</i> Joshua Alfaro (Paris Lodron University of Salzburg) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3075	Creating a Hebrew – Greek – Hebrew Index of Theodotion in 1–2 Samuel With the Help of AI (Timo Tekoniemi)	Diversity and Development Within the Septuagint's Kaige-Aquila Tradition (Ryan Comins)	Otto Thenius and Zacharias Frankel on the Text of the Books of Samuel (Theo van der Louw)

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

16:30–18:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Lexical and Linguistic Studies 2 22–306 <i>Chair:</i> Reinhart Ceulemans (KU Leuven) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3071	The ‘Imagined Readers’ of the Septuagint: Lexical Choices and Cultural Negotiation (Camilla Recalcati)	The Lexical Choice of ἀφή for ὕμν in OG Leviticus: A Greek-Priority Perspective (Alberto Paredes)	Knowledge From the Greek Bible: Lexical Investigations on ἐπιστήμη and Cognates (Laura Bigoni)
Textual Criticism and Revisions 2 22–307 <i>Chair:</i> Joshua Alfaro (Paris Lodron University of Salzburg) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3075	The Books of Hosea and Joel in Theodoret of Cyr’s Commentary on the Twelve Prophets (Tiphaine Lorieux)	Synoptic Edition of the Old Georgian Versions of the Book of Esther (GeII and GeI): Aims and Challenges (Natia Mirotadze)	Continuum, Threshold, and Procession: A Framework for Collaborative Text-Critical Analysis, With Examples From Ezra – Nehemiah (Steve C. Daley)

IOQS

Monday, 08/11/2025

15:30–17:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Manuscripts and Materiality 1 13–401 <i>Chair:</i> Jutta Jokiranta <i>Room:</i> UL6 2093	Writing Sectarian Texts on Papyrus (Oren Ableman)	Materiality and the Provenance of the Nabataean Manuscripts: The Case of 4Q343 (Ayhan Aksu)	Qumran Tefillin Rehearsed: Regular Recitation as Apotropaic Practice (Arjen Bakker)	The Two-sided (Opisthograph) Writing Technique in Tefillin from Qumran (Ariel Schwarz and Esther Eshel)

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Open Session 1 21–402 <i>Chairs:</i> Molly Zahn, Daniel Falk <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	Exhortations, Laws, and Implied Speakers: Understanding the Damascus Document as a Textualized Performance of the Mebaqquer (Jeffrey Cross)	Scribal Culture Features of Organisation and Memory in 4QInstruction: The Elusive Structure of a Fragmentary Sapiential Text (Lindsey A. Davidson)	The Adaption of Sapiential Phrases to Create Halakha in 4QMMT (Ananda Geyser-Fouché)	Anonymity in the Hodayot (Michael B. Johnson)
Mystery and Esotericism 1 (IOQS-IOSOT-Joint Session) 21–114 <i>Chairs:</i> Arjen Bakker, Hindy Najman <i>Room:</i> UL6 2097	Ethicisation of Ritual and Esotericism in the Levi Traditions (Christoph Nihan)	Holiness and Mystery: A Reexamination of their Relation in Priestly Texts (Annie Calderbank)	(A Hymn) Pregnant with Meaning: Life and Death of the inner self in Hodayot Column XI (Christine Rosa De Freitas)	Grasping the Unfathomable: Hidden Knowledge in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (Noam Mizrahi)

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

16:30–18:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Open Session 2 22–402 <i>Chairs:</i> Molly Zahn, Jonathan Ben-Dov <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	Sovereignty and Dominion in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls (Robert E. Jones)	Enslavement in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Embodied, Metaphorical, and Debt (Carmen Palmer)	DJD XVII Twenty Years Later (Andrea Ravasco)	-

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Mystery and Esotericism 2 (IOQS-IOSOT-Joint Session) 22–114 <i>Chairs:</i> Arjen Bakker, Hindy Najman <i>Room:</i> UL6 2097	Unsearchable Light: The Quest for Knowledge in 4Q392 (“Works of God”) and Second Isaiah (Ruthanne Brooks)	In Praise of Darkness – rituals of mystery and initiation from Ancient Egypt (Robert Kade)	The Spirit of the Sofer and the Gathering of the Lost Tribes: Scriptural Mysteries in the Peshar on Psalms (4Q171) and 4 Ezra (Florian Neitman)	Secrets of Prayer: Esotericism in the Book of Daniel (Sarah Wisialowski)
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Wednesday, 08/13/2025

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Manuscripts and Materiality 2 31–403 <i>Chair:</i> Esther Chazon <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	Analysing Conjoined Texts: A Material Study of 4Q414 (4QRitual of Purification A) and 4Q415 (4QInstruction ^a) (Charles P. Comerford)	New Joins and Ancient Debates in the Aramaic New Jerusalem (Shlomi Efrati)	Material observations on 1QIsa ^a and IQS/IQSa/IQSb (Torleif Elgvin)	The Great Isaiah Scroll: Bisection and Unity (Marcello Fidanzio)

Thursday, 08/14/2025

13:45–14:30 IOQS Business Meeting (UL6 2095B)

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Manuscripts and Materiality 3 41–404 <i>Chairs:</i> Arjen Bakker, Michael B. Johnson <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	A New Aramaic Inscription from the Cave of the Swords near Ein Gedi (Asaf Gayer and Jonathan Ben Dov)	Cryptic, Not So Cryptic: Paleographic Considerations on the Term ‘Cryptic’ to Describe Some Qumran Manuscripts (David Hamidovic)	The Material Significance of the 4Q82 Stick and a Reconstructed Reading of its Fragments (Joshua M. Matson)	The Different Hands of 4Q266: Ancient Scribes and Modern Scholars (Eibert Tigchelaar)

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

16:30–18:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>	<i>Paper 4</i>
Manuscripts and Materiality 4 42–404 <i>Chairs:</i> Arjen Bakker, Michael B. Johnson <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095B	Philology in a Material World: Constructions, Reconstructions, and Deconstructions of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Matthew P. Monger)	The New Materiality and the Dead Sea Scrolls: 1QS-1QSa-1QSB as a Case Study (Dermot Nestor and Gareth Wearne)	The Scrolls of Cave 6 as a Literary Collection (Anna Shirav Hamernik)	1QS V, 13: Misplaced or Deliberate? (Kamilla Skarström Hinojosa)

IOVS

Thursday, 08/14/2025

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Perspectives on Jerome's Work 1 41–501 <i>Chair:</i> Michael Fieger (Theologische Hochschule Chur) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3071	Chanukah in the Vulgate (Matthew Kraus)	Jerome's Text-Critical Practice: What can the biblical commentaries tell us? (Simone Rickerby)	What makes an interpretation a good exegesis? (Bernhard Klinger)

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

16:30–18:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Jerome and the Psalms 1 42–502 <i>Chair:</i> Bernhard Lang (Paderborn University) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3071	Jerome's Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos: translation technique and Hebrew Vorlage (Martijn Jaspers)	cum carbonibus iuniperorum/desolatoriis. Psalm 120:4 (Vg 119:4) (Michael Fieger)	Psalms 14 (Vg 13) and 53 (Vg 52) in the Vulgate: A Comparative Analysis of the iuxta hebraeos and iuxta LXX Translations in Relation to the Original Texts and Other Ancient Translations (Wilhelm Tauwinkl)

Friday, 08/15/2025

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Perspectives on Jerome's Work 2 51–501 <i>Chair:</i> Wilhelm Tauwinkl (University of Bucharest) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3071	Elijah in the Vulgate (Benedikt J. Collinet)	The Book of Joshua in the Vulgate. Examples of Translation Technique (Dionisio Candido)	Jeromian revisions and versions of Ecclesiastes (Sincero Mantelli)

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

16:30–18:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Jerome and the Psalms 2 52–502 <i>Chair:</i> Michael Fieger (Theologische Hochschule Chur) <i>Room:</i> UL6 3071	Zur Wirkungs-geschichte der verschiedenen Textformen von Ps 22 (Vg 21) (Andreas Vonach)	ablactata or retributio? The meaning of גמל in Ps 131 [Vg 130]:2b and its influence on the overall interpretation of the Psalm (Konrad Kremser)	-

ISLP

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

16:30–18:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Lexicography and Linguistics 1 22–602 <i>Chair:</i> Richard A. Taylor (Dallas Theological Seminary) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095A	Ghosts, Spirits and Winds – Lexical Gleanings from Mandaic Magic Texts (Matthew Morgenstern)	A Treatise on Homographs attributed to Elias of Nisibis (Sinai Syr X4IN) (Nicolas Atas)	Framing the Use of the Syriac Particle ܐܢܝܢ in the Peshitta Psalms (Godwin Mushayabasa Mhuriyashe)

Wednesday, 08/13/2025

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Lexicography and Linguistics 2 31–603 <i>Chair:</i> Richard A. Taylor (Dallas Theological Seminary) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095A	Reception of ‘Charisma’ in the Early Arabic Translations of the New Testament (Srećko Koralija)	Context-Sensitive Parsers for Syriac: Benchmarks (Zhan Chen)	Evidence for Syriac Bilingualism and Language Contact in the Aramaic Magic Bowls (James Nathan Ford)

Friday, 08/15/2025

14:30–16:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Syriac Bible 2 51–604 <i>Chair:</i> Richard A. Taylor (Dallas Theological Seminary) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095A	The Translation of Adverbs in the Peshitta of Deuteronomy (Logan Copley)	The Syro-Hexaplaric Psalter: A Linguistic and Literary Reassessment (Willem Th. van Peursen)	The Function of the Paronomastic Infinitive in Peshitta Jeremiah (Jerome A. Lund)

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

16:30–18:00	<i>Paper 1</i>	<i>Paper 2</i>	<i>Paper 3</i>
Hebrew Bible 52–605 <i>Chair:</i> Richard A. Taylor (Dallas Theological Seminary) <i>Room:</i> UL6 2095A	Grammatical Parallelism in Job – from a Diachronic Perspective (Mats Eskhult)	A Variationist Sociolinguistic Approach for the Study of Ancient Hebrew Varieties: Potential and Obstacles (Kengoro Goto)	A Semantic Study of אֱלֹהִים in Isaiah: A Dialogic Linguistic Approach (Tiantang Ren)

IOSOT Main Papers: Abstracts

Due to ongoing construction work in the university's main auditorium, the main paper sessions will take place in a smaller lecture hall with a capacity of 180 people (UL6 2094). Additionally, the main papers will be streamed to an adjacent lecture hall (UL6 2091, for 175 people) and online via Zoom. You can join the discussion from wherever you join the session.

Monday, 08/11/2025

Opening Ceremony

CHAIR: ANNETTE SCHELLENBERG-LAGLER (UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA)

Address: Red Town Hall, Rathausstraße 15, 10178 Berlin

18:00–19:00

10

Words of Welcome

Kai Wegner (Governing Mayor of Berlin),

Julia von Blumenthal (President of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Egyptian Demotic Papyri and the Hebrew Bible

Bernd U. Schipper (Humboldt University of Berlin)

10/1

For over a century, Hebrew Bible scholars have looked to Egyptian texts from the second millennium BCE for parallels to biblical literature. Whether wisdom literature, narrative texts, or prophetic literature, the focus has been on Egyptian material from the classical periods of ancient Egypt, such as the New Kingdom with the Ramesside pharaohs.

This lecture presents a new approach on Egypt and the Hebrew Bible, one based on Demotic papyri from Persian and Hellenistic Egypt. After a general introduction, it presents three case studies from prophetic literature, wisdom instructions, and narrative literature. The lecture then closes with some thoughts how Egyptian Demotic papyri can shed new light on the formation of biblical literature.

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

Main Papers I

CHAIR: JULIA RHYDER (HARVARD UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom

09:00–10:40 + 11:20–13:00

20

**Geteiltes Leid : Collective Violence and Memory
in Biblical Accounts of the Babylonian Conquest***Sonja Ammann (University of Basel)*

20/1

The disaster of the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 587 BCE and the painful experience of the exile are familiar themes in biblical literature. Upon closer examination, however, the biblical texts reveal traces of a multifaceted discourse on the memory of these events. This multivocality of biblical texts can be studied as an example of the memorialization of collective violence. Based on detailed analyses of Hebrew and Greek biblical texts, I will explore this process of war memorialization along three main lines: (a) a diachronic development that resulted in a shifting focus on different groups of victims; (b) sectional accounts that may have been preferred by certain local groups over the now dominant narrative; and (c) the normative dimension of emotional representations of the events. I will argue that the multifaceted memory of the Babylonian conquest in biblical texts can be set against changing socio-cultural contexts, and that emotions are prescribed for the present rather than preserved from the past.

**Wie Abraham nach Hebron gekommen ist – vom schwierigen
Geschäft der Datierung alttestamentlicher Texte***Jan Christian Gertz (Ruprecht Karl University of Heidelberg)*

20/2

Die historische Verortung biblischer Texte ist seit über 200 Jahren ein zentrales Anliegen der Bibelwissenschaften. Ihre Datierung beruht auf literarhistorischen Annahmen, die von Hypothesen zur Geschichte Israels und seiner Literatur abhängig sind – ein methodischer Weg, der angesichts der begrenzten Datenbasis mit erheblicher Unsicherheit behaftet bleibt. Literar-, siedlungs- und politische Überlegungen können die Grundlage zwar erweitern, doch auch dann sind in der Regel nur vorläufige Plausibilitätsurteile möglich. Dies verdeutlicht der Abraham-Lot-Zyklus. Diskutiert werden Datierungen anhand der Erwähnung Abrahams in Ez 33,24, der Siedlungsgeschichte von Rāmet el-Ḥalīl und Ḥirbet Nimrā sowie Ansätze, die aus der Textwelt auf die realpolitischen Verhältnisse der Abfassungszeit schließen. Alle diese Zugänge bleiben unsicher, insbesondere die realpolitische Lesart, die leicht die literarische Eigenlogik der Textwelt verkennt.

Cultural Hybridity in Visual Form: Iconographic Traditions of the Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods in the Southern Levant

Katharina Pyschny (University of Graz)

20/3

The material culture of the Southern Levant from the late fifth to the early third century BCE is characterized by dynamic developments shaped through the appropriation and transformation of both Persian and Greek cultural elements. Traditionally, such processes of cultural interaction have been described using terms like “Persianization” and “Hellenization,” which often imply a linear, unidirectional flow of influence. However, recent scholarship has become increasingly critical of the colonial underpinnings and the core-periphery model inherent in these frameworks.

In response, scholars have proposed alternative approaches to cultural contact, foregrounding concepts such as connectivity, interconnectivity, and the potential for mutual exchange. Within this context, the concept of cultural hybridity has gained significant traction, particularly in analyses of visual culture in the ancient Near East. This theoretical lens enables a more nuanced interpretation of typologies, motifs, styles, and techniques, including those associated with ostensibly “local” traditions and contexts.

This lecture employs the concept of cultural hybridity to examine the iconographic material of the Persian and early Hellenistic periods, focusing on key visual media such as terracotta figurines, seals, and coins. It will be demonstrated that neither the objects nor their iconographic motifs can be readily classified within rigid Eastern or Western traditions. Instead, they reveal varying degrees of hybridization, shaped by intercultural contact, trade, prevailing fashions, and shifting sociopolitical influences. Consequently, the early Hellenistic period, as reflected in the material record, should not be regarded as a time of abrupt transformation, but rather as a transitional era characterized by a dynamic interplay of continuity and change.

The Contribution of Recent Excavations in Jerusalem to Biblical Historiography

Yuval Gadot (Tel Aviv University)

20/4

Excavations in and around Jerusalem are consistently interpreted in light of the city’s relatively rich textual sources, which illuminate its political, social, and economic realities in the past. This is particularly true for the period described in the historical books of the Old Testament (10th–5th century BCE), where the integration of material and textual evidence allows for a multi-layered and nuanced reconstruction of Jerusalem as both a royal and sacred city. However, such integration requires critical reading of both types of sources, along with a clear understanding of the limitations of the available evidence.

Although the ancient mound of Jerusalem has been excavated for over a century, it is the extant and methodology of excavations in the past generation – especially the use of independent dating techniques – that have enabled scholars to offer a more detailed and refined reconstruction of Jerusalem during the period of the Judean kings.

This lecture will focus on the period between the 11th and mid-8th centuries BCE. Drawing on both current and past excavations, as well as the results of an absolute dating project, it aims to reconstruct the gradual development that transformed Jerusalem into a wealthy, densely populated, and fortified city – one of the most powerful political entities in the southern Levant during the later part of the Iron Age.

Wednesday, 08/13/2025

Main Papers II

CHAIR: NILI SAMET (BAR ILAN UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom

09:00–10:40 + 11:20–13:00

30

Miriam and the Cushite Woman: Africana Biblical Hermeneutics and the Quest for Liberation after Liberation

Kenneth Ngwa (Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary)

30/1

The narrative of Numbers 12:1–16 revolves around the interactions between Israel's liberation leaders (Moses, Miriam, and Aaron) and an unnamed Cushite woman. Miriam initiates the narrative's interrogation of the prophetic, sapiential, and priestly implications of the Cushite woman's presence within the community. Drawing from the theoretical fields of negritude, womanist, and postcolonial studies, this paper examines Miriam as a catalyst and dialogue partner for Africana biblical hermeneutics attendant to questions of triple consciousness around post-liberation forms of erasure, marginalization, and singularity.

Dalit Feminist Hermeneutics and Biblical Interpretation

Monica Jyotsna Melanchthon (University of Divinity, Melbourne)

30/2

Biblical interpretation and scholarship are primarily concerned with the world behind the text (historical), and the world created by the text (literary). Significant and important as these are, there is tendency among mainstream biblical scholars to be suspicious of or to underplay the contributions made by those readers who privilege the world in front of the text, or the contemporary contexts. Issues that these readings bring to the fore are seen often as a 'postscript' to biblical exegesis and 'scholarly' biblical interpretation. This paper argues for the importance of the experiences, epistemologies, and intersectional and intercultural approaches of marginal readers, especially those seen as the subaltern 'other,' in this instance, Dalit women, women abused, violated and oppressed by India's caste structure. The ethical and emotional component

in their approaches, their emphasis on justice, reconciliation, agency, empowerment and emancipation in their readings, and the resultant insights they offer to our understanding of biblical texts are making profound changes to the manner in which the bible is viewed, its authority assessed, and its contents interpreted. This approach to the Bible stresses that biblical interpretation is both a political and pastoral task. The question before us then is how we might use the best of the tools of biblical criticism and these Dalit interpretive offerings for the revitalization of the biblical studies in general and the church in particular. The presentation will attend to some theoretical, methodological and hermeneutical issues and will offer a reading of a text from a Dalit feminist perspective as illustration.

Measuring Variance in Textual Traditions

Frédérique Michèle Rey (University of Lorraine)

30/3

Textual traditions vary. But how do they vary? How can variance be measured, and how can it be used to accurately assess the distance between two textual witnesses? This presentation aims to propose a categorization, quantification, and qualification of variance between Hebrew manuscripts belonging to the same textual tradition, using the Hebrew manuscripts of Ben Sira as a theoretical model. After reviewing the state of the art, a structured classification of variants is introduced, followed by a methodology for analyzing and quantifying variance between two witnesses, both manually and computationally. The results of the manual analysis are then compared with those of the computational analysis to assess the latter's relevance. Finally, these results are interpreted in terms of textual transmission and manuscript classification. In particular, the study will demonstrate how these findings can provide valuable insights into the practices of ancient scribes.

The Temple Scroll as a Continuation of Priestly Thought

Molly Zahn (Yale University)

30/4

The goal of this paper is to re-imagine the relationship between the Qumran Temple Scroll and the priestly texts of the Hebrew Bible (P, H, and Ezekiel in particular). This relationship has typically been framed rather narrowly, with the Temple Scroll characterized as an exegetical response to the earlier, authoritative scriptural texts. Although the Scroll certainly does engage deeply with earlier materials, I argue that so much focus on how its statutes are derived from biblical texts obscures the distinctiveness of the Scroll's own priestly theology. Drawing on examples from the Scroll's sacrificial calendar and purity regulations, I will suggest that its authors did not view themselves as "interpreting scripture," but as contributing to an ongoing priestly conversation about where, how, and when God's presence could be found. The Temple Scroll thus points the way toward a more integrative view of early Jewish literature that recognizes its deeply hermeneutical nature but avoids marginalizing it as "reception."

Thursday, 08/14/2025

Main Papers III

CHAIR: MARKUS WITTE (HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN)

Room: UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom

09:00–10:40 + 11:20–13:00

40

Isaiah in Asia

Maggie Low (Trinity Theological College)

40/1

This essay discusses four areas of interface between the Book of Isaiah and the author's context as a Chinese Singaporean woman, especially in relation to our Confucianist values: (1) The Asian emphasis on the family co-relates well with the fatherhood of God in Isaiah, but Isaiah's depiction of God's fatherly grace provides a helpful model for the patriarchal Asian family. (2) Isaiah's maternal imagery of God offers a corrective to the Confucian view of women and patriarchal authoritarianism. (3) Isaiah's favourite epithet for God as "the Holy One" fits in with Asia's religious context, but the relational aspect of the Holy One "of Israel" reveals a more personal nature of the Divine. (4) Isaiah's monotheistic faith challenges Singapore's pluralistic society, but the universal message of the Suffering Servant crosses boundaries for the good of all.

Can Body-Imagination Help Us to Overcome Epistemological Injustice when We Encounter Job?

Katherine Southwood (University of Oxford)

40/2

This paper explores the role of body-imagination for interpreting Job's experiences of somatic distress. Body-imagination is imaginative, empathetic attention which is focused on depictions of embodied experience within texts. Body-imagination may be useful for cultivating an intensification in the interpreter's perceptiveness through deepening our appreciation of the aesthetic force and imaginative traction within texts in order to re-humanise characters. It involves an interpretative leap that self-consciously tolerates unknowing, instead of jumping to familiar categories of cognition, when Job describes his corporeal experiences. The paper will argue that body-imagination is important for engaging with Job because the text invites us to engage beyond those detached and intellectual areas of cognition in order to know Job in a more human way. It argues that this is important in Job because of the dangers posed by epistemological injustice which deny Job's capacity as a knower, even of his own body. To avoid the asymmetrical and privileged power dynamics involved in disembodied theorising about Job's pain, body-imagination offers audiences interpretative flexibility by presenting us with multiple opportunities for cognitive and emotional perspective-taking.

How Are We Meant to Understand the Story of Ruth?*Ed Greenstein (Bar-Ilan University)***40/3**

Basic issues regarding the book of Ruth remain unresolved. Linguistically, is it archaizing or truly archaic? Literarily, is it meant to be heard as historiography, a folktale, or a novella? Historically, does it reflect an event or a period? Sociologically, does it represent real practices, a memory of real practices, or ideals? Is it a romantic idyll or a political polemic? How we process the story depends on how we understand it generically. But how we define its genre depends on how authentic or fantastic the story seems and how real or idealized the institutions and practices seem. The historical sense of the story – what it means to us – rests on how we resolve the questions raised above. In this talk, the issues will be laid out and a proposal will be made.

Das Urdeuteronomium und sein historischer Ort*Reinhard Müller (Georg August University of Göttingen)***40/4**

Wie lässt sich die älteste Schicht des Buches Deuteronomium – das ‚Urdeuteronomium‘ – rekonstruieren? Zu welcher Gattung gehört sie? Im Vergleich mit den königlichen Dienst-anweisungen aus dem hethitischen Reich legt sich nahe, dass die im Urdeuteronomium vorherrschenden Formen von Gebot und Verbot auf die Lebensordnung in einem staatlichen Gemeinwesen zielen. Es ist nach wie vor am wahrscheinlichsten, dass das religions- und sozialpolitische Reformprogramm des Urdeuteronomiums im Juda des späten 7. Jahrhunderts entstanden ist.

Friday, 09/15/2025**Main Papers IV**

CHAIR: CARLY L. CROUCH (RADBOUD UNIVERSITY NIJMEGEN)

Room: UL6 2094 (in person), UL6 2091 (livestream), online via Zoom

09:00–10:40 + 11:20–13:00

50**Prayer as “Site of Memory” for Israel and Judah:****The Psalter of the Sons of Korah Revisited***Jorge Blunda (Catholic University of Cordoba)***50/1**

Archaeology and epigraphy have changed our view of the history of Israel and Judah. Only after the fall of the more developed and powerful northern kingdom, was the southern one able to establish itself as a major actor in the region. Judah not only received a massive migration and assimilated its elements primarily in and around Jerusalem, but also adapted and made its own the cultural and historical memory of Israel. While all the books of the Hebrew OT canon can certainly be defined as ‘Judaic literature of the

Second Temple period; it is nevertheless becoming increasingly clear that they largely rework and transmit a literary legacy inherited from the kingdom of Israel. It seems that the time has come to re-read certain texts suspected of northern origin from this point of view in order to discern in them the traces of this process..

“I have opened my doors to the traveler” (Job 31:32): The Social Grammar and Narrative Function of Hospitality in the Hebrew Bible

Anne Katrine de Hemmer-Gudme (University of Oslo)

50/2

Hospitality is both everywhere and nowhere in the Hebrew Bible. It is nowhere, because there is no word for hospitality in Biblical Hebrew, nor are there words for host, guest, or invitation. But hospitality is there in so many Hebrew Bible narratives, as a concept and a theme, as a recognizable and meaningful social setting, in which events may unfold, and often as a social value that is highlighted or negotiated in the texts. Think of Abraham's three divine guests in Gen 18, the two traumatizing stories of hosts, guests and “the men of the city” in Gen 19 and Judg 19, and the overflowing cup put in front of the Psalmist in Ps 23.

This lecture is an anthropological investigation of hospitality in the Hebrew bible. The analysis shows a complex web of socio-cultural values, in which hospitality is sometimes presented as an ultimate and universal value, sometimes merely as nice-to-have and secondary to other socio-cultural concerns. In all instances, however, hospitality is a recognizable type-scene and as such an ideal backdrop for telling tales, both exemplary and horrific, and an ideal literary tool to characterize both people and deities.

Desacralizing Lands and Politics in the Northern Levant

Jan Dušek (Charles University, Prague)

50/3

The Assyrian presence in the Levant weakened during the first half of the eighth century BCE, and the Assyrian rulers had to cope with revolts in their own land (in Ashur 763–762 BCE, in Arrapha 761–760 BCE, in Kalah 746 BCE). At that time, Urartu became an important power in the southwestern Asia and the strongest enemy of the Assyrian kings. By the mid-eighth century BCE, the northern Levant became the region where the interests of both powers, Urartu and Assyria, crossed. The development of this conflict, which resulted in a desacralization of the lands and politics of the local Levantine kingdoms in the last phase of their existence, is reflected in some inscriptions commissioned by the kings of Arpad/Bit Agūsi and Sam'al/Yʿdy. In my paper, I will describe this gradual process as it is reflected in the Aramaic inscriptions from Sefire and in the two Samʿalian inscriptions on the statues of Hadad and Panamuwa II from Sam'al/Yʿdy.

IOSOT Open Sessions: Abstracts

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

Pentateuch

CHAIR: ANDREAS SCHÜLE (UNIVERSITY OF LEIPZIG)

Room: DOR24 1.101

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–001

Connecting themes and concepts between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2–3

Benjamin Kilchör (Staatsunabhängige Theologische Hochschule Basel)

21–001/1

The relationship between Gen 1 and Gen 2–3 is being discussed more openly than before. Are these two independent creation narratives that were connected by secondary editing? Is Gen 2–3 a post-P addition to Gen 1? Or did the three chapters belong together from the beginning?

This paper focuses on some topics and concepts that run through the three chapters but have so far received little attention in the discussion: the giving of names, value judgments (good and bad), blessing and curse.

Gen 2,16–17: Das erste Speisegebot in der Tora? Eine intertextuelle Spurensuche

Jonas Brunner (Staatsunabhängige Theologische Hochschule Basel)

21–001/2

In Gen 2,16–17 begegnet der Leser des Alten Testaments erstmals einer Aussage, die Gott dem Menschen gebietet (צוה). Wie ist dieses erste Gebot, “du sollst nicht essen von dem Baum”, innerhalb der weiteren Gebote der Tora zu verorten? Und was hat es mit dem unerwarteten Zusatz Evas in Gen 3,3, “und rührt (נגח) sie auch nicht an”, auf sich?

Diesen beiden Fragen soll in diesem Short Paper nachgegangen werden. Ausgehend von vier Teilaspekten des in der Garten Eden Perikope genannten Gebots, wird Ausschau nach intertextuellen Bezügen innerhalb der Tora gehalten. Es handelt sich bei den Teilaspekten um die folgenden vier herausgearbeiteten Punkte: 1) Erlaubnis von allem zu essen => Gen 2,16b 2) Einschränkung einer bestimmten Speise => Gen 2,17a 3) Zusatz des Berührens => Gen 3,3b 4) Todesandrohung bei Übertretung des Gebots “damit ihr

nicht sterbt" (Gen 2,17b / Gen 3,3b). Die folgenden Texte dienen anschliessend als "Gesprächspartner": Gen 9,1–5; => Lev 17,10–14; Lev 11,46–47; Lev 11,8; Lev 10,1–7

Diese intertextuelle Spurensuche, welche insb. im Levitikus-Buch stattfindet, wirft einerseits neues Licht auf das Verständnis von Gen 2,16–17 und stellt zugleich Anfragen an die herkömmliche Einstufung von Genesis 2 und Genesis 3 als Nicht-P.

Die Thesen dieses Shortpapers wurden besonders angeregt durch Nihan "From Priestly Tora to Pentateuch" (2007), der darauf hinweist, die israelitischen Speisegebote im Vergleich zur Urgeschichte zu lesen, sowie von Harpers Werk "I Will Walk Among You – The Rhetorical Function of Allusion to Genesis 1–3 in the Book of Leviticus" (2018).

Gen 6:1–4: A mytho-analytical approach to explaining an enigmatic text

Michaela Bauks (University of Koblenz)

21–001/3

Unanimously labelled as a 'mythical text', commentators remain perplexed by the so-called bridge text between creation and flood narratives. The mytho-analytical approach, as developed by the Göttingen MythoS project, has presented a theory and methodology for reconstructing and analysing narrative materials in a transmedial and comparative perspective, that is helpful for the interpretation of the always polystratic mythical texts. The reconstruction and interpretation of the mythical elements at hand, which form a particular myth or Stoff variant, proves the approach to be a useful tool for categorising the enigmatic text section in terms of literary history and evaluating its composition and content. The aim of the paper is to identify the meaning of the individual mythical motifs of Gen 6:1–4 and to interpret them within the primeval context.

Session 2

22–001

"That's What She Said": A Legal and Narrative Analysis of Hagar and Sarah

Riane McConnell (University of St Andrews)

22–001/1

Connections between biblical casuistic law and narratives in Genesis are present but have yet to be explored with a great deal of scholarly attention. Often, matters of hypothetical sourcing, dating, and text reconstruction are the objects of academic pursuits. While chronological objections can keep scholars from observing legal and narrational connections, the syntactic parallels, comparable character identities, and thematic connections allow for a unique interpretation of the women in Genesis 16 and 21 – Sarah and Hagar. Casuistic texts like Exodus 21:1–11, Deuteronomy 15:12–18, and Deuteronomy 21:16–17 highlight the texts' juridical backgrounds, which parallel to Hagar's circumstantial identity as an **הַמָּאָה**, second-wife to Abraham, and mother to Abraham's firstborn. Additionally, Sarah's status as Abraham's first-wife and master of Hagar presents a striking parallel to the master and slave relations exhibited in Exodus 21.

The casuistic narratives considered in this paper will be examined through a narrational lens to examine the function of the lawgiver and the law (s)he presents. I will utilize scholars like Jackson, Wells, and Daube as the foundation for the methodological

construction for this paper. I will argue that the lawgiver implores his(her) listeners to exhibit characteristics of a wise a master (i.e., a bond of loyalty (Ex 21) and a master's generosity upon the release of a slave (Deut 15)). The lawgiver will instruct a man with two wives to refrain from favoritism and provide an ethical inheritance to the hated wife's first-born son (Deut 21), which indirectly comments on Hagar and Ishmael's experience in Genesis 21. Ultimately, this paper will prove that casuistic texts should be read alongside narrative in order to explore the multifaceted characteristics of female identities like Sarah and Hagar.

Jacob, his sons and the people living in the land: a troubled relationship.

Suzana Chwartz (University of São Paulo)

22-001/2

This presentation focuses on an array of instances of Jacob's trajectory as a patriarch, in which he is represented as increasingly weak.

When he is touched by an adversary in *khaf- yerekho* (Gen 32:33) he becomes a crippled man *tsole'a 'al-yerekho* (Gn 32:32) with undeniable sexual/reproductive connotations.

In the following episodes, Jacob's adversaries are his own sons.

In Gen 34, when his only daughter is raped, his only words are about his numeric inferiority and anxieties in relation to the "people living in the land", blaming his sons for his clan's utter destruction if they join forces against him – *wenišmadetti 'ani uveiti* (Gen 34: 30) – while presenting himself as his sons' direct victim, with the affirmation '*akarttem 'oti* (Gen 34:30). This verb, which means to make turbulence, to make muddy is a wordplay with *la'aqor* (to become sterile, to unroot, to cut the back tendon of an animal), employed throughout Genesis narratives to designate the matriarchs as barren.

The accusation against his sons takes an even more personal tone in Gen 42: 36, with the affirmation '*oti šikalttem*, when *škl* is a verb closely related to the radical '*qr* in the Hebrew Bible. In Gen 49:5–7, Jacob explicitly employs the verb *la'aqor* : *ki be'apam hargu 'iš*, *ubirtsonam 'iqqru-šor*. Here *la'aqor* means to cut the back tendon of an animal, diminishing his vital strength, and by making reproduction by mounting impossible, indirectly rendering it sexually impotent and infertile.

If we consider that the the man killed in Gen 34 is *ḥamor*, the ruler of the Hivites and representative of his people, an interesting paralel would be apparent: *hargu ḥamor/ 'iqqru šor*. The death of *ḥamor*, the ass – which can simbolyze the people living in the land– incurs in the mutilation of the ox – which can simbolyze the Israelite, an equation which ressonates to this very day, with an ironic twist when Jacob renders Shimon's and Levi's swords as *klei ḥamas*.

Former Prophets

CHAIR: VERONIKA BIBELRIETHER (UNIVERSITY OF ERLANGEN – NUREMBERG),
DAVID TSUMURA (JAPAN BIBLE SEMINARY)

Room: DOR24 1.102

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21-002

Theophanic Counterparts: A Narratological Study in Characterization and Identity Between the *שר־עב־יהוה* (Josh 5:14) and the *מלאך יהוה* (Exod 3:2)

Derek Frederickson (Duke University)

21-002/1

In Exodus und Eisodus: Komposition und Theologie von Josua 1–5, Joachim Krause makes a convincing argument that “there is a deliberate literary relationship between Joshua 5:13–15 and Exodus 3:1ff ... at every level of analysis.” In both passages, the “commander of the army of Yhwh” and the “messenger of Yhwh” issue a nearly identical imperative to their conversation partners to remove their footwear because the place where they stand is “holy” (Josh 5:15/Exod 3:5). However, commentators have often given exclusive attention to how this literary relationship serves to characterize Joshua as another Moses without considering whether the parallel might also serve to characterize the “Commander” (*שר־עב־יהוה*; Josh 5:14) as another “Messenger” (*מלאך יהוה*; Exod 3:2) – perhaps even as the same character. To supply this lack, this paper will argue that the implied author of Joshua 5:13–15 fashions the Commander at the discourse level to be not only what Benjamin Sommer refers to as a “small-scale manifestation” of Yhwh, but also (by way of a second-degree), a “smaller-scale” manifestation of the Messenger of Exodus 3 – the Messenger’s unique theophanic counterpart. The latter claim is not an ontological or metaphysical claim but a narratological and literary one. This paper is an interdisciplinary study that combines insights from recent bodies of God scholarship with narratological and intertextual approaches to character analysis.

Fathers, Daughters, Oaths, and Commitments: An Analysis of the Structure of the Book of Judges and Its Contribution to Understanding the Book’s Meaning

Orit Avnery (Shalem College and Shalom Hartman Institute)

21-002/2

The literary editing of the Book of Judges was shaped by a distinct ideological perspective. Three stories interwoven throughout the book – at its opening, middle, and conclusion – deal with the relationship between a father and his daughter.

The book begins with the story of Achsah, Caleb, and Othniel, a narrative also recounted in the Book of Joshua. Later, the stories of Jephthah and his daughter and, at the book’s conclusion, readers encounter the concubine, her father, and the Levite. The dynamics between the father (Caleb, Jephthah, and the concubine’s father) and the

daughter (Achsah, Jephthah's daughter, and the concubine), as well as the role and portrayal of the third party – the spouse – reflect societal conditions, more broadly, and the moral state of society, in particular.

Various motifs link these three stories, and reading them together reveals an intriguing ideological theme within the Book of Judges. One recurring element in all three stories is the issue of a commitment or oath, particularly as it relates to the daughters' lives. In my lecture, I will analyze how this motif appears in each of the stories: where it arises, its content, and how it sheds light on the father and his relationship with his daughter. I will connect this discussion to the broader comparative analysis of the stories and the overall ideological themes of the book.

Session 2

22-002

"... Everyone Did as He Pleased" (Jud 17:6; 21:25): Depicting Biblical Chaos

Nili Wazana (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

22-002/1

The two final stories in the book of Judges are framed by the phrase "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did as he pleased" (Jud. 17:6; 21:25), or in a shorter form, "in those days there was no king in Israel" (Jud. 18:1; 19:1). These stories, which unfold in a sequence of events beginning with the wandering of an individual Levite and leading to the fate of entire tribes (Benjamin and Dan), are considered an appendix to the book, distinct from the typical sin-enemy-deliverance-peace cycle that dominates most of Judges.

In this paper, I will demonstrate how these stories portray chaos by completely reversing the expected norms of retribution. For instance, Micah replaces his son with a Levite as priest in his house of God, convinced that "the Lord will prosper me" in return (Judg. 17:13), but his plan fails for no clear reason. The people of Dan steal Micah's priest and household gods, and succeed in establishing their own cultic center. The concubine played the harlot, yet her husband goes after her to woo her and to win her back (Jud. 19:3). The Israelites gather at Bethel, asking God whether they should fight the Benjaminites. The answer is affirmative, but they fail. Eventually, the Israelites succeed in exterminating the tribe of Benjamin, only to mourn the destruction of an entire tribe. The response of the Israelites to the rape of one woman leads to the rape of 600 others.

The details of these absurd stories illustrate a biblical version of the saying, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions."

Is there a covenant making in 1 Samuel 10:25?

Michael Avioz (Bar-Ilan University)

22-002/2

Thirty-Five years ago, Zafira Ben Barak has published a paper on 1 Sam. 10:25, where she argues that "The Mizpah covenant served as the basis for a new regime in Israel, the Monarchy, and became the ancient source and prototype of the Israelite monarchic covenants down the generations". Some scholars followed Ben Barak while others disagreed.

However, no thorough examination of her method was offered in previous research. In the following paper, I will revisit the arguments put forward by Ben Barak and claim that this verse does not contain evidence for covenant making.

Military Strategy and Disinformation in 1 Samuel 13–14

Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer (ALT School of Theology)

22–002/3

The need to obtain accurate information is an important aspect of any warfare. This is also true for the military descriptions in 1–2 Samuel. To optimise the outcome of an impending battle, army leaders consult priests who are armed with a variety of tools of divination. The military commanders also depend on securing pertinent and accurate information from human beings, yet this is often easier said than done. The present study deals predominantly with the notion of disinformation, namely, the war strategy of deliberately spreading false information with the explicit purpose of misleading the enemy. Disinformation is prevalent in the descriptions of warfare in 1–2 Samuel. I shall explore the final form of 1 Samuel 13–14 (MT) and highlight how it can be fruitfully read as a story of disinformation with its disastrous military and human consequences. A few of these cases of disinformation may be the result of conflated textual traditions. In other words, the disinformation is not part of the earliest textual layers, but only becomes a literary feature in the merging of originally independent texts. Yet, in the final form, the resulting dissonances, contradictions, and factual discrepancies deepen the characterisation of Saul and Jonathan and enhance the representations of their conflict.

Isaiah

CHAIR: REINHARD G. KRATZ (GEORG AUGUST UNIVERSITY OF GÖTTINGEN)

Room: DOR24 1.103

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–031

A Fresh Approach to Isaiah 22:1b–8a

Hugh Williamson (University of Oxford)

21–031/1

Whatever unity Isaiah 22:1–14 may display does not derive from its being a single composition. The changes in person, the chronological inconsistency, whereby vv. 8b–11a have to be understood as prior to 1b–8a, and the switches in literary style strongly imply that we here have at least something of a compilation. On the other hand, there is good evidence for believing that the writing comes predominantly from the late eighth century in terms of historical setting. The first half of the passage shows unevenness within itself (especially in relation to v. 4), and although it is now clearly applied to Jerusalem

there are features within these verses that suggest it cannot first have been written with Jerusalem in view. The proposal that it refers to the battle of Kish (Gallagher and Roberts) is not probable. Taking geographical and military factors into account, this paper will suggest an alternative original setting, and this in turn sheds light on the nature of the compilation of the passage as a whole.

**Justice and Righteousness in Isa 28–33. A Contribution to
the Redaction and Composition History of the Book of Isaiah**
Ulrich Berges (Rhenish Friedrich Wilhelm University of Bonn)

21-031/2

Wie in kaum einem anderen biblischen Buch spielt das Thema „Recht und Gerechtigkeit“ im Justice and Righteousness play an important role in the Book of Isaiah. The central lexemes run like a red thread through all parts of this prophetic scripture. The lecture concentrates on the chapters 28–33, which are considered partly as very old, partly as very young layers in the redaction history of Isaiah. Without doubt the theme of justice proves to be a central component of the post-exilic continuation, which is of great importance not only for this textual collection, but also for the editorial and composition history of the book of Isaiah as a whole. The intra- and intertextual references are very illuminating and allow conclusions to be drawn about the authors and editors who, from their post-exilic perspective, make the book what it is in the end, the “vision of Isaiah” about the just rule enforced by YHWH, which reaches out to all nations. Many major lines of the book of Isaiah, such as the theology of Zion, the idea of the remnant, the power of YHWH in history, are bundled in these chapters from the perspective of Justice and Righteousness. Methodologically, a diachronically reflected synchrony proves to be expedient in order to come a step closer to the editing and composition processes of the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 35 Revisited

Ronnie Goldstein (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

21-031/3

The paper will discuss anew the meaning of Isaiah 35 and its relationship to the similar material elsewhere in the Bible. The chapter is particularly close to several passages in Second Isaiah (and in Jeremiah), which describe the miraculous return to Zion. It has garnered attention especially since the seminal monograph by Steck (1985), who viewed Isaiah 35 as an imitation of Deutero-Isaiah, which was intended to serve as a bridge between the first part of the book and its second part. This view has been (partially) accepted by various scholars. The paper will reconsider the precise relationship between those materials, and the place of the prophecy in the present sequence.

The main focus of the paper will be on the philological analysis of some of the exegetical issues within the passage, offering new interpretations of a number of details. It will also consider extra-biblical parallels to the chapter, some of them previously unidentified. As a consequence, the meaning of the passage, its place in the present sequence of the book, and its relationship to other passages in the book of Isaiah, and their Sitz im Leben, will be reevaluated.

Incantation Parodies in the Book of Isaiah*Juliane Eckstein (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)*

22-031/1

With the expansion of the Assyrian Empire during the 8th and 7th centuries BCE, healing rituals proliferated across Mesopotamia, the Levant, and beyond. Libraries in prominent cities such as Nineveh and Assur contained diagnostic and prognostic handbooks alongside ritual texts. Among the most solemn and comprehensive rituals was the Maqlû (“burning”) Incantation Series, a standard text in Babylonian-Assyrian scribal education. Despite the considerable variation in individual incantations within the series, they adhere to a limited set of recurring elements, establishing a distinct and recognizable genre. Some of these elements appear in Proto-Isaiah, suggesting the conscious adaptation of this genre, possibly as a form of parody. This paper offers a brief introduction to the Maqlû ritual, identifies the primary components of its incantations, and delineates the defining characteristics of the genre. It further examines Proto-Isaian texts that incorporate elements of the Maqlû genre, analyzing how these components were integrated and transformed in the process. The study concludes by considering the implications of this incorporation for the interpretation and dating of the Proto-Isaian texts.

You are my witnesses (Isaiah 43:9): Between Trial Witnesses and Covenant Keepers*Orit Malka (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)*

22-031/2

You are my witnesses (Isaiah 43:9): Between Trial Witnesses and Covenant Keepers Isaiah 43 depicts an assembly of all nations, where the people of Israel are called as witnesses in what has long been interpreted in scholarship as a courtroom scene anchored in a contemporary legal framework. According to this perception, Yahweh himself is on trial, with the people of Israel testifying in His favor. This view is somewhat ambiguous as the opposing party are not other deities but other nations, who are challenged to bring their own (presumably false) witnesses to testify on their behalf.

Contrary to this traditional view, this paper proposes a different reading of the scene. It argues that the call for witnesses is not intended to resolve a factual controversy but rather signifies oath-swearing and covenantal undertaking. This interpretation draws on the role of witnesses in establishing oaths and sworn obligations in biblical and ancient near eastern legal thought. According to this proposed reading, the designation of “witnesses” in this chapter refers not to testifying witnesses but to ratifying witnesses, akin to their role in Joshua 24.

Ways Through the Wilderness: Poetics and Problematics in the Study of Isaiah*Rebekah Van Sant (University of Oxford)*

22-031/3

This paper examines the impact of the “prophecy-fulfilment model” in studies of the book of Isaiah, identifying it as central to supersessionist and typological readings of the

Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (Boulton, 2013). It explores how intertextual approaches to Isaiah have been shaped by this history, focusing on the emergence of the “New Exodus” concept in twentieth-century Isaiah scholarship and its framing of Isaiah as engaging directly with Exodus, Numbers, and Psalms (Zillesen, 1903; Fischer, 1929; Anderson, 1962).

Using the wilderness motif in Isaiah 35 and examples from Second Isaiah (40–55), I suggest that approaches not focused on reading Isaiah in light of other biblical texts tend to underscore the rhetorical complexity and ambiguity of Isaiah’s prophetic oracles (Barstad, 1989; Tiemeyer, 2011). In contrast, many intertextual approaches, which interpret Isaiah as engaging in polemic or dialogue with texts such as Psalms, Exodus, Numbers, or Lamentations, often construct hierarchical relationships between Isaiah’s motifs and those of other texts (Talmon, 1966; Sommer, 1998; Fishbane, 1985). These approaches frequently emphasize triumphalism in Second Isaiah, downplaying ambiguities surrounding prophecy and fulfilment.

This paper argues that the transformation of the wilderness in Isaiah, contrary to many of these approaches, does not form a typological or polemical relationship to other texts or traditions. Instead, the motif highlights the rhetorical ambiguity of the prophetic oracles, particularly regarding the nature and process of restoration after exile.

Psalms

CHAIR: BEAT WEBER

Room: DOR24 L205

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–041

The Conflict Myth Narrative Structure as a Template for the Ordering of the Hebrew Bible Psalter

Clayton Mills (University of St Andrews)

21–041/1

This study explores the structure of the Book of Psalms and its relationship to the narrative of the Ancient Near East Conflict Myth, examining concepts of kingship, transfer of power, and creative sovereignty as understood through imagery of water. I first examine how the structure of the Psalter shares similar themes with many representations of the Conflict Myth that are prevalent in the poetry of the Ancient Near East. I then demonstrate that within the Psalter itself, this thematic imagery serves as guide map to the replacement of the failing human monarchy with a divine one. The language of the Conflict Myth is concentrated in Book 3 of the Psalter, and signals a development in its own internal presentation of kingship and the nature of sovereignty. This trajectory culminates in the Enthronement Psalms (Ps. 93–99), and marks a significant development within the theological and political ideology of the Psalms. I conclude with observations about the importance of this ideological shift within the

Psalter, and the use of parallels with the literature of the Ancient Near East to convey it. Though this ideological development within the Psalter has been noted previously, this paper offers a new perspective and new language with which to engage in discussion about its structure and composition.

War cries and peans in the Psalms
Sophie Ramond (Catholic University of Paris)

21-041/2

The aim of the paper is to explore the fact that psalms, or ancient hymns inserted into more recent compositions, may contain war cries, war songs celebrating the glory of the victor, or war cries as the army prepares to attack, even deprecating hymns intended to ward off danger (e.g. Ps 81). These various songs or warlike acclamations are similar to the paean, the war hymn that precedes or concludes a battle and which is well known in Greek civilisation.

**„Sie strauchelten und fielen ...“ (Ps 27,2).
 Irreguläre w-SK-Formen in althebräischer Poesie?**
Johannes Schiller (University of Graz)

21-041/3

Für eine konsistente Beschreibung des althebräischen Verbalsystems stellt die Abfolge von Sätzen mit SK und w-SK in der Poesie eine Herausforderung dar, da erstere dem perfektiven Aspekt zugeordnet werden, während letztere regelmäßig für imperfektiven Aspekt stehen. Um diese w-SK-Formen nicht einfach – wie in manchen Grammatiken – als irregulär zu betrachten, bewähren sich Versuche, diese als gleichzeitig zum Kontext einzuordnen, ebenso wie die Erklärung als elliptischer Konstruktion, wodurch die koordinierte SK-Form den Vordersatz weiterführt, ohne dessen perfektiven Aspekt zu verlassen. Dass die poetische Gestaltung von Texten durch z.B. häufige Parallelismen darüber hinaus die Möglichkeit bietet, die Grenzen des Sagbaren auch auf der Ebene der verwendeten Verbformen auszuloten, soll darüber nicht vergessen werden. Der Beitrag versucht, die verschiedenen aktuellen Perspektiven zusammenzuschauen und für die Auslegung exemplarischer Psalmen fruchtbar zu machen.

Session 2

22-041

Polyphony of Existential Interpretations in Psalms 35–41
Judith Gärtner (University of Rostock)

22-041/1

Psalms 35–41 describe a process that, in the prayer from Ps 35 to Ps 41, fundamentally describes existential interpretations of the individual in the face of severe life crises. These texts thus offer an examination of serious illness, experiences of social isolation, injustice, economic hardship and psychological suffering. They reflect in depth the ambivalences that people experience in crises, wrestling with experiences of powerlessness that they try to shape or endure. Psalms 35–41 are characterized by the fact that

they approach these issues in very different ways. Ps 35 is a lament in legal distress, Ps 36 reflects on the potential for evil in every human being. Ps 37 is a wisdom teaching and describes how to live as a righteous person despite the injustice in the world. Ps 38 deals with serious illness, Ps 39 reflects on the suffering of broken relationships. Ps 40 complements a supplication of an oppressed poor person who remembers an earlier experience of deliverance, and Ps 41 complements a wisdom reflection of lament and hope for deliverance.

The group of Psalms 35–41 is closely linked to each other through complex linguistic references. The lamentations in Ps 35, 38 41 are connected to the wisdom Psalms in Ps 36, 37 and 39 by a variety of textual references. And Ps 40, which is originally a song of thanksgiving, has been expanded to include elements lament, so that in this way it is also closely interwoven with the group of psalms. This creates a composed polyphony that forms the conclusion of the first book of Psalms. The following paper aims to trace this process of composed polyphony and to explore the compositional lines of the Psalter at the end of the first book of Psalms.

Dressing up Yhwh as Warrior in Psalm 76

David Ray (University of Divinity, St Francis College)

22–041/2

Whilst there are scattered references to deities depicted as being clothed or girded by their patrons to demonstrate strength and virility in antiquity, there are relatively few such comparable references in the Hebrew Bible. A most important exception is found in Zion Psalm 76, in which the Psalmist describes the majestic appearance of God to judge the adversary. In particular, God is depicted as being girded (חָגַר) with a “remnant of rage” of national enemies of Israel (v10). In contrast to instances where clothing is used as a relatively plain metaphor to describe God’s character in abstract terms, the image of God girded with raging enemies is treated as written clothing (Barthes, 1983), from which explicit and implicit messages are extracted. Those messages are complemented with a reading of the Psalm within the Asaph tradition, with an eye to comparable ANE texts. First, Psalm 76 draws on the image of Yhwh as a man of war in Exodus 15. Second, appearance and girding language used in the Psalm is both consistent with Neo-Assyrian clothing ceremony, by which handmade cultic objects became divine and kings became vassals thereof, and also comparable to “garments of anger” in other ANE texts. Third, variants in the heading of the Psalm provide some evidence of an intent to contrast the divine warrior with a mocked enemy – a reversal of what is expected of an Assyrian god and king. Fourth, the symbols of victory in Psalm 76 are reversed against the mocked Psalmist in the succeeding individual Psalm 77, devastated at the absence of God. This juxtaposition of Asaphite praise and lament manifests a new realisation of a past event with strong emotive effect, leaving only a trace of the redactors’ creativity – a counter-image of what divine justice is expected to deliver.

An un(w)holy stone leading to Spiritual transformation.**Reading Mark 12:1–12 in the light of Psalm 118:22–23***Lodewyk Sutton (University of the Free State)***22–041/3**

Psalm 118 is one of the New Testament's most alluded and cited psalms. The number varies from scholar to scholar and how they exegetically approach and interpret the texts. These quotations and allusions to Psalm 118 depict and communicate many contexts in the New Testament, from the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem to Jesus' confrontation with authorities and those at the temple. A direct quotation from Psalm 118:22–23 (an exact quotation from the LXX) is used in the famous parable of "The Vineyard", also called the parable of "The Wicked Tenants". The sources for this parable are Mark 12:1–12, Matthew 21:33–46, Luke 20:9–19, and The Gospel of Thomas 65–66. This contribution focuses on the intertextual use of Psalm 118:22–23 in the version of Mark 12:1–12, reading the text from a spatial and social critical perspective. The spatial relation of the stone concerning its position and interpretation in contexts of the social values of holy and unholy produces new insight into its understanding in Psalm 118 and its later reception within Mark 12:1–12.

Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemia, Esther

CHAIR: NN

Room: UL6 3053

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–043**I Can Fix Him, No Really I Can: Good Rule in Chronicles***Haley Kirkpatrick (University of St Andrews)***21–043/1**

As with the book of Kings, Chronicles offers an evaluation of the kings therein, offering up its own paradigm for good rule. Incorporating broader ancient Near East kingship imagery, the Chronicler develops his own picture of both good and bad rule in Israel / Judah. Studies on the kings described in the books of Chronicles have tended to focus more on the role (or reworked role) of the kings or the relationship of the account of the kings in comparison with their Samuel / Kings counterparts. This paper will compare and contrast the accounts of both David's and Manasseh's reigns by identifying and analysing aNE kingship imagery therein, as well as the implicit and explicit critiques of their rule. The Chronicler paints a picture of good rule through his work on David and Manasseh that uses the aNE paradigm of good rule, while at the same time using that paradigm in manner that is unique to Hebrew Bible.

Qualified Continuity: Idolatry and the Temple Vessels in the Book of Chronicles

Francisco Martins (Pontifical Gregorian University)

21-043/2

The account of the fall of Jerusalem in the Book of Chronicles mentions the despoliation of the temple vessels. In contrast to its Vorlage (2 Kings 24–25), Chronicles is filled with a sense of forward-looking continuity; the cultic paraphernalia serves as a symbol of the postexilic restoration. Yet, according to 2 Chronicles 36, that continuity does not extend backward; the vessels taken to Babylon were not those produced under king Solomon. To explain the discrepancy with 2 Kings 24–25, the paper discusses the Chronicler's understanding of idolatry and studies its effects. The comparison between the accounts of the reforms of Jehoash and Hezekiah shows that, for the Chronicler, the misuse of the temple vessels in the ritual worship of foreign deities demands their substitution. Probing the reason for this, the paper proposes that the Chronicler could have been influenced by an early exegetical tradition, reflected in the Damascus Document, that promoted a more stringent interpretation of Deuteronomy 7:25.

Tensions and Assimilations between “YHWH's Torah” and “Moses' Torah” in Ezra-Nehemiah

Zhenshuai Jiang (Shandong University)

21-043/3

In Ezra-Nehemiah, the notion of Torah serves as a foundational element of the narrative, with much of the scholarly discussion focusing on the relationship between the “Torah” and the Pentateuch. However, the term “Torah” is sometimes referred to as “YHWH's Torah” (תּוֹרַת יְהוָה) and at other times as “Moses' Torah” (תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה) in Ezra-Nehemiah. These varying formulations have not received enough attention they deserve. This paper will explore these formulations through a diachronic comparison of “YHWH's Torah” and “Moses' Torah,” both terminologically and thematically, within the broader narrative context of the Persian period. It will argue that these variations reflect distinct social and intellectual powers in the authorization of the Torah, indicating the complex dynamics involved in the development of the notion of divine law.

Session 2

22-043

Ezra 2 as Grafted and Molded Ways of Thinking with a Twist

Kristin Joachimsen (MF-Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society)

22-043/1

Much research on Ezra-Nehemiah has dealt with issues of historicity and identity negotiation.

While much of the narratives are unanimously considered historically inaccurate, most scholars take the tension between the returnees from Babylon to Judah and those who remained in Judah when others left as reflecting a socio-historical reality. Also, much energy has been spent scrutinizing the historicity of the various archival documents that are embedded with narratives, like inventories of people (including genealogies), lists (places and objects), letters (imperial decrees and diplomatic correspondence), books,

and laws, which appear in different versions in EN. In this regard, value-laden terms like inauthentic, fabricated, forged, etc., have been applied. With increased attention paid to the imperial context of EN, the paper seeks to reframe the discussion by focusing on matters of mimesis, referring to repeated performances, enactments, or re-representation that challenges the convention by negating or impairing it (Seligman/Weller 2021) and belonging, as an alternative to the contested concept of identity. While the imperial setting complicates identity negotiation, belonging broadens the analytical repertoire by explicating the complexity of local groups and the composite relationship and interaction between local groups and the Empire. Belonging embraces social relations, like commonality, reciprocity, and attachments, and is part of more extensive hierarchical and stratifying processes, complexly interwoven with the different power operations. This paper will apply the genealogical records and census list in Ezra 2 as a case. While genealogies and census lists might be used to redefine an ideal entity, “Israel”, it will be argued that this extends further than the exclusive interpretation often assumed. Besides, while Eskenazi (2023:193) claims that “The most obvious and undisputed purpose of the list(s) is legitimation,” the list also implies a critique, as what is at stake, is not how the community is constituted, but how it should be.

Temple Restoration in Ezra 1–6: How does it contribute to the cultic-political debates of the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods?

Louis Jonker (Stellenbosch University)

22–043/2

Scholars nowadays acknowledge that various biblical literature formation processes in the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods were in serious debate with one another. This resulted into bidirectional influence in the formation and finalisation of some biblical corpora. This paper will investigate how the narrative about Temple restoration and the role of the clergy in Ezra 1–6 interacted with other biblical corpora, particularly Chronicles and Ezekiel 40–48, in the late formation processes of the Hebrew Bible.

Religions of Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East

CHAIR: FELIX HAGEMEYER (UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG),

DAVIDE D'AMICO (UNIVERSITY OF LORRAINE)

Room: DOR24 1.201

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–007

The Babylonian Oracle Procedure: Theory and Practice

Netanel Anor (University of Hamburg)

21–007/1

This paper focuses on a series of manuals containing instructions regarding an ancient Babylonian ceremony, a ceremony during which the entrails of sacrificial lambs were inspected for the purpose of oracle. These sources, usually referred to as the Extispicy

Rituals, extensively elaborate on different practical aspects of the oracle procedure by providing descriptions of the sequences of sacrificial offerings and the purification acts performed during the ritual. The first part of the presentation will address problems that concern the roles of the seer and his client in this ceremony, clarifying its setting, in time and space, based on study of these newly edited ancient manuals. The second part of the presentation will focus on the intellectual challenges, raised by the ritual's special setting. It will assess the role of these handbooks of the seer in the process of providing the answer of the gods to their client's question. It will discuss the degree to which knowledge about this mode of communication with the gods was considered esoteric and restricted only to scholars initiated into the discipline. The role of astrology in this religious ceremony will also be discussed here.

**Napishtu of the gods of Mesopotamia –
and the nephesh of YHWH in the Hebrew Bible?**

Desiree Zecha (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)

21-007/2

In the Hebrew Bible, the nephesh of YHWH is mentioned 19 times. All references stand in connection with YHWH, mostly in prophetic (and negative) contexts. Twice YHWH swears by his nephesh (Jer 51:14 and Am 6:8). Interpretations of these passages have always differed. YHWH's nephesh is usually associated, analogous to the anthropological interpretation of nephesh (often in metonymic use), with high emotionality, strong attachment or aversion, a relative pronoun or even "soul". Despite this controversy the nephesh of YHWH has been studied surprisingly rarely in research literature.

The paper poses the question of the precise understanding of the nephesh of God, combining three perspectives: Evidence in the Ancient Near East, in which the *napishtu* of gods occurs more frequently than often assumed, the perception of ritual dimensions in those texts, and the perception of the physical dimension of the term analogous to other terms (*leb* or *r'osh*).

In Akkadian texts the term *napištu* of gods refers mostly to their throat: Marduk cuts Tiamat's throat (Enūma Eliš IV 103f.), Ninurta kills Emmešarra by cutting the throat (BM 47530/K 20957 line 10), and gods take an oath by touching the throat (E.E. VI 98). That the latter was well-known in the Hebrew Bible can be shown by idiomatic statements in uncertain situations: *we'asim naphshi becapi* – "and I put my nephesh (= throat) in the palm of my hand" (Judg 12.3; 1Sam 19.5; 1Sam 28.21; Job 13.14). The biblical authors relate this human action to YHWH: when YHWH swears by his nephesh he actually puts his palm to his throat. Especially in the book of Jeremiah, (nine references to the nephesh of YHWH) symbolism including body part plays a major role. I propose therefore that nephesh especially in this context should more often be understood concretely (throat) rather than metaphysically (life, vitality etc.).

A deity list or liturgy? KTU1.102 reconsidered
Shirly Natan-Yulzary (Gordon College of Education)

21-007/3

Tablet KTU 1.102 features a ritual text divided into two distinct parts. Lines 1–14 correspond to a sacrificial ritual text (KTU 1.39:13–19). Lines 15–28 display unique characteristics, with each lexeme combining a verbal form and a theophoric element. Pardee interprets these lines as a list of deities' names, with three names also appearing in another sacrificial text (KTU1.106:3–5; Pardee 2002:20, 54–55). He suggests these names may represent a divine genealogy or hypostases of deities (Pardee 2000:522–526; 2002:19–20). Conversely, del Olmo Lete views them as royal names and notes an artificial concentric pattern (del Olmo Lete 2014:138–140).

However, several factors challenge the interpretation of these lines as a list of divine or royal names. The passage features numerous repetitions, the verbal elements likely have specific significance, no ritual instructions are present, and sacrificial animals are absent. This suggests that lines 15–28 might represent a liturgical passage rather than a deity or royal name list.

In my lecture I will reexamine KTU 1.102, within a broader context – particularly in light of KTU 1.106 and KTU1.39, and also in light of KTU 1.65, which shares similar features with KTU 1.102. Namely, it too contains two different sections: the first half includes a list of deities, which appear almost exactly in KTU 1.40, repeating several times; the second half of KTU 1.65 contains a list of lexemes that seemingly are theophoric names. Scholars have already discussed this text and proposed various liturgical functions for it (Ginsberg 1936:88; Oberman 1936; Gaster 1937; Avishur 1989; cf. Amzallag and Yona 2014). In addition to philological and literary tools, a new literary examination reveals an intentional and meaningful structure in ll.15–28. Further contextual and comparative examination of KTU 1.102 will yield clues to its practical uses and role. Other textual sources, whose content, structure or form may be reminiscent of this text, will be briefly discussed. This research may shed new light on the meaning and function of KTU 1.102:15–28 and on Ugaritic scribal and cultic practices.

Session 2

22-007

**Playing for God? Scenic Processes in Divine-Human
 Communication: A Case Study of *פִּיֵּל וְיֵר* Pi'el and Jer 27f**
Judith Filitz (University of Augsburg)

22-007/1

If the human being is a “homo ludens” and the origin of culture is rooted in play, as Johan Huizinga proposed in 1938, this concept also extends to religious processes and acts, enabling a communication between humans and deities. In relation to the Hebrew Bible, several questions emerge: Do the texts describe religious or cultic acts that involve play or playful elements? How can such acts and their inherent performativity be adequately described? What is the significance of play in religious activity?

This paper examines the concept of performativity in public acts of divine-human communication described in the Hebrew Bible. For this purpose, the method of “scenic processes,” as developed by theatre scholar Andres Kotte, will be used. This method facilitates the analysis of the relationship between the components of presentation/ostentation and play. The advantage of this approach is that it does not necessitate a distinction between artistic and ritual or cultic actions, nor does it rely on anachronistic terms (such as theatre or performance art), thereby allowing the description and analysis of performative and scenic processes in ancient cultures. A central question is whether scenic processes involving play are present in the Hebrew texts, or, alternatively, why they might be absent. Specific examples include institutional play, expressed by the verb *שחק/צחק* *Pi'el* (e.g., Judg 16:25, 27; 2Sam 6:5, 21; Prov 8:30f), as well as the so-called prophetic sign-acts, such as those performed by Jeremiah with the yokes (Jer 27f). This approach, inspired by Theatre Studies and Biblical Performance Criticism, offers a fresh perspective on the forms and functions of publicly staged communication between deities and humans, as well as the role of (religious resp. cultic) play in the Hebrew Bible and Israelite religion.

Sukkot and the Kingship of God

Oliver Dyma (University of Münster)

22-007/2

This paper examines the relationship between God's kingship and the Sukkot festival. The concept of God's kingship constitutes a central theme in Old Testament discourse on God. This “root metaphor” (Mettinger) generates a network of related metaphors, providing the underlying framework for various motifs and concepts. It is mythologically rooted in God's victory over the primordial flood, firmly establishing the created order (cf. Psalm 29). God is king over Israel, having delivered it from Egypt (cf. Exod 15) and providing victory over historical enemies, often depicted using mythical imagery. As king of the whole world, he will ultimately demonstrate his sovereignty at the end of times in the final judgment.

The paper argues that the festival of Sukkot celebrated God as king, highlighting his dominion over the cosmic waters. Water rituals, such as libations, symbolically sustained the cosmic water cycle, ensuring rainfall and agricultural fertility, with Zion and the Jerusalem Temple serving as the focal point of this divine kingship. The Babylonian Talmud further preserves mythical aspects of Sukkot, associating it with the containment of primordial waters, essential for cosmic stability.

Zechariah 14 envisions the period following the eschatological judgment as marked by an annual celebration of Sukkot, during which all nations honor YHWH as king. Connections to the cosmic water cycle are clear. The priestly Flood narrative (Gen 6–9*) already appears to be oriented toward the timing of the Sukkot festival, embedding symbolic references to Sukkot within its calendrical structure.

New Testament texts reference Sukkot imagery in connection with messianic expectations (John 7–8) and the eschatological visions of divine kingship in Revelation. Sukkot is a celebration of God's kingship, bridging creation, history, and eschatology.

**On the language of the concept of praise God in
the Hebrew Bible: A critical synthesis of the state of the art**

Marcus Joubert (Stellenbosch University)

22–007/3

The praise of God is a central activity of religious expressions in the Hebrew Bible. The variety of so-called praise words in Biblical Hebrew and other ancient Semitic languages has been pointed out (Gerstenberger 2014:30). Some important “praise” words have been investigated in great detail. However, up to date, no scholarly attempt has been made to describe the concept of praise from the perspective of all the lexical options available to express this concept. This paper aims to critically evaluate all the possible “praise” words in the relevant resources for the study of Biblical Hebrew words and integrate all the findings to determine the gaps in our knowledge about the concept of praise. Additionally, this project seeks to demonstrate not only the gaps in our knowledge but also the reasons for the state of the art. Developments in “schools” of linguistic thought are used to contextualise the theoretical linguistic models and methodologies adopted in the existing literature and how they shape our understanding of the concept of praise in Biblical Hebrew. Cognitive Linguistics (CL) places high value on principled qualitative and quantitative analysis as a means to uncover meaningful patterns in language that give us insight into the way speakers of a language conceptualise their world. It is suggested that the paradigms and methodologies of CL, itself a refinement of the historical-philological approach to meaning (Geeraerts 2010), provide us with a way forward to address the gaps in the literature. Ultimately, this paper aims take a step toward aiding exegetes, translators, priests, and researches gain better grasp of the concept of the praise of God in the world of the Hebrew Bible and also perhaps other related concepts.

Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics

CHAIR: REBEKAH VAN SANT (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD),

THOMAS HIEKE (JOHANNES GUTENBERG UNIVERSITY MAINZ)

Room: DOR24 I.204

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–009

**Recent Contributions to the Discussion of Bible
and Immigration – An Assessment and a Way Forward**

Markus Zehnder (Evangelical Theological Faculty Leuven)

21–009/1

In this paper, three representative recent contributions to the – often heated – discussions about immigration issues as seen from a biblical-theological perspective will be scrutinized:

- Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, *Ethisch-theologische Aspekte der Migration* (Berliner Theologische Zeitschrift 33, 2016);

- Nigel Biggar, *Whatever Happened to the Canaanites? Principles of a Christian Ethic of Mass Immigration* (Studies in Christian Ethics 35, 2022);
- Mark R. Glanville and Luke Glanville: *Refuge Reimagined* (IVP Academic, 2021).

The three voices investigated here represent the diversity of the discussion both in terms of professional specialization and cultural/geographic background (Germany, UK, Canada), and also in terms of their views on the core issues of the debate (Bedford-Strohm and Glanville&Glanville arguing for what has been labeled “welcoming culture”, Biggar offering a more restrictive view). The respective arguments will be critically assessed both from an exegetical, an ethical and a hermeneutical angle. In the conclusion, core elements of an approach that may help to find a way forward in dealing with questions around Bible and immigration will be presented.

The presenter has recently written a monograph on the topic, published both in English (*The Bible and Immigration*, Eugene 2021) and German (*Bibel und Migration*, Münster 2021).

Hospitality in the Jewish Tradition: Lessons for the Contemporary Church

Chase Rodriguez (Seattle Pacific University)

21-009/2

Commenting on the story of Abraham's hospitality in Genesis, Rabbi Yehudah stated, “Welcoming and receiving guests is an act of even greater importance than receiving the Divine Presence!” (B. Talmud, Shabbat 127a.). Hospitality is the ancient practice of making room for others (Christine D. Pohl, *Making Room*, 18). By the first century, much like today, the practice was largely domesticated; in public life, hospitality was extended only to those who could repay the debt, thereby reinforcing social hierarchies and power dynamics. However, in the Hebrew Scriptures, true hospitality is rooted not merely in custom and culture – power and prestige – but in a deep understanding of the character of God, an intense history of sojourning and exile, and a fundamental belief in the inherent dignity of others. This paper analyzes the primacy of hospitality in Jewish scripture, theology, and tradition, and argues for its novelty in the ancient world and centrality in Jewish law and ethics. Attention is then given to how the Church in the West, which currently finds itself driven to the margins of society amidst increasing religious pluralism and unprecedented ideological polarization, can embody the posture and practice of hospitality in the modern world. It is precisely in this challenging moment that the Church has a delicate opportunity to revive and reimagine this deeply embedded Jewish ethic, one which has enabled the Jewish people to thrive on the margins of the global landscape for millennia.

Gen 39 as encounter with consequences.

Some notes on vulnerability and ethics of migration

Natalie Klimenko (University of Graz)

21-009/3

In Old Testament research there is a consensus that the Joseph narrative is not a purely idealised success story of Joseph's migration. Just to name one example Jürgen Ebach considers Gen 39:7–20 as a ‘painfully momentous encounter with Potiphar's wife’ (Ebach 2007,

159). In fact, encounters play a crucial role in the Joseph story. The various interactions that Joseph has – with his brothers in Dothan (Gen 37), with Potiphar and his wife (Gen 39), with Pharaoh (Gen 41), etc. - have an impact on his fate and play a central role, especially in terms of his vulnerability. This short paper focuses on the analysis of the negative encounter with Potiphar's wife in Gen 39:7–20 with special emphasis on Joseph's vulnerability. The following questions will be asked: How is Joseph characterised in the biblical text? Which levels of humaneness are addressed? How does the encounter affect the figure Joseph? Vulnerability is expressed on different levels. In particular, Joseph's vulnerability derives from being a foreigner and is closely linked to the topics of social status and sexuality. The narrative of Joseph's encounter with Potifar's wife shows its impact on his vulnerability and the connection to his status as a foreigner. Thus, following the analysis, the question arises as to whether this narrative can provide impulses for a contemporary ethics of migration – especially with regard to the relation to foreigners.

Session 2

22–009

Decolonizing Western Biblical Hermeneutics – a potential Project?

Benedikt Collinet (University of Passau)

22–009/1

Postcolonial theory has been practised for several decades, particularly in the Francophone and Anglophone world. In the German-speaking world, we are only at the beginning.

The aim of this paper is twofold: to discuss the question of how Western biblical hermeneutics can or may work with decolonial concepts and how this can be demonstrated using an example in the Hebrew Bible.

The thesis is, that we need to work out a contextual Hermeneutic of decolonial Biblical Hermeneutics. On the one hand there are the ongoing important postcolonial discourse of people of colour, of the Global South etc. On the other hand, European scholarship also has to find its place as subject and object in this field.

I plead for an adaption of Hermeneutic concept, Germans learned in their work on the own past of Jew-Hatred, i.e. I think there are plural perspectives on postcolonial methodology and Hermeneutics, at least some universal parts, then the big part of current scholarship and the question of coming to terms with guilt. This means reading the texts of the Hebrew Bible with the perspective of – in my case European/German white male – former colonizers and offenders (in mind).

Contextually reading the Bible in the context of Homophobic Hate Crime in South Africa

Charlene Van der Walt (University of KwaZulu-Natal)

22–009/2

This contribution explores the intersection of homophobic hate crimes and the use of the Bible in reinforcing hegemonic constructions of masculinity within the South African context. In line with the critical interrogation of the systemic ideology of

econo-heteropatriarchy, it examines how societal and religious structures perpetuate violence against LGBTIQ+ individuals, focusing on the enduring marginalization and victimization of those who deviate from heteronormative norms. Employing a contextual reading of Genesis 37, the paper interprets Joseph's non-normative masculinity as a reflective surface for understanding the experiences of LGBTIQ+ individuals. It argues that Joseph's embodied difference, depicted through his ornate coat and dreamer identity, mirrors contemporary realities of vulnerability, violence, and systemic policing of non-conforming identities. It identifies the role of religious texts in upholding econo-heteropatriarchal norms, citing their frequent misuse to justify exclusion and violence. The paper also highlights the persistent gaps between South Africa's progressive constitutional protections for LGBTIQ+ individuals and the lived realities of violence, hate speech, and inadequate legal interventions. As a response, the paper presents Contextual Bible Study (CBS) as a transformative methodology. Developed by the Ujamaa Centre for Community Development and Research, CBS enables critical engagement with biblical texts, fostering spaces for liberation and affirmation for marginalized communities. Using CBS as a tool, the paper demonstrates how Genesis 37 provides a platform to challenge normative gender constructs, destabilize hegemonic masculinities, and empower African LGBTIQ+ individuals to reclaim sacred texts as instruments of justice and hope. Through this approach, the paper underscores the urgent need to harness religion for social change, countering narratives of exclusion and violence within African faith communities.

Wednesday, 08/13/2025

Pentateuch

CHAIR: JULIA RHYDER (HARVARD UNIVERSITY)

Room: DOR24 I.101

14:30–16:00

31-001

The Literary Profile of the Priestly Writing: A New Perspective

Hila Dayfani (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

31-001/1

This paper examines the narrative gaps in the Priestly texts of the Pentateuch and the challenges they pose to the concept of P as an independent source. Drawing on the scroll approach proposed by David Carr (2020, 2023), it explores how the transmission circumstances of large literary compositions in antiquity – particularly the inability to transmit them in a single scroll before the Hellenistic period – shaped the Priestly texts as they have come down to us. The paper's main claim is that inconsistencies in the occurrence of narrative gaps across various sections of P may stem from differing states of preservation in the sub-scrolls that comprised the copy used, directly or indirectly, to integrate the Priestly material into the Pentateuch.

The seven + one Sequence in Lev 9:1 and the End of Priestly Writing in Lev 8:35–36. Textual and Literary Criticism Study
Domenico Lo Sardo (Pontifical University of Saint Anthony)

31–001/2

In the history of Pentateuchal scholarship, particularly with regard to the formation of the Pentateuch and the conclusion of the Priestly Writing (P), Lev 8–9 or Lev 9–10 have been the subject of significant scholarly debate. For many scholars – especially those who interpret the inauguration of the cult as the climax of the Priestly Grundschrift – either Lev 9 (or the whole of Lev 9–10) section is regarded as the terminus of this Writing/Project.

The seven + one sequence at the outset of Lev 9:1 is frequently cited by scholars as compelling exegetical evidence of the inseparability of Lev 9 from the preceding chapter. The reasoning behind this interpretation is that the eighth day marks the beginning of a new ritual cycle (e.g., an initiation rite). Consequently, it is argued that the eighth day cannot be linked to the seventh, and by extension, to what precedes it, because in fact it inaugurates a distinct narrative development.

This brief paper aims to demonstrate that within the Hebrew Bible, there are multiple textual traces and pieces of evidence suggesting that the seven + one sequence does not definitively establish the inseparability of Lev 9 from the preceding chapter. Rather, it may lend support to the perspective that Lev 8:35–36 signals the conclusion of the Priestly Writing (P).

The Role of Inference in Reading the Pentateuchal Priestly Work
Jeffrey Stackert (University of Chicago)

31–001/3

Across the modern period, scholars have struggled with the style of the pentateuchal Priestly work (P). In some instances, this struggle has led to strongly negative aesthetic judgments, including that P's texts are "stiff," "pedantic," "clumsy," "inarticulate," or "impoverished." It has even contributed to influential theories regarding the compositional history of P texts. In this paper, I will propose a new, social-scientifically informed framework for analyzing Priestly style. I will argue that the terseness that typifies P is best described in terms of the readerly reception it requires: rather than being judged inferior, Priestly style can be characterized as reliant upon a high level of inference, a reliance that, in different measures, is common to all expressions of language. I will begin by reviewing the role of inferences in the reading process, aided by the substantial body of social scientific research that has addressed this issue. I will then turn to specific examples that demonstrate that P is especially reliant upon readerly inferences, even as it also provides explicit aids for drawing such inferences. I will conclude with a few examples where, in the midst of a compiled text, premodern interpreters successfully made the inferences required by P, underscoring the effectiveness of the cohesive ties in this work's plot and characterization.

Former Prophets

CHAIR: VERONIKA BIBELRIETHER (UNIVERSITY OF ERLANGEN – NUREMBERG)

Room: DOR24 1.102

14:30–16:00

31-002

The Death of Saul: The Biblical Double Narrative (1Sam 31:1–6 and 2Sam 1,5–10) and Its Reception

Daniela De Panfilis (Salesian Pontifical University)

31-002/1

The “twofold told tale” (thus M. Sternberg) is not unknown to biblical narrative. Diachronic approaches have focused on its origin; synchronic approaches have shifted attention to its communicative function. Double narrative, as a literary device, plays a key role in structuring the Book of Samuel on two distinct levels, that is, the narration of events (the primary narratives) and the ideological reflection on the events themselves (the secondary narratives).

This paper will present the well known double narrative about the death of King Saul.

The two accounts of the same event are irreconcilable. Thus, biblical scholars have proposed different solutions to this problem. My proposal is to read the account of the narrator (1Sam 31:1–6) as the primary narrative, that draws a heroic portrait of Saul and ends his troubled kingship. The Amalekite’s report (2Sam 1:5–10), on the other hand, reduces Saul to a trembling and doomed man and paves the path to David’s rise to the throne.

Ancient and modern writers, also, confronted themselves with this double narrative. A double narrative, even when the two accounts do not narrate the same event in mutually exclusive ways (as it happens in this case), nevertheless creates a difficulty in the development of the plot. Every writer tries to solve this difficulty in a creative way (emphasizing the differences between the two accounts in order to propose them as different events; merging them into a single story; removing one of the two). In so doing, every writer shows a peculiar reception of the biblical account and proposes a fresh interpretation of it.

An Incestuous Congress: The Case Of Two Siblings Tamar And Amnon (2 Sam 13:1–22)

Luis Quinones-Roman (University of Edinburgh)

31-002/2

The narrative of 2 Samuel 13 has been interpreted alongside David’s and Bathsheba’s sexual affair (2 Samuel 11–12) – which is a story of sexual violence, homicidal violence, political power, and divine intervention. Likewise, it is widely understood that Tamar’s coercive sexual assault is a fulfillment of Nathan’s prophecy against David’s marital affairs. This article explores what function the “coercive sexual intercourse” in 2 Samuel 13 has within the biblical narratives that speak about sexual and gender-based violence. More specifically, this paper is interested in how this type of violence is portrayed in the

narrative and what it can tell us about the violence committed against female figures. For this reason, the paper concentrates on the analysis of three scenes in which the elements of violence are expressed. These scenes of violence are expressed in three areas: a) the orchestration of the crime (vv. 1–6), the crime (vv. 7–14), and the aftermath (vv. 15–22) – all of which contributes to the social fragmentation of ancient Israel's society. The argument here is addressed in three movements. The starting point will be an analysis of 2 Samuel 13, outlining content and argument. Next, it will ask how the imagery of violence is embedded in the context of 2 Samuel 13. Therefore, this paper demonstrates that the narrative of 2 Samuel 13, like other sexual violence narratives (Genesis 19, 34, 39; Judges 19), draws from a common theme of violence towards female figures to depict the social decline of Israel, more especially a collapse of one phase and the emergence of another. Moreover, it argues that the author's use of speech compounds Tamar's victimization to expose the power struggle within David's royal household.

Book of the Twelve

CHAIR: KIRSTEN SCHÄFERS (UNIVERSITY OF BONN)

Room: DOR24 I.103

14:30–16:00

31–034

Hosea 1's Use of Exodus

Derek Bass (Tyndale Theological Seminary)

31–034/1

Hosea's use of Exodus throughout Hosea 1 by quotation and allusion is extensive. This opening portion of the prophecy grounds each of YHWH's commands to his prophet in the language of Exodus 34, Exodus 6 and Exodus 3. This paper will seek to demonstrate that not only is the final command to name the final son, "Not my people," grounded in a reversal of Exodus 6:7, so too is the language for the first command – "to take a wife of" whoredom – sourced from Exodus 6:7.

Vom Ort des ungestörten Beisammenseins zum

Haus der Sklaverei. Die Exodus-Bezüge in Hosea

Szabolcs-Ferencz Kató (Protestant Institute of Cluj Napoca)

31–034/2

Die Exodustradition ist nahezu allgegenwärtig im Alten Testament, jedoch mit unterschiedlichen Akzentuierungen. Dies erschwert es, eine Entwicklung zu rekonstruieren und die einzelnen Elemente klar zu differenzieren. Dennoch scheinen zumindest vier zentrale Bestandteile diese Tradition zu konstituieren: der Aufenthalt in Ägypten, die Wüstenwanderung, Mose als zentrale Figur des Exodus und die Eisodos bzw. Landnahme.

In der Forschung wird immer wieder versucht, anhand der sogenannten vorexilischen Propheten darzulegen, dass diese Inhalte im Laufe der Literaturgeschichte erheblichen

Änderungen unterlagen. Besonders anhand von Hosea wird argumentiert, dass Ägypten und die Wüste ursprünglich positiv konnotiert waren und erst sekundär als das Haus der Sklaverei und der Ort der Erprobung dargestellt wurden.

In diesem kurzen Beitrag werden die Exodus-Bezüge in Hos untersucht und eine Zusammenschau des Themenkomplexes geboten. Es wird hinterfragt, wie und warum alternative Motive im Rahmen der Exodustradition auftauchen und ob es sich dabei tatsächlich um eine vorexilische, ursprüngliche Version des Exodus handelt oder um ein Gegenkonzept der nachexilischen Zeit. Auf jeden Fall scheinen die Belege stark in den prophetischen Diskurs eingebettet zu sein und dort spezifische Nuancen zu entfalten, was eine Erklärung für die Sonderstellung der hosanischen Tradition liefern kann.

Puns, Ambiguities and Rhizomorphic Text Structures in the Book of Hosea

Anna Maria Bortz (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

31-034/3

With the memory of the fall of the Northern Kingdom as its historical starting point, the Book of Hosea presents a continuous history of interpretation and re-interpretation that is almost impossible to unravel. The possible approaches to understanding the intention of the text lie somewhere between coping with trauma and polemics. Furthermore, the book is striking for its complex structure of thematic jumps, literary breaks, cross references and chains of association. This is accompanied by a wealth of puns, such as paronomasia, polysemy and Janus constructions, which serve to connect several ideas and motifs with one another and at the same time leave room for ambiguity – a phenomenon also known from the Qumran Pesharim or other midrashic texts.

This paper aims to show that these literary features do not only fulfill stylistic or poetic functions but must be understood as processes of interpretation and means of inner-textual exegesis. As a result, the text grows in ever new directions of meaning and gains in complexity. This process of textual growth, however, cannot be categorized into editorial layers. Rather the complex text-internal interrelationships and links of meaning reveal non-linear, rhizomorphic reference structures (Deleuze/Guattari), which allow a certain openness to further interpretation.

From the abundance of examples, this paper will focus on instances in the core of the book (Hos 5–8*), namely the extensive linking of the metaphors of clothing, body, sickness, and infidelity through paronomasia, polysemy and ambiguities. Also, I will show how the paronomastic play with the individual components of the root of the lexeme “Efraim” leads to ever new interpretations of the text.

Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemia, Esther

CHAIR: LOUIS C. JONKER (STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 3053

14:30–16:00

31-043

Räume, Grenzen und Grenzüberschreitungen im Esterbuch

Lara Mayer (University of Trier)

31-043/1

Der russische Literaturwissenschaftler Jurij M. Lotman zeigt auf, dass Räume in literarischen Texten nicht nur Schauplätze für bestimmte Handlungen sind. Vielmehr bilden räumliche Begriffe häufig nicht-räumliche Relationen ab, z. B. steht in manchen Texten „oben“ für das Gute, „unten“ für das Schlechte. Das heißt, dass mittels räumlicher Kategorien in literarischen Texten Wirklichkeit gedeutet werden kann. Eine wichtige Rolle spielen nach Lotman dabei auch Grenzen, durch die im Text verschiedene Teilräume entstehen. Ein Merkmal dieser Grenzen im literarischen Raum ist, dass sie – in aller Regel – unüberschreitbar sind. Heldinnen und Helden einer Erzählung zeichnen sich u. a. dadurch aus, dass sie in einer bestimmten Situation in der Lage sind, eine solche unüberschreitbare Grenze doch zu überschreiten. Durch den damit einhergehenden Eintritt in einen anderen Teilraum verändern sie sich selbst und entwickeln sich weiter. Vor diesem Hintergrund kann das Esterbuch analysiert werden. Dieses steckt voller unterschiedlicher Räume, die strikt voneinander abgegrenzt sind. Diese Räume, die Grenzen zwischen den Räumen und die Figuren, die bestimmten Räumen zugeordnet sind, sollen im Shortpaper näher betrachtet werden. Dabei soll der Fokus auf folgenden Fragen liegen: Wie verändert sich das Bild einzelner Figuren, wenn man sie von „ihren“ Räumen her betrachtet? Wer überschreitet Raumgrenzen und wird dadurch zum Helden bzw. zur Heldin, und wie beeinflusst das den Fortgang der Erzählung? Welche Strategien werden zur Grenzüberschreitung verwendet?

Dan 8:27 is Dan 7:28b

David Forward (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

31-043/2

The final words of Dan 8 (וְאִין מְבִין) are commonly understood as an expression of Daniel's ignorance and thus intimately connected to the following chapters where Daniel seeks further revelatory information – a quest that seems to support the “ignorance” interpretation. However, earlier commentators (e.g. Rashi) understood the phrase differently as an expression of Daniel's surreptitiousness. While presenting linguistic and local contextual arguments in favour of the “surreptitious” reading, this paper will observe patterns of similarity between Dan 7:28b and Dan 8:27 and argue that the latter is a Hebrew translation of what was originally an Aramaic Wiederaufnahme of 7:28b created to attach the addition of chapter 8 to the Aramaic anthology. The verse thus emerged from the preceding chapter. However, this association does not negate its connections with the later chapters, with their underlying “ignorance” interpretations, but the shift

in comprehension is evidence of the stratification of the Danieline apocalypses and the process of inner-biblical exegesis by which they were created, challenging the commonly held assumption of their sole origin.

Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature

CHAIR: FLORIAN OEPPING (TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 3075

14:30–16:00

31-005

The Origins and Functions of the Additions to Old Greek and Theodotion Daniel 3

Michael Segal (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

31-005/1

The Greek versions of Daniel contain three significant clusters of Additions vis-à-vis the Masoretic text: Susanna; Bel and the Serpent; and the Additions to chapter 3. The latter, which is the focus of this lecture, is not cut of one cloth, and consists of three separate sections: The Prayer of Azariah, the Song of the Three Youths, and an expanded version of the Furnace Narrative (vv. 46–50).

It will be argued here that:

- (1) The Additions were included successively, and based upon a close analysis, it will be posited that the first of the Additions is the Song. The arguments include a previously unidentified exegetical tradition regarding (Aramaic) Dan 3:25, which served as the immediate trigger for its addition.
- (2) As has been argued previously by many scholars, both the Prayer and Song were already extant compositions composed in Hebrew (or Aramaic).
- (3a) MT Dan 3:22–23 are a secondary addition that were inserted in order to assimilate the stories in chapters 3 and 6. This claim is based upon internal considerations, and the evidence of the Greek versions.
- (3b) The expanded Furnace narrative in the Old Greek of Daniel 3 is a Greek rewriting and expansion of MT/Theodotion 3:22–23, with some elements adopted from the surrounding verses (especially 3:19, 25). It is similar in style to OG Dan 4, which has been noted by many scholars for its unique character. Both the rewriting and its source remained together in OG Daniel 3.
- (3c) Theodotion Dan 3 attempts to reduce the redundancies created by the inclusion of both the source and its rewriting (3b).

Was Nabouchodonosor alone or only a (hu)man?

ὥς ἀνὴρ εἷς in Jdt 1:11 as the Expression of Quality

Martina Korytiaková (Comenius University in Bratislava)

31-005/2

The paper inquires into the phrase ὥς ἀνὴρ εἷς in Jdt 1:11 and its existing interpretations in support of which unpersuasive or insufficient arguments have been provided. Currently, two readings of the expression ἀνὴρ εἷς exist, one with a quantitative meaning, “single

man,” and the other with a qualitative sense, “just a (hu)man.” Shortcomings are found in the argumentation for each of the suggested translations. Scholars opting for the variant “a single man” and arguing by Judg 6:16 and Jdt 6:3 overlook the fact that the latter verses employ a syntagma different to that in Jdt 1:11. Just as problematic is their argumentation by Jdt 1:6 as based on the defective interpretation of καὶ συνήντησαν πρὸς αὐτόν and claiming that Nabouchodonosor remained without allies. Even if explained correctly, the phrase in Jdt 1:6 would not corroborate the translation “a single man” in 1:11 but rather contradict it. Insufficient and sometimes also inconsistent is the argumentation for the variant “just a (hu)man.” The proposers argue for the qualitative meaning of ἀνὴρ εἷς without giving enough relevant proof and despite such a translation defying their interpretation of 1:6. In general, scholars have ignored syntagmatic and lexical differences between Jdt 1:11, 6:3 and Judg 6:16. Moreover, they have not examined the use of the nouns ὁ ἀνὴρ and ὁ ἄνθρωπος or of the numeral εἷς in the story, in other biblical and non-biblical literature, including documentary sources. The aim of the paper is to help rectify the existing lack of a convincing scholarly argumentation to validate the translation of ὡς ἀνὴρ εἷς (Jdt 1:11) as the expression of quality and proposing it as a more appropriate translation alternative than that of quantity.

On Ideal Rulership. Simon's Eulogy in 1 Macc 14:4–15

Barbara Schmitz (Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg)

31–005/3

The First Book of Maccabees introduces Simon's reign with a eulogy (1 Macc 14:4–15) that describes Simon's reign as a time of peace and security, of well-being and happiness, and thus Simon as an ideal ruler. On the one hand, the eulogy of Simon in 1 Macc 14:4–15 is well anchored in the First Book of Maccabees, as it specifically recalls his deeds as recounted in the narrative. On the other hand, Simon's eulogy expands his portrayal through elaborate and in-depth intertextual references that portray him as a leader mainly in biblical terms. It has often been suggested that Simon is portrayed as a king or even a messianic figure. Is this so? Since Simon's eulogy is one of the poetic pieces in 1 Maccabees, it reveals the intentions of the narrator and indicates his goals and intentions as the best. Therefore, this paper aims at a thorough analysis of the intertextuality of this eulogy, focusing especially on the references to the Greek Bible. The references are mostly to priestly traditions or to non-royal leaders – with one exception: Solomon. The Solomonisation of Simon has often been interpreted as a royalisation. The paper will challenge this interpretation by showing that Simon's eulogy refers to specific traditions of the Greek Bible that differ from the Hebrew Bible, thereby portraying Simon in a very specific way as the ideal ruler.

Religions of Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East

CHAIR: MARTTI NISSINEN (UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI)

Room: DOR24 1.201

14:30–16:00

31-007

The Collective Godhead the Deity IL and the History of Israelite Religion

David Toshio Tsumura (Japan Bible Seminary)

31-007/1

Among the Old Testament scholars it has been a consensus that the ʾēl elements in names found in patriarchal narratives such as ʾēl ʿōlām (Gen 21:33), ʾēl ʿelyōn (14:18ff.), ʾēl ʾēlōhē yisrāʾel (33:20), ʾēl rōʾi (16:3), ʾēl bêt-ʾēl (35:7), ʾēl šadday (Gen 17:1, etc.) are either a proper noun, i.e. the Ugaritic-Canaanite god ʾEl, or a generic appellative, “god” (Cross 1973: 46–47). However, I would argue that the Ugaritic term IL may refer also to the collective godhead the Deity, as can be seen in various Ugaritic liturgical texts, including the official pantheon lists in three languages, i.e. Ugaritic, Akkadian and Hurrian (Tsumura 2024).

The divine being IL was pervasive among the Semitic traditions (e.g. Akkadian and Ugaritic) from the Middle Bronze Age. And the term IL could refer not only to a generic name “god” and a proper noun DN “El,” but also the collective godhead the Deity in the long history of ancient Semitic religions.

If this is the case, the El element in the Hebrew texts such as the above names, the phrase ʾēl ʾēlōhē hārūḥōt “God, the God of the spirits” (Num 16:22), and “the assembly of God” (ʿādat-ʾēl) in Ps 82:1 might rather refer to this collective godhead the Deity in the history of Israelite religion.

The Art of Not Collapsing: Zion as the Center of the World

Matthew Arakaky (Duke University)

31-007/2

Scholars often note that Psalm 46 is a hymn celebrating Zion’s salvation from the primeval chaos at its gates. Less appreciated, however, are the cosmic implications of Zion’s survival in the psalm. When the song is read alongside iconographic parallels from the ancient Near East, the interpreter realizes that the well-being of the entire cosmos is also at stake in Zion’s survival. This paper argues that Psalm 46 evinces the same basic worldview as the Babylonian Map of the World. In the Babylonian Map of the World, Marduk’s temple lies at the center of the earth and the bitter, chaotic waters (nār maratu) on the periphery rage in vain against it. Like this image, Psalm 46:2–7 is designed concentrically, with the phrase אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ בִּלְתִּתְמוֹט (“God is in its midst, it shall not collapse”) at the center of its chiasmic structure. Although the earth “gives way” and “melts” (vv. 2a, 7c), the waters and nations surrounding Zion “roar” (הִמָּה) (vv. 2b, 7b), and mountains and kingdoms on both sides “collapse” (מוֹט) (vv. 4, 7a), the psalm emphatically proclaims that Jerusalem “will not collapse” (לֹא מוֹט). Reading Psalm 46 alongside the Babylonian Map of the World enriches its interpretation by raising the stakes of Zion’s survival. In

Mesopotamian cosmology, the entire world was watered by the river that flowed from the cosmic mountain, which recalls the “stream that makes glad the city of God” in Ps 46:5 (נהר פלגיו ישמחו עיר־אלהים). Consequently, if Babylon was destroyed, the entire world would suffer harm. Likewise, since Psalm 46 borrows from Mesopotamian cosmology, envisioning life-giving streams that flow from Zion and water the entire world, the well-being of the whole earth is tied up with Zion’s survival.

Keywords: Babylonian Map of the World, iconography, Psalm 46, Zion theology

Visual Power Networks: The Semiotics of the Solar Imagery in the Iron Age Levant

Bruno Biermann (University of Münster) and Dylan Johnson (Cardiff University)

31–007/3

Solar imagery was widespread in the visual and textual media of the Iron Age Levant. The ideas, attitudes, and emotions it evoked were multifaceted and are still not fully understood. To access the “meaning” of such imagery, however, one cannot separate or flatten out the complex relationships between text(s) and image(s). Countering simplistic correlations of archaeological finds with biblical literature, we look to the case of a bulla found in the Ophel excavations in Jerusalem. The bulla bears an inscription, “Belonging to Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, King of Judah,” showing a winged sun disk flanked by two ankh signs. This royal artefact is unique, but its imagery was shared widely among various stakeholders in the region’s power networks.

Our paper aims to explore these power networks, which are visible in the interaction between kings in the southern Levant and other regional and local actors. The Hezekiah bulla serves as a central prism for this project, providing new insights into solar imagery in visual and textual media in the region and beyond. Royal interest in solar imagery is clear from the textual data, while the iconographic evidence provides insights into its use by other actors of various social strata, including elites in the different kingdoms of the Iron Age Levant. The widespread use and regional transformations of solar imagery (and associated motifs) warrants a serious study that transcends outmoded paradigms (local vs. imperial, political vs. religious, or ethnic categorizations). Instead, a semiotic approach can reveal how the variations of solar motifs are locally distinct yet interconnected in various media. This aims at improving the “resolution” of our understanding of solar imagery and its multi-mediatic appeal. A semiotic approach to textual and visual imagery traditionally deemed “royal” reveals how structures of power were constructed and transformed.

History of Ancient Israel within the Ancient Near East

CHAIR: SHUICHI HASEGAWA (RIKKYO UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 3059

14:30–16:00

31-008

How views of the afterlife influenced the adoption of death penalty laws in ancient Israel compared to Egypt.

Alex-David Baldi (King's College London)

31-008/1

This short paper will present findings from a current Ph.D. project researching and analysing the origins of death penalty laws in the Pentateuch, partly by using a comparative approach that examines capital punishment in other civilizations of the ancient world. While using this approach an intriguing correlation has been noted while comparing biblical death penalty laws with instances of capital punishment found in the surviving records of ancient Egypt.

In the three Pentateuchal law codes the crime to which most attention is paid to, in terms of definition, prosecution, execution and text devoted to explain all these, is the crime of murder. Conversely, in Egyptian records the largest number of execution records and death penalty laws concerns crimes related to a single area: protection and preservation of funerary cults, funerary establishments and tombs. I propose that each culture's particular emphasis on these crimes has a direct link to the culture's views of the afterlife. Egypt possessed the most sophisticated view of the afterlife in the ancient Mediterranean, including beliefs that souls travelled after death to a state of life that was more important than the physical one. Therefore, a particularly strong emphasis was placed on protecting souls travelling to that state, or not harming them while residing there. This resulted in more capital punishment instances related to funerary cults and tombs than any other type of capital crime. The Israelite writers' views of the afterlife instead typically focused on a shadowy world, Sheol, which was inferior in quality and importance to the life lived in the physical world. More emphasis, therefore, was placed on protecting the natural course of physical human life. This resulted in more capital punishment laws in Israel related to murder than any other single type of crime.

Die Renaissance der biblischen Statthalter im politischen Diskurs des späten 2. Jh. v. Chr.

Sarah Schulz (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg)

31-008/2

Der Vortrag untersucht, wie die biblischen Statthalter Nehemia und Serubbabel im späten 2. Jh. v. Chr. für politische Interessen neu interpretiert und literarisch umgestaltet wurden. In 2 Makk 1,10–2,18 nimmt Nehemia eine zentrale Rolle als legitimatorisches Vorbild für die hasmonäische Herrschaft ein. Demgegenüber tritt Serubbabel in anderen Traditionen, vor allem in 3 Esra, als Gegenentwurf zur hasmonäischen Herrschaft hervor. Der Vortrag soll zeigen, dass es sich dabei um literarische Strategien im Rahmen eines

innerjüdischen Diskurses um die Legitimität der hasmonäischen Herrschaft handelt. Während die Hasmonäer ihre Herrschaftsideologie durch die Konstruktion Nehemias als Vorläuferfigur in der Tradition zu verankern suchten, griffen ihre Gegner auf Serubbabel zurück, um die Notwendigkeit eines Davididen für die Wiederherstellung Judas und Jerusalems zu untermauern. Im Blick auf die historische Beurteilung der biblischen Restaurationserzählung in Hag/Sach und Esr/Neh ist aufschlussreich, dass die im 2. Jh. v. Chr. entstehenden alternativen und konkurrierenden Versionen derselben nicht auf die Rezeption biblischer Texte im Rahmen literarisch selbständiger Neuerzählungen (2 Makk; 3 Esra) beschränkt bleiben, sondern auch die späten Phasen der Redaktion biblischer Texte selbst betreffen (Neh; Hag/Sach).

The Origins of the Amalekite Ban

Yair Segev (Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg)

31-008/3

Alongside the Canaanites, the Amalekites are the only other nation that the Israelites are commanded to ban, i.e., to subject to sacral annihilation. This directive is repeatedly justified by the Amalekite onslaught on Israel during its journey through the desert after the Exodus (e.g., Deuteronomy 25:17–19, Exodus 17:8–16, 1 Samuel 15:2–3). This line of reasoning presents an anomaly, as other nations that harmed Israel during its desert wanderings were spared (e.g., Moab and Ammon: Numbers 22–24, Deut 2:9, 17–18, 23:4–7) and are even treated favorably (e.g., Edom: Num 20:14–21, Deut 2:2–6, 23:8–9). Nevertheless, this issue has received little scholarly attention, as most scholars have been primarily focused on the ethical implications of extermination through the ban and genocide. The current proposal offers a fresh approach to the origins and roots of the banning of Amalek. It will set aside the moral aspects of the issue and focus instead on reconstructing the history of the tradition behind this theme. The first stage of the analysis involves both synchronic and diachronic readings of the biblical references to Amalek, alongside a comparison of biblical attitudes toward Amalek and other foreign nations. Concepts and practices related to settlement and nativity in biblical and ancient Near Eastern sources will also contribute to the crystallization of the question. The analysis will conclude with a discussion of the potential literary and historical background for the emergence of the demand to ban Amalek.

Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics

CHAIR: REBEKAH VAN SANT (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

Room: DOR24 1.204

14:30–16:00

31-009

The relationship between HB/OT theology and Philosophy (2000–2025)

Jaco Gericke (North-West University)

31-009/1

Towards the end of the 20th-century, one of the issues debated was the relationship between Old Testament theology and philosophy (in general) By the end of the first

quarter of the 21st-century (2000–2025), new developments in both Philosophy and HB/OT scholarship in general beg the question concerning the current state of the associated interdisciplinary relations within the discipline of HB/OT theology in particular in this paper, leading German and English publications in the field be discussed, with special attention to the following points (each of which can only be briefly introduced for the sake of nuance) 1) implicit conceptions of – and explicit references to philosophy/the philosophical; 2) supervening meta-philosophical traditions; 3) philosophical periods, problems perspectives and persons represented. 4) a correlation with relations to philosophy in other biblical scholarly disciplines/approaches, 5) miscellaneous questions concerning ideological differences, conceptual coherency interpretative fallacies and what philosophical (sub-disciplines are absent (and why) and 6) (dis)continuity in relations with philosophy in 21st and 20th-century publications. The paper concludes with a synthesis of the findings some critical observations (both positive and negative), an identification of gaps in and limits of the presentation itself, as well as suggestions for future related research.

**Realistic Hamartology and Narrative Theodicy: Remarks on
the Origin of Human Violence and Free Will in Gen 4**

Jörg Lanckau (Lutheran University of Applied Sciences Nuremberg)

31-009/2

Of course, “theodicy” is not a term used in Biblical languages. Nevertheless, the harshest human question to God can be found in the Bible, not first in the Book of Job, but in prominent places in the Torah, in Gen 18:25. There is a literary finesse, or rather a narrative technique, which brackets the divine violence and precedes it with a discussion. This technique can also be observed in other texts (e.g., Exodus 32 or Judges 19–20). The Biblical “Urgeschichte” also offers some of these literary techniques. From the Paradise Narrative to the biblical adaptation of the Near Eastern Flood story, there is a common thread running through the discourse on human and divine violence. In my contribution, I will focus on the image of God and man in the story of Cain and Abel. God’s narrative interventions in Cain’s thoughts before and after the bloody deed reveal theological and anthropological baselines as well as a discourse on God’s justice.

“They are in the morning like grass that is renewed” (Ps 90:5):

Vegetable Anthropology in the Hebrew Bible

Tobias Häner (Cologne University of Catholic Theology)

31-009/3

The application of plant metaphors and similes to aspects of human life is common throughout the Hebrew Bible: The righteous is compared to a flourishing tree (Ps 1:3; 92:14–15; Jer 17:7), whereas the ephemerality and transiency of human existence is illustrated by the shortness of the life cycle of grass and flowers (Ps 90:5; 103:15–16; Isa 40:6–8). In the Song of Songs, the appearance of both woman and man are described by the use of metaphors that are associated with plants (lily, Song 2:1 and 2; apple tree, Song 2:3 etc.). And “sitting under the own vine and the own fig tree” figures as a symbol of the coming era of salvation (Mic 4:4; 1Kgs 5:5; 2Kgs 18:31).

Evidently, these findings reflect the cultural historical background of the agrarian society in the first millennium BCE from which our texts emerged. However, beyond that, I will argue in my paper that the close relationship between humans and plants is a somewhat overlooked aspect of biblical anthropology. In particular, I will show that the plant metaphors shed a light on the responsibility of human beings in regard to the flourishing of the land beyond the cultivation of economic plants. Additionally, I will discuss how this responsibility may illuminate the close connection between the election of the land and of the people of Israel.

Thursday, 08/14/2025

Pentateuch

CHAIR: DAVID CARR (UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY),
ANNE CALDERBANK (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

Room: DOR24 1.101

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–001

Linguistic Dating and Pentateuchal Criticism as Complementary Methods: The Case of a Priestly Inclusio (Exod 40:34–38; Num 9:15–23)

Nili Samet (Bar Ilan University)

41–001/1

The issue of dating Pentateuchal materials in general, and Priestly texts in particular, has been a matter of scholarly debate for two centuries now. Traditional source criticism has customarily used legal and narrative content as well as theological trends to date the various pentateuchal sources and strata. Concurrently, and too often separately, diachronic linguistic methods have been used as an alternative means to determine the texts' date. The conclusions of these two schools of research have sometimes been perceived as contradictory or disconnected. This paper aims to demonstrate how both sets of considerations may be integrated in dating sections of the Priestly source, taking into account both literary criticism and historical-linguistic consideration. The case study to be discussed is the editorial inclusio found in Exodus 40:34–38 and Numbers 9:15–23, which frames a significant body of Priestly material through the description of the cloud's journeys in the wilderness.

The Composition of the Torah in the Book of Exodus

Reinhard Achenbach (University of Münster)

41–001/2

The paper will give an introduction to the theory presented in the monograph "Die Komposition der Tora im Buch Exodus" (FAT 180), 2024. It is a commentary on the Book

of Exodus with a redaction-critical focus on the stages of its composition. Each chapter is analyzed with respect to its pre-exilic and exilic sources (the Moses-Exodus narrative, the mountain of God narrative, the Covenant Code, the Deuteronomy-Horeb narrative, the Priestly Code) and their composition against the backdrop of the Hexateuch, Pentateuch and priestly scribal reworking from the late Persian period (theocratic reworking). It shows that the model applied to the Book of Numbers (BZAR 3, 2003) has a certain heuristic value for the whole of the Hexateuch-Composition.

**Deuteronomy and the Pentateuch:
A Re-Evaluation of Their Literary-historical Relation**
Stefan Schorch (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

41-001/3

In recent Pentateuch scholarship, the determination the literary-historical relation between Deuteronomy and the other books of the Pentateuch, or between Deuteronomy and the Pentateuch as a whole, has received an increased measure of attention. From a text-historical view, this research is dominated by approaches that favor the Masoretic Text and use it as point of departure for literary analysis. At the same time, research into the textual history of the Pentateuch in general, and Deuteronomy in particular, has made an immense progress in the last decennia, often strongly suggesting a reevaluation of the literary history of the Pentateuch, sometimes even to the point that drastic revisions of earlier commonly followed concepts may seem required. One prominent example for this, from the perspective of textual history, is the conclusion (following earlier suggestions in this regard, e.g. by Albrecht Alt, but using evidence emerging from textual witnesses that were formerly unknown or disregarded) that the Book of Deuteronomy was not originally composed in Judah, but rather originates in a literary composition from the Northern Kingdom. Obviously, the historical recontextualization of Deuteronomy that is implied by this hypothesis requires also new models that explain the creation of the Pentateuch as whole. In this paper, some major questions in this regard will be presented and discussed.

Session 2

42-001

Rites of passage in Numbers 6 and 8
Esias Meyer (University of Pretoria)

42-001/1

The paper is interested in the rituals prescribed for the Nazirites and the Levites in Numbers 6 and 8. First, the paper compares the three basic rituals in these chapters with one another, which include the one prescribed for “re-entry” of the Nazirite after accidental exposure to a corpse (6:9–12), the one for “exiting” the Nazirite oath (6:13–21) and how the Levites are “ordained” for their task (8:5–13). The paper then compares these rituals with similar rituals in Leviticus, especially in chapters 8, 9 and 14. The paper argues that whereas cleansing and ordination rituals are slightly more clearly distinguished from one another in Leviticus, this is not true of similar rituals in Numbers. The

passages from Numbers tend to reappropriate ritual elements for Leviticus and thus present new combinations.

The Double Water-from-a-Stone Narratives and Bekhor Shor's Innovative Reading

Jonathan Jacobs (Bar-Ilan University)

42-001/2

In Numbers 20, when the Israelites are without water, God tells Moses to get water from a stone, which he does by striking it, and is punished. Yet in Exodus, Moses does the same thing, and the story ends positively. What is the relationship between these two accounts?

Although modern source critical scholars (like Noth, Budd, Davies and Milgrom) suggest that the two stories are two alternative traditions, or variations on the same story in different sources, traditional commentators read the Torah as one text from one Source, and thus assume that these are two similar stories that take place at different times in the wilderness.

Remarkably, Rabbi Joseph of Orleans (ca. 1130–1200), who went by the name Joseph Bekhor Shor, says that the two stories are two accounts of the same story. In his opinion, both tell the same story, but from different points of view.

The 'Contagiousness' of Forbidden Worship in the Pentateuchal Imagination

Jesse Mirotznik (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

42-001/3

Most scholarship on the perception of other gods and their worship in the Hebrew Bible has focused on the question of "monotheism." Did the biblical authors believe that there were other gods? Or did they believe that the Israelite deity was the only God? Or did this perhaps depend on the particular biblical text under consideration? These are, of course, important questions, but they are, in fact, not the questions with which the biblical authors themselves were primarily concerned. Their focus was not on affirming or denying the reality of other gods, but rather on preventing Israelites from engaging in their worship.

It is to this topic, then, that my scholarship seeks to turn the attention of scholars. Toward this end, my research focuses not on the reality (or irreality) of other gods in the biblical conception, but rather on the causal mechanisms which were imagined to lead to their worship. By what means, in other words, might the Israelites be tempted into 'transgressive' religious devotion, and how, as such, might it be possible, according to the biblical authors, to preempt or disrupt such means?

In this presentation, I will seek to lay out one such causal pathway within the Pentateuch: that of 'contagion.' Through contact with the worshipers of other gods, that is – and indeed, even through exposure to their very worship paraphernalia – ancient Israelites might run the risk of adopting devotional practices deemed transgressive. In my exposition, I will attempt both to taxonomize some of the different ways in which this causal mechanism was imagined within the Pentateuch, and then to analyze the ways in which Deuteronomy in particular inherited this causal conception from its sources (and reinterpreted it in the process).

Former Prophets

CHAIR: DAVID TSUMURA (JAPAN BIBLE SEMINARY),

VERONIKA BIBELRIETHER (UNIVERSITY OF ERLANGEN – NUREMBERG)

Room: DOR24 1.102

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–002

Personal Names in the Biblical ‘United Monarchy’

Prose and Lists: Do They Reflect the Same (Onomastic) Reality?

Shira Golani (Bar Ilan University) and Mitka Golub (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

41–002/1

Personal names shed light on our understanding of biblical texts. In particular, personal names included in the ‘United Monarchy’ narratives can illuminate these texts’ origin, i.e., their chronological relation to each other. The personal names in the ‘United Monarchy’ narratives, in both Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, are found within two main genres: prose and various types of lists of royal family members, warriors, cultic and civil personnel. A common perception is that the authors and redactors of the prose incorporated these lists which they received from their sources. In a previous study (Golub and Golani 2023), we collected and analyzed the personal names from biblical ‘United Monarchy’ texts according to the books in which they occur. We found that the group of names unique to Chronicles reflects one onomastic reality which is different and later than that of the group of names in Samuel-Kings, whether unique to Samuel-Kings or common to Chronicles. This paper presents a new study, with our analysis and comparison of the biblical ‘United Monarchy’ names according to the genres in which they are found, aiming to answer the following question: Do ‘United Monarchy’ personal names in lists reflect an onomastic reality that is different than the reality reflected by names in prose? The paper will conclude with how this study of personal names might contribute to the evaluation of the biblical names, the texts in which they occur and the redaction process of the Deuteronomistic and Chronistic accounts of the ‘United Monarchy’.

The Solomon Accession Narrative: Contours, Artistry, Politics

Raanan Eichler (Bar-Ilan University)

41–002/2

The Solomon Accession Narrative (1 Kings 1–2) is a dramatic and action-packed story that is longer (99 verses) than, for example, the book of Ruth (85 verses) or the book of Jonah (48 verses). Perhaps due in part to its incorporation into the relatively straight-laced book of Kings, its literary qualities have been underappreciated, and its political stance has been almost universally misunderstood. In this talk I will do three things. First, define the extent of the story, showing that David’s Testament (1 Kings 2:1–9) is not an original part of it, while the so-called “Shimei Duplicate” (1 Kings 2:35–o in the Septuagint) is an original part. Second, show some instances of devilishly clever literary

artistry in the story, with a focus on the deliberate use of ambiguity. Third, discuss the story's political stances and goals.

Solomon's enthronement in the light of ANE enthronement rituals

Peter Dubovsky (Pontifical Biblical Institute)

41-002/3

This paper proposes that the ceremony of Solomon's accession to throne (1 Kgs 1:32-48; 1 Chr 29:21-25) consisted of different steps. First, Solomon left the palace and was anointed at the outskirts of the city. Leaving the royal palace, Solomon was symbolically stripped of his dignity. The apex of the enthronement ceremony was Solomon's sitting on the throne, which restored the king's dignity and elevated him above other people. The whole ceremony was accompanied by acclamations, blessings, trumpeting the ram horn, and sacrifices. The concluding part of the ceremony was a public feast and the courtiers' pledge of allegiance. A comparison of this biblical ritual with ANE ceremonies shows that the biblical account merges two types of ceremonies: 1. The Gihon-Palace ceremony that corresponded to the ANE rites de passage, included other ethnic groups (riding the mule), connected the king with the primordial river, and put emphasis on the throne; 2. The Temple-Palace ceremony that was in the priests' hands and took place in the temple.

Session 2

42-002

**The blood of Nabot and the wine of the vine:
the stakes and risks of land ownership in 1 Kings 20-22**

Emanuelle Pastore (Catholic University of Paris)

42-002/1

The episode of Naboth's vineyard in the first book of Kings is positioned differently, according to the arrangement of the Septuagint (3 Reigns 20) and that of the Masoretic Text (1 Kings 21). Although with important nuances, the episode must be interpreted, in both cases, in the context of King Ahab's Aramaean wars. The aim of this study is to identify the theological conviction underlying the unity between the episode of Naboth's vineyard and the Aramaic campaigns.

Politics in Judah? Royal mothers and "the people of the land" in the book of Kings

Rachelle Gilmour (University of Divinity)

42-002/2

Under the enduring reign of the Davidic dynasty in Judah, as represented in the book of Kings, there is little space for political compromise, or even politics more broadly.

In this paper, I will consider ways in which kin-based politics may have functioned in the southern kingdom of Judah despite the relative absence of collaborative forms of politics more widely attested in accounts of the northern kingdom. I argue that a royal mother was not only central in the politics of accession, as widely observed, but provided ongoing political representation for the house of her father throughout the reign of her son. This paper will also examine the interruptions of "the people of the land" in Judah

in dynastic succession. The political action of “the people of the land” can be linked to the accession of kings with mothers from the Shephelah and Beersheba. Proposing that the “people of the land” refers to family groups in these southern regions, these queen mothers guarantee the ongoing political influence of the “people of the land” throughout the reign of the king.

Book of the Twelve

CHAIR: KIRSTEN SCHÄFERS (UNIVERSITY OF BONN)

Room: DOR24 1.103

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–034

Die Fremdvölkerpolemik im Buch Hosea

Christoph Levin (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)

41–034/1

Anders als die Bücher Protojesaja (Kap. 13–23), Jeremia (Kap. 46–51), Ezechiel (Kap. 25–32) und Amos (Kap. 1–2) enthält das Buch Hosea keinen Abschnitt mit Unheilssprophetien gegen die fremden Völker. Stattdessen folgt das ganze Buch dem Urteil: “Ihr seid nicht mein Volk” (Hos 1,9). Das lässt sich im Einzelnen zeigen.

Am 3–6 neu aufgelegt. Das jüdische Profil von Am 6,1–7

Kristin Tröndle (Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen)

41–034/2

Am 6,1–7 stellt in der Reihe der jüdischen Bearbeitungen des Amosbuches einen bisher nur unbefriedigend geklärten Sonderfall dar. Der Abschnitt erwähnt Zion im Parallelismus membrorum neben Samaria, ist der Form nach aber vordergründig recht eindeutig mit der Nordreichsverkündigung des Amos aus Am 3–6 verwandt. Von Befürwortern oder Kritikern einer literarkritisch rekonstruierbaren jüdischen Aktualisierung von Am 6,1–7 wird mehrheitlich davon ausgegangen, dass der Abschnitt fest in die früheste Zusammenstellung der Spruchkollektion von Am 3–6 verwoben ist. Im Rahmen meines Beitrages möchte ich eine andere Lesart des Abschnittes zur Diskussion stellen. Mit einem stärkeren Fokus auf das Profil des Textes und seine kompositionelle Verortung im größeren Rahmen von Am 3–6 komme ich zu dem Schluss, dass es sich bei Am 6,1–7 bereits im Kern um eine frühjüdische Erweiterung des Amosbuches handelt, die die Funktion erfüllt, in Amos-typischer Nordreich-Motivik Juda seinen bevorstehenden Untergang vorherzusagen.

Four Visions and a Narrative: Remarks on the Redaction History of Amos 7:1–8:3

Bob Becking (Utrecht University)

41–034/3

The literary origin and redactional growth of Amos 7:1–8:3 have been debated by scholars. The last 150 years a great variety of proposals has been presented – without reaching a consensus. In this paper, I dare to present a new view. I start with some observations:

- (1) The first and the second vision-report have a comparable composition. They contain images from natural world. They present a testimony on the changeability of YHWH.
- (2) The third and the fourth vision-report have a different but interdependent composition. They contain images from the world of warfare. They present YHWH as an unchangeable God.
- (3) Being a narrative, Amos 7:10–17 differs from the poetic-prophetic context.
- (4) Both Williamson and Eidevall have noted linguistic correspondences between the third vision report and the narrative.

In general, I assume a fourth stage growth of the Book of Amos: Authentic words, King's redaction, Nature redaction, Final redaction.

This leads to the following proposal:

- The narrative on the expulsion goes back to the oral tradition on the prophet and should not be seen as a later addition.
- The king's redaction composed a concentric symmetry borrowing language from the narrative in composing the third vision-report:

A 7:7–9 Third vision: tin

X 7:10–17 Amos send away from Israel

A' 8:1–3 Fourth vision: ripe fruit.

- The nature redaction expanded this composition with two vision-reports in which YHWH is seen as having empathy for the fate of Israel.

This proposal has a theological consequence, since it presents a movement from 'punishment' to 'compassion'.

Session 2

42–034

The Prophet as Hired Worker? The Role of Wages in Zechariah 11

Anita Dirnberger (University of Basel)

42–034/1

In the Gospel of Matthew, Judas receives thirty pieces of silver, which he later throws into the temple. This well-known motif is probably drawn from the Book of Zechariah. In Zech 11, the prophet enters the world of his narrative as a shepherd, receives thirty units of silver as wages for his work, and deposits the sum in the temple. Extensive scholarship has described intertextual connections regarding silver sums and temple symbolism within the Hebrew Bible. However, there are not many texts within the Hebrew Bible that can help us shed light on the meaning and function of this prophetic sign act in its Zecharian context. This paper argues that the concept of hired labour is central to

understanding Zech 11. Building on Hervé Gonzalez's socio-historical contextualisation of Zech 9–14 in Early Hellenistic Judea, this paper situates the shepherd's wages within their economic and social milieu. Using Marcel van der Linden's framework for distinguishing different forms of hired labour, this paper examines the dynamic established between the shepherd-prophet, the sheep-owners and YHWH through the payment, receipt and deposit of wages. In doing so, this paper seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the prophetic critique of the social organisation and the community's relationship with YHWH in this central chapter within the literary unit of Zech 9–14.

Mournful Judah (Zech 12:10–14)

Noam Mizrahi (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

42–034/2

Critical analysis of the prophetic unit in Zech 12:1–13:6 suggests that it in some cases it embeds earlier sources. This paper identifies one such case, which describes in some detail a ritual of mourning. The paper demonstrates the distinctive features of this text vis-à-vis its present context, analyzes its content and form, and hypothesizes about its original function and the possible motivations for placing it in its present context. This analysis leads to a couple of conclusions about the appropriate methodology for tracing the compositional and redactional history of Deutero-Zechariah.

Zech 13:7–9; 14:2–5, Onias III, and the Trials of the 160s

Torleif Elgvin (NLA University College)

42–034/3

Zech 13:7–9 should be dated to the 160s, the shepherd given to the sword identified with Onias III (killed in Antioch c.171), and the trials with the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes. Reading *rēʾî*, “my close friend,” in 7a makes a clearer parallelism with *geber ʾāmītî* in 7b and a word play between *rēʾî* and *rōʾēh*. *rēʾî* is a fitting designation for the high priest, considered “online” with the heavenly temple in his sacrificial service, and “shepherd” fits the high priest as civil leader of the Judeans.

13:7 is a sequel to the shepherd chapter (ch. 11) and possibly to the pierced figure of 12:10 (Reddit: probably a priest; Sellin: Onias III; Reventlow: a messianic figure). Scholars have struggled to situate 13:7–9 in the fifth-third centuries and there is no consensus on the identity of the shepherd.

13:7–9 closely parallels Daniel passages which symbolically recast the history of the 160s: thousands shall be slayed during times of trials (7:21, 23; 11:41; 12:1), an anointed one is being cut off (9:26, commonly identified with Onias III), the trials will lead to a renewed relation with God (7:18, 27). 14:2–5 may belong to the same editorial stage: nations conquer and ravage Jerusalem, Judeans flee, half the Jerusalemites go into exile (as did Onias IV and his followers), Yhwh appears on the scene with his *qədōšîm* – a term known from Dan 7 and 1 En 1:3–9 (an early-second century text, 14:5b repeats 1 En 1:9).

Wisdom Literature

CHAIR: ANNETTE SCHELLENBERG-LAGLER (UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA),

MARKUS WITTE (HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN)

Room: DOR24 L205

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–042

Is Job Among the Wise? Rethinking the Concept of Wisdom in the Book of Job

Rachel Frish (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

41–042/1

A widely held scholarly view posits that at the heart of the Book of Job lies the distinction between human and divine wisdom: the text is said to dismiss the value of practical human wisdom in favor of a transcendent, inscrutable divine wisdom that lies beyond human reach. The Wisdom Poem in Job 28 and God's speeches in chapters 38–39 are often interpreted as the most pointed articulations of this perspective. This conceptual dichotomy has profound implications for understanding the work's central themes, its genre, and its broader theological framework. However, these interpretations are often grounded in later theological presuppositions about the limits of human wisdom and the nature of divine wisdom.

This paper seeks to challenge this entrenched scholarly consensus and offer a reevaluation of the concepts of, and the relationship between, human and divine wisdom in the Book of Job. Through a detailed analysis of the occurrences of the term “wisdom” in Job – taking into account the text's rhetoric and distinctive modes of discourse – I will argue that divine wisdom is best understood as a reflection or projection of human conceptions of wisdom onto the divine realm. Thus, divine wisdom differs from human wisdom not qualitatively but quantitatively, i.e., in scope and scale. Moreover, divine wisdom enables human wisdom, in contrast to the prevalent view that posits divine wisdom as an insurmountable barrier to human understanding or as rendering human wisdom irrelevant.

In the final section, I will discuss the broader implications of this revised understanding of wisdom for key issues in biblical scholarship, including the nature of wisdom in the Hebrew Bible and its relationship to ancient Near Eastern wisdom traditions, the message of the Book of Job, and the text's place within the biblical wisdom tradition.

Sapientia Discursiva – The Hermeneutics of Sapiential Thinking

Yannik Ehmer (Humboldt University of Berlin)

41–042/2

The question of a corpus sapientiale and its philosophical implications is as old as the discipline of exegesis itself. Origen, for instance, identifies the Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs with the three philosophical disciplines of ethics, physics and epoptics (Commentary on the Song of Songs, Prol. 3). He characterizes these

sapiential works as modes of knowledge production. While they resemble each other in their aim to understand the world, they differ in their epistemic strategies. Modern versions of the Hebrew Bible separate the Book of Proverbs from Ecclesiastes, following a tradition from the 15th and 16th century. However, there are traces of a different canonical order, preserving a *sapientia discursiva*. The sages deliberately created an anthology of sapiential works that resemble each other, react to each other, while presenting different perspectives on the world. Only a few scholars have taken up and seriously considered the idea of a *corpus sapientiale* or a *sapientia discursiva* (Maurice Gilbert; Rachel Frish; Markus Saur; Bernd U. Schipper; Tomas Krüger). All of these scholars point to the formal connections between the canonical books. None of them, however, address the philosophical implications of the “words of the wise” and their entanglement. What are their epistemological, aesthetic and ethical dimensions and how do they interact with each other? I propose to shift the focus in two ways: (1) scholars need to take the philosophical consequences of discursive wisdom more seriously (Origen) and (2) scholarship on Wisdom Literature of the ANE should significantly broaden the material basis to conceptualize a *sapientia discursiva* as a philosophical practice (rather than a rigid *corpus sapientiale*). Discursive wisdom is a philosophical hermeneutics that enabled the sages to understand their world in different times by transposing ideas, adding perspectives and nuancing ideas.

The “Death of the Self” in the Book of Lamentations: A Philosophical Account

Pia Regensburger (University of Oxford)

41-042/3

Research on the formation of the subject has shown that ancient societies can no longer be conceptualized as having primitive, collectivist conceptions of the self that contrast with the more individualized and interiorized forms of later cultures. In recent years, it has thus become common practice to explore the themes of individuality and introspection in ancient Jewish writings through topics like moral agency, lived religion, liturgical and interpretive practices, perfectionism, corporality, desire, ethics and gendered violence. When it comes to the book of Lamentations, scholarly fixation on cultural or collective identity continues to be persistent, however, leaving the individual dimensions of selfhood captured within the text largely underexplored. Moving away from the prevalent tendency of reading Lamentations through the lens of collective trauma, this paper will explore how the portrayal of Bat-Zion reflects the parallel trajectories of an introspective self that are visible in the Hebrew Bible and ancient Judaism more broadly speaking. At its core, the paper will address the idea of the “death of the self” as a fundamental motif throughout Lamentations, reflected first and foremost in the notion of Bat-Zion’s lost *nephesh*. Drawing on Søren Kierkegaard’s philosophical deliberations on selfhood to illuminate the ancient text, it will be argued that Lamentations encapsulates the dynamic processes of self-formation, dissolution, and reconstitution in the face of trauma. By framing trauma as a catalyst for introspection, the paper overall aims to contribute to the broader discourse on ancient Israelite conceptions of selfhood, offering a fresh perspective on the interplay between individuality and collective experience in biblical literature.

**“What Brightens the Eye Gladdens the Heart; Good News Puts Fat on the Bones”
(Prov 15:30): The Interrelationship between Body and Soul in Aphoristic Rhetoric**

Tova Forti (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev)

42-042/1

The biblical writers' metaphorical and idiomatic use of corporal organs to convey emotions indicates their awareness of the interrelationship between body and soul (Lahua; Smith; Kruger). As reflected in the modern term “psychosomatic,” human experiences frequently involve both psychological and physical aspects (Wolff, 1968; Hill, 1970a). Exploring ancient knowledge of the way in which physical health affects mood and mental states on the one hand and the mind the body on the other, this paper focuses on the psychological sensitivity and cognitive and emotional self-awareness the aphoristic rhetoric of Proverbs exhibits. The findings corroborate the view that biblical proverbs recognize the power of cognitive behavioral intervention to change thought patterns and thereby improve an individual's quality of life.

The Body and the Immaterial Person in Proverbs and Egyptian Iconography

Emily Page (University of St Andrews)

42-042/2

A live question in ANE anthropology centers on how the physical body was thought to relate to the immaterial person. Within Hebrew Bible scholarship, debates center on whether the texts express any distinction between body and immaterial, with the two arguments typically being 1): the body and the immaterial are two distinct things or 2): the self is one thing, a “psychosomatic unity.” In this paper, I explore a root conceptual metaphor for anthropology in Proverbs: body is container of immaterial person. Throughout Proverbs, various metaphors regarding parts the body (heart, eyes, etc.) contribute to a larger insinuation regarding the whole body, namely: the physical and immaterial aspects of a person were thought to be codependent, though distinct. Even further, the physical state of a person and the inner state of a person are a direct result of one another.

In order to help decode some of these metaphors, I evaluate Egyptian body concepts, particularly in funerary iconography, which illustrate how embodied experiences can define the relationship between body and non-body. Egyptian concepts are helpful comparative materials because while they do not define ancient Israelite thought, they provide limitations around what broader anthropological concepts existed in the ancient Near East.

Although partitive metaphors of the body abound throughout Proverbs and Egyptian iconography, my paper focuses on metaphorical uses that address the whole body along with the whole immaterial person, uses that most wholistically illustrate the anthropological metaphor body is container of immaterial person. These verses include Prov 4:22; 11:17; 13:3; 14:30; 15:4; 16:24; 17:22; and 21:23. This metaphor drives the anthropological framework of both Proverbs, and it also permeates Egyptian iconography. This

shared concept thus infers not only a common thought-world, but also a normative anthropology that undergirds the two cultures, though still remaining unique within each community.

The Dark Side of Wisdom in Proverbs: An Intersectional Perspective

Mark Sneed (Lubbock Christian University)

42-042/3

In this presentation, the dark side of wisdom in Proverbs will be delineated. Feminist scholars divide roughly into two camps concerning the personification of wisdom (and folly) as a woman in Prov 1–9. Either she is a positive (e.g., Katharine Dell and Claudia Camp) (or at least neutral) or a more malevolent figure reflecting patriarchy (e.g., Carol Newsom and Carol Fontaine). I will side with the latter position but will extend this topic beyond Woman Wisdom to include the notion of wisdom itself in the book and its encapsulated form as represented especially in the sentences (aphorisms or epigrams) in Prov 10:1–22:16 and chapters 25–29. I will show that the conceptualization of wisdom in Proverbs is certainly not neutral and serves to promote the cultural capital (drawing on anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu) of the scribes who composed the book, i.e., it serves their interests by providing them with social capital. This will then lead to the use of intersectionality (drawing on the work of Gail Yee) to reveal how social class, status, and gender in Proverbs align to alienate certain social categories like women, the governing class, and the peasantry from an elite form of wisdom the book promotes. The wisdom writers' particular social location as elite male retainer class scribes will be shown to be ensconced in the very notion of wisdom the book constructs. For them, indeed, knowledge (or wisdom) is power.

Religions of Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East

CHAIR: ADRIAN MARSCHNER (EBERHARD KARL UNIVERSITY OF TÜBINGEN)

Room: DOR24 1.201

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41-007

Prophecy and the Brain: A Neuroscientific Perspective on the Prophetic Ritual in Ancient Israelite Religion

Ville Mäkipelto (University of Helsinki)

41-007/1

Prophecy is a form of human-divine communication widely attested in the ancient world. The prophet serves as an intermediary receiving a message from the divine and conveying it to their audience. Prophecy was likely associated with some form of an altered state of consciousness (i.e., ecstasy, trance). However, the textual evidence in the Hebrew Bible is heavily edited and comes from late periods. Since we cannot access the minds or behaviour of the prophets, little evidence exists how these altered states

of mind were achieved or what the exact nature of such experiences was. Nevertheless, when used critically, comparative evidence from other cultures and even modern parallels may help us hypothesize about the bodily aspects of prophecy.

In this paper, I review evidence from modern experimental neuroscience of mystical experiences that, in some respect, resemble prophecy. Since the human brain has not decisively changed in the past millennia, this evidence may help us elucidate the bodily aspects of prophecy in Ancient Israel. The most comprehensive neuroscientific model of religious experiences so far has been proposed by Michiel van Elk and André Aleman. It is based on the influential predictive processing framework and proposes that the human brain is heavily influenced by prior cultural beliefs and practices when integrating and interpreting multisensory information in the creation of experiences. The model integrates the most recent finds in neuroscience of religion (i.e., neurotheology) demonstrating that different brain mechanisms are involved in different aspects of the mystical experience. I review the central brain mechanisms and reflect how they may also play a role in creating the prophetic experience. Finally, I propose how the applicability of the model to prophecy could even be experimentally studied in the future. Limitations of comparing modern evidence with historical phenomena will also be discussed.

Prophetic Bodies in the Ancient Near East

Martti Nissinen (University of Helsinki)

41-007/2

The site of prophetic activity has traditionally been found in the socio-historical contexts of prophetic texts. Anatheia Portier Young, however, has recently highlighted the human body as the primary site of the actual prophetic performance, which is widely acknowledged in prophetic texts (The Prophetic Body Embodiment and Mediation in Biblical Prophetic Literature, 2024). Reaching beyond the verbal content of prophecy to its human and material carriers, inquirers and audiences reveals the interembodied entanglements between deities, prophets, and their audiences. Even ancient Near Eastern sources reflect in many ways the embodied aspect of prophecy. This paper discusses selected examples from Mari, Assyria, and Deir Alla, in which a prophet is in need of food (ARM 26 8, SAA 12 69), performs a highly embodied symbolic act (ARM 26 16), appears as an omen by himself (FM 645, FM 14), or has bodily symptoms related to a vision (Deir 'Alla Inscription). All this demonstrates the synergy of speech and action and the centrality of the human body in prophetic mediation.

“From the Strong Came Something Sweet”: Sweetness as an Indicative of Authentic and Reliable Oracles in Ancient Israel

Luiz Gustavo Assis (Boston College)

41-007/3

What does it mean that the scroll handed to Ezekiel was “sweet like honey” (Ezek 2:8–3:3)? Previous scholarship on the scroll scene in Ezekiel provides different answers to this very question. Some connect it to the ordination and the prophet’s experience (e.g., Greenberg, Zimmerli), while others posit that it symbolizes the prophet’s encounter with the divine word (e.g., Block, Tuell). In this paper, I propose an alternative perspective:

the sweetness of the scroll signifies its authenticity and reliability as a divine oracle. Regarding the former, the sweet taste of the scroll indicates that it originated with Yahweh, that is, it is authentic. This interpretation will be supported by a comparative analysis of similar metaphors in Psalms 19 and 119, where instructions (תורה) that originate from Yahweh are described as sweet (מתוק) and smooth (מלץ). As for the notion that “sweetness” indicates the reliability of the divine word, the evidence of Jeremiah 23 – where Yahweh feeds the Jerusalemite prophets bitter food (v. 16) – highlights the association of “bitterness” with unreliable oracles. That the Judahite deity can impart an unreliable oracle to a mantic expert is evident in the account of Micaiah ben Imlah (1 Kgs 22). Thus, this approach to the scroll’s “sweetness” provides a nuanced understanding of Ezekiel’s prophetic experience and contributes to ongoing discussions about the nature of divine communication in ancient Israel and the broader ancient Near East.

Session 2

42-007

Priester als Universalgelehrte?*Florian Oepping (Tel Aviv University)*

42-007/1

Wie war der Bildungsstand der Priesterschaft? Waren Priester in der Tat Universalgelehrte? Diese Annahme liegt zahlreichen alttestamentlichen Thesen zugrunde. Als konkretes Beispiel lässt sich auf den Tempel von Bethel mit seiner Priesterschaft verweisen. In der Theorie sammelten Priester die Nordreichstradition, aktualisierten sie oder verfassten sogar neue Texte. Sie waren auch für die Aufnahme der Schriften im Südreich verantwortlich. Neuere Ausgrabungen in der Nähe von Bethel sowie ihre Interpretation fordern diese Hypothese nun allerdings heraus. Namhafte Archäologen identifizieren den Tempel mit einem Freiluftheiligtum. Damit steht der Tempel von Bethel als literarisches Zentrum allerdings in Frage. Weshalb ebenfalls dem Bildungsstand der Priesterschaft kritisch nachgegangen werden muss. Dieses Paper wirft zuerst anhand von archäologischen Funden der Eisenzeit einen Blick auf eben-diesen. Passend dazu werden einige alttestamentliche Texte aus der vorexilischen Zeit analysiert. Da der Befund eher bescheiden ausfällt und die Datierung oftmals auch noch umstritten ist, wird das Bild in einem weiteren Schritt durch Texte aus der nachexilischen Zeit vervollständigt. Es werden insbesondere Texte betrachtet, die die Verben „lesen“ und „schreiben“ verwenden. Daneben aber auch solche, die die Professionen „Priester“ und „Schreiber“ behandeln. Eine einfache Antwort lässt sich auf die oben gestellten Fragen nicht geben. Durch die literaturgeschichtliche Differenzierung zeichnet sich allerdings eine Entwicklung im Bildungsniveau der Priesterschaft ab. Trotzdem legen die Ergebnisse der Auswertung der archäologischen Funde sowie der Textanalyse einen kritischen Umgang nahe.

The High Priest – How High Is His Standing?

Hananel Shapira (Harvard University)

42-007/2

In both biblical and Mesopotamian priestly traditions, we encounter references to a particular priest who assumes a dominant role within the cultic framework. One key aspect that underscores his elevated position is his responsibility to conduct an annual ritual aimed at purging the temple of evils and restoring its cultic order. This is exemplified in Mesopotamia by the New Year Festival and in the Bible by the ritual of atonement. Recent scholarship has suggested that, in both cultures, the priest's performance of this ritual served as a means to elevate his status, potentially even as a replacement for the king, who traditionally would have held this ritual authority. However, a close examination of the ritual's specific details reveals an alternative perspective: rather than positioning the priest as a substitute for the absent king, the ritual's structure appears to reinforce the king's primary authority. Even in the king's absence, the priest's role, though essential, is presented as subordinate to that of the monarch. This nuanced dynamic calls into question the notion that the priest's involvement signified a direct challenge to royal supremacy and instead suggests a more complex relationship between priestly and royal power in both cultures.

Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics

CHAIR: SARAH WISIALOWSKI (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

Room: DOR24 L204

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41-009

Glad Tidings of Divine Fury?: The Value of Trauma Theory for Reading Nahum 1

Juliana Claassens (Stellenbosch University)

41-009/1

The book of Nahum begins with a vivid description of the Warrior God that bursts onto the scene, avenging his (Judah's) enemies in a dazzling display of divine fury (Nah 1:2–8). Klaas Spronk recently made a case for reading this metaphor of the divine warrior through the lens of trauma hermeneutics, proposing that the people of Judah, who have for a long time been on the receiving end of the Assyrian brutality, found comfort in the notion of the avenging God. Building on the work of Christopher Frechette, who has argued concerning a similar portrayal of Baylon in Isaiah 47, Spronk contends that the portrayal of the divine warrior serves as a type of revenge fantasy that gave the authors language to voice the inexpressible suffering experienced by Israel to the Assyrian Empire's invasion and ongoing control of the region. However, other levels of trauma hermeneutics could also be valuable for interpreting the Divine Warrior metaphor in the Book of Nahum. In this regard, Danilo Verde and Chwi-Woon Kim have explored the role of collective and cultural trauma in the Psalms, demonstrating how the collective

memories of Israel's national catastrophes are kept alive in the communal psalms of lament. This intergenerational transmission of past trauma moreover feeds into an expression of cultural or chosen trauma that forms an indelible part of Judah's collective identity, with the portrayal of divine fury, in particular, exhibiting potentially traumatizing effects in generations to come. This short paper for IOSOT Berlin will explore the value of trauma theory for reading the book of Nahum, with specific attention to the rhetorical significance of the metaphor of the Divine Warrior in the context of trauma and how this metaphor forms part of the ongoing process of meaning-making and identity formation in the shadow of one Empire after another.

Murderous Intent? Toward a New Poetics of Violence in Biblical Law

David Lambert (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

41-009/2

What is the role of “intent” in biblical law? This paper will examine passages on murder in the Covenant Code (Exod 21:12–14), Deuteronomic Code (Deut 19:4–13), and Priestly Code (Numbers 35), weighing them against their ancient translations. While these passages, for the most part, use a wide range of differing terminology to define what constitutes murder, contemporary translations and scholarly interpretations consistently have recourse to a single concept of “intent” to render their meaning. Indeed, “intent” is central to normative Western understandings of wrongdoing, but are there other possibilities for representing violence? Is the focus on “intent” native to the biblical texts? I will argue that many of the biblical terms commonly understood as signifying a concern for intention have been subject to a long history of interiorizing readings, beginning with the Septuagint. The paper will explore the various relevant terms with the aim of developing a less psychological, more material-based understanding of the nature of violence in biblical law.

The Legal Language of Esther: An Exploration of the Hermeneutics of Interpretation in the Traditions of Esther

Rahel Lampérth (University of Oxford)

41-009/3

Esther is a vibrant, living narrative tradition which is fertile ground to explore the impact of hermeneutics and ethical reading. In this paper I investigate the role and terminology of the law as a theme throughout Esther (see Clines, Boyarin, Davidson, Ego, Thambyrajah).

In the Hebrew Bible *תִּוְרָה* is the most common term for law and its meaning has evolved and expanded over time (see Schiffman 2012). *תִּוְרָה* does not appear in MT Esther at all. Instead, *דֵּת*, an Old Persian loanword, is often used. Due to this absence, some scholars have suggested that legal themes and the concept of *תִּוְרָה* are also absent from the traditions of Esther (i.e. Collins).

However, in the Greek texts of Esther, a variety of legal terms are used (e.g. νόμος, πρόσταγμα, ἔαθεμα; see Blank, Cohen, Ego, Greengus, Kneebone, Schiffman). I explore what this variety of terminology might suggest; for example: the use of νόμος (a common translation equivalent for *תִּוְרָה*) in the Greek texts.

Moreover, the additions in the Greek versions give innovative insights such as the prayers with theological themes such as law (e.g. Efthiamadis-Keith, C25–6, 29).

Despite the absence of the term תּוֹרָה in MT Esther, I argue that this idea plays a significant role within the story (contra Collins). I explore the transferal and translation of legal terminology in various traditions of Esther and its implications.

By exploring this theme and terminology across these textual traditions, insight is given into hermeneutical techniques and the impact of translation choices in this. Moreover, the ethical implications behind approaching these texts without their context within their wider tradition of interpretation and translation/languages will be considered. I argue that viewing a textual tradition as a whole greatly impacts and narrates the hermeneutical, ethical and theological discourse around these texts and themes within them.

Session 2

42–009

Human and Divine Emotions in the Hebrew Bible: Jealousy as a Test-Case

Ariel Seri-Levi (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev)

42–009/1

Biblical literature frequently attributes human emotions such as love, sadness, anger, and jealousy to God. What does this mean? Does God truly love, grieve, get angry, and feel jealous in the same way humans do? What is the relationship between human emotions and divine emotions? The prevailing trend in scholarship is to interpret divine emotions – particularly those perceived as negative – in abstract or metaphorical terms, downplaying their connection to human emotions. This approach stems from the assumption that God's inner world is fundamentally different from that of humans and even beyond human comprehension. However, since this assumption is rooted in Jewish and Christian theology, its applicability to biblical literature is questionable.

In this lecture, I will reexamine the relationship between human and divine emotions, focusing on the case study of קִנְיָה, or jealousy – a trait frequently attributed to the God of Israel and even portrayed as one of his unique characteristics. At first glance, one might argue that divine jealousy is merely metaphorical. However, some biblical passages, which I will examine, are much more plausibly understood under the assumption that divine and human jealousy are essentially identical rather than metaphorically related. I will argue that a literal, non-metaphorical understanding of divine jealousy is key to interpreting many biblical passages and fundamental ideas in biblical thought. Finally, I will discuss the implications of analyzing jealousy for understanding the relationship between human and divine emotions and for conceptualizing God in the Hebrew Bible.

Staying in the sanctuary – a danger to life

Edgar Kellenberger (University of Basel)

42–009/2

The fact that the numinous has a dangerous aspect is a cross-cultural phenomenon that can be observed not only in the Old Testament. Uzza's honest attempt to rescue the

tottering Ark of the Covenant leads to his death (2 Sam 6); the rescue of the Palladium from the burning Vesta temple in Rome by L. Caecilius Metellus, which led to his blindness, is comparable. Whoever sees the face of God risks dying (Ex 33:20 and other examples). In Greco-Roman mythology, people who unintentionally see a naked goddess bathing are comparable (Actaion is then turned into a stag and mauled by his own dogs; Teiresias goes blind). Semele wants to see Zeus during making love and is burnt to death by his lightning epiphany.

Particular attention must be paid when priests or other personnel of a sanctuary are affected, as is the case with the death by fire of the priest's sons Nadab and Abihu during the incense offering (Lev 10; Uzza in 2 Sam 6 may also be a priest or Levite). The deadly consequences of ritual or sacral misbehaviour are also evident in the case of Eli's sons in Shiloh (1Sam 2–4). On the other hand, I am not aware of any analogies from the ancient Near East or from antiquity. Conjuraton and oracle specialists prophylactically protected themselves from any ritual errors by praying formulas (numerous examples from Neo-Assyrian times). The Old Testament statements (cf. also Num 16; Isa 6:5–6) appear to be a *proprium* of Israel; and this line is also continued in the New Testament (1 Peter 4:17: „judgement begins at the house of God“).

De la célébration des fêtes bibliques à la réflexion sur la légitimité des traditions abrahamiques: ancienneté, messianité et foi en Dieu

Yolande François (Jean Moulin University Lyon 3)

42–009/3

Les fêtes bibliques occupent une place centrale dans les traditions religieuses abrahamiques, constituant des points de rencontre privilégiés entre Dieu et les fidèles, tout en symbolisant des moments clés de la relation entre le divin et l'humanité. Issues des Écritures hébraïques, ces fêtes, qu'il s'agisse du Shabbat, de Pessa'h, ou de Yom Kippour, témoignent de la singularité de l'alliance entre Dieu et Israël. Pourtant, leur portée ne s'arrête pas à la tradition juive: elles sont également reprises et réinterprétées dans le christianisme et l'islam, devenant des lieux de convergence, mais aussi de divergence, entre ces trois grandes religions monothéistes. Dans le christianisme, ces célébrations, héritées de la Torah, prennent une nouvelle dimension, centrée sur la figure de Jésus-Christ, perçu comme l'accomplissement des promesses messianiques. De leur côté, les fêtes de la Torah sont également évoquées dans l'islam, qui reconnaît la Torah et l'Évangile comme des révélations divines antérieures tout en affirmant leur dépassement par le Coran. Dès lors, ces fêtes deviennent un prisme à travers lequel se posent des questions fondamentales: la fidélité à la révélation originelle, la légitimité des interprétations successives et la portée universaliste de la foi. Ce contexte soulève des tensions théologiques et historiques, notamment autour de la figure du Messie et de l'interprétation des Écritures. Le judaïsme, par son ancienneté, revendique une continuité inaltérée avec les textes fondateurs, tandis que le christianisme et l'islam affirment une évolution ou une correction de la révélation. Ce débat met en lumière des enjeux complexes: comment comprendre les fêtes bibliques à la lumière de ces différentes traditions? Quelle place accorder à l'ancienneté et à la fidélité textuelle face à la réinterprétation et à l'universalité revendiquées par les traditions postérieures? Ces questions, loin d'être purement

théoriques, résonnent dans le dialogue contemporain entre les religions abrahamiques. Ainsi, cette communication propose d'interroger les fêtes bibliques comme un terrain de réflexion sur la fidélité à la révélation, l'interprétation messianique et la légitimité des traditions abrahamiques, dans une perspective où le judaïsme, le christianisme, et l'islam dialoguent sur leurs convergences et divergences fondamentales. Comment les fêtes bibliques, inscrites dans les Écritures hébraïques et reprises dans le Nouveau Testament, permettent-elles de questionner les notions de fidélité à la révélation originelle, d'accomplissement messianique, et d'universalité religieuse dans le dialogue entre judaïsme, christianisme et islam?

Reception History

CHAIR: HANNES BEZZEL (FRIEDRICH SCHILLER UNIVERSITY JENA)

Room: UL6 3053

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–010

Law, History and the Spirit of the Age. Biblical Politics beyond the Hebrew Republic

Daniel Weidner (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)

41–010/1

In 2010, Eric Nelson argued in “The Hebrew Republic” that 17th-century political thought is heavily influenced by biblical models. My paper focuses on how this biblical politics reverberates in 18th-century discussions on state and society in the context of the emergence of modern critical study of the bible, namely in the constellation of three texts: Johann David Michaelis “Mosaic Law” (1775) prepares the historization of the Bible by correlating the precepts of the Pentateuch with the customs of an archaic ‘oriental’ people. At the same time, he deduces traits of a well-ordered polity from Moses, e.g. when describing the Levites as a learned elite that collaborated with the state to educate the people. Moses Mendelssohn’s Jerusalem. “On Religious Power and Judaism” (1783) refers to Michaelis, arguing that Judaism has no conflict with enlightened reason, since it has no dogma, but only practical precepts. More generally, Mendelssohn suggests a delicate “balance” between “religion” and “politics”, in which “religion” represents the sphere of moral commitment and free consent. In “Religion within the Limits of Pure Reason” (1792) Kant, too, counterbalances the power of the state by the control of the enlightened public sphere, and, similar to Mendelssohn, he figures this sphere of consent by religious metaphors, namely as an “invisible church”. Judaism however, and namely the mosaic law, is now placed on the opposite side of this distinction as an essential “statuary religion” in contrast with the “spiritual religion” of a moral-philosophical faith into which Christianity is about to transform. Thus, all three instances show how the major 18th-century topics of the relation between morals and politics as well as between truth and knowledge are articulated through readings of the Hebrew Bible.

Amos in Reception: Elusive and yet Pervasive*Paul Joyce (King's College London)***41-010/2**

Some have assumed that the story of the reception of Amos is a relatively thin one, prompted in this view in part by the lack of overt reference elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible (as such) and in the New Testament (an impression that belies widespread yet subtle influences). The reception of Amos in fact emerges as a fascinating story, though one not without paradox and problem. This will be illustrated through two examples. Reading of certain verses along messianic lines goes back at least as far as the LXX construal of the puzzling Hebrew of 4:13; and subsequent interpretation along these lines throws up intriguing and yet also troubling issues. Then there is the ambiguous role of Amos with regard to issues of modern politics and society: a favourite source in liberationist and related discourse (including that of Martin Luther King), and yet also a book that has played its part in sustaining a corrosive moralizing discourse in relation to migration, a legacy with potentially very damaging effects.

The paper will close with brief reflections on the ethics of reading and method in reception studies.

**The Legacy of 19th-Century Travelogues of the Holy Land in the
Historiography of Ancient Israel in the 20th Century**

*Emanuel Pfoh (University of Helsinki)***41-010/3**

The modern rediscovery of the Middle East, and in particular of Palestine, after Napoleon Bonaparte's military invasion of Egypt and Syria in 1798–1801, meant for Western explorers, pilgrims and audiences a renewed interest in the Holy Land – which ought to be understood here as a particular Christian imaginative geography comprising in broad terms the region of the southern Levant. The Holy Land of premodern Christian pilgrims was now conceived through more scientific means: it was possible to be described with precision, measured, excavated – in other words, materially and to a certain extent “objectively” retrieved from the past. To this, a more proto-ethnographic description of the “manners and customs” of the local inhabitants of the region created a more rigorous picture into which to understand the past in which the Old and New Testaments were produced. The amount of empirical data gathered by hundreds upon hundreds of travelogues to the Holy Land eventually impacted on the histories of ancient Israel that were being written especially since the mid-19th century, under the new development of historical methodologies, and in particular “historicism”, in the humanities. This presentation explores the impact of this rediscovery of the Holy Land in the histories of ancient Israel produced in Europe, in particular within the institutional frameworks of faculties of theology and other religious environments. The reception of the travelogues in the Holy Land in this historiography set the stage to conceive of the ancient Israel of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible not only in nationalistic terms – proper of the period – but also after a search for biblical authenticity in the varied ethnographic record of Ottoman Palestine documented by multiple travelers in the region. As it will be shown, this historiographical legacy can be traced well into the second half of the 20th century.

“A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping.”
Rahel's tomb and Rahel's tears, and the appropriation of text and land.
Johanna Erzberger (Theologisches Studienjahr Jerusalem)

42-010/1

Remembered history can be experienced and becomes tangible in memorial landscapes. Memorial landscapes unite dimensions of time and space, of history and territory (Aleida Assmann). Space becomes meaningful and is so transformed (Klaus Bieberstein). At the same time memorial landscapes imply interpretations of their remembered past. With regard to biblical stories, memorial landscapes convey specific interpretations of biblical texts and translate these interpretations into space. In so far as they are connected to rituals or customs, memorial landscapes translate interpretations into action. By walking memorial landscapes, by converting them into a “theater stage”, people write themselves into the underlying narratives and become their protagonists as well as their authors resp. interpreters. Memorial landscapes are social spaces that are rooted in specific social and cultural contexts and in which these social and cultural contexts are reflected. The interpretations of memories that are reflected in memorial landscapes are therefore contextual interpretations. The representations of the story of Rachel and in particular of Jer 31:15 that are connected with Rachel's tomb, are contextual interpretations of these Biblical traditions. However, Rachel's Tomb, that has been venerated by Jews, Christians and Muslims throughout its history, is a place within larger, complex memorial landscapes of all three Abrahamic religions. These memorial landscapes participate in, influence, overlap, argue and compete with one another. They are the appropriation and interpretation of remembered history and identity-forming traditions – as well as of holy scripture and of space itself. They are places of conflict, but also places of shared history and of coexistence, and thus potential places and potential subjects of dialogue. Jer 31:15 and its remembrance as it is connected with Rachel's tomb shall serve as an example for this kind of contextual interpretation.

Hld 1,2 in zwei mittelalterlichen Quellen
Sr. M. Manuela Gächter (University of Lucerne)

42-010/2

Das Hohelied hat im Laufe seiner Geschichte ganz unterschiedliche Deutungen erfahren. Vor allem ist man sich nicht einig, ob man den Text als weltliche Liebeslieder oder als religiösen Text lesen soll. Was wenig bekannt ist: Bereits im Mittelalter erfuhr das Hohelied sowohl Auslegungen, welche den Text als religiösen Text lasen, als auch solche, welche ihn im Sinne von weltlichen Liebesliedern deuteten. Dass der Text solche Kontroversen auslöst, hat unter anderem damit zu tun, dass der Text sehr offen gestaltet ist. Es ist ein poetischer Text, der aber trotzdem narrative Elemente beinhaltet. Mehr als bei rein narrativen Texten, ist man beim Lesen gezwungen, die Lücken im Text mit eigenen Vorstellungen zu füllen und bei mehrdeutigen Wörtern die eine oder andere Bedeutung zu aktivieren. Vieles wird nicht gesagt und was gesagt wird, kann

unterschiedlich gedeutet werden. In diesem Short-Paper werden die offenen Elemente an einigen Beispielen aus Hld 1,2 dargelegt und anschliessend analysiert wie Bernhard von Clairvaux in seinen Hoheliedpredigten und der anonyme Kommentar von Oxford zum Hohelied (Bodleian Library, MS Opp. 625) diese offenen Elemente auffüllen und damit den Text interpretieren.

Friday, 08/15/2025

Pentateuch

CHAIR: CORINNA KÖRTING (UNIVERSITY OF HAMBURG)

Room: DOR24 1.101

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

51-001

Tautological Statements about God in the Book of Exodus:

Synchronic and Diachronic Aspects

Rainer Kessler (University of Marburg)

51-001/1

The book of Exodus is the book of God's revelations. God reveals his power and glory to Egypt, so that Israel praises him in hymns (Exodus 1:1–15:21). God reveals the Ten Words to his people, the 'Book of the Covenant', the sanctuary (15:22–40:38). The book is framed by two scenes in which God reveals himself to Moses (Ex 3 and Ex 34). In both scenes, statements about God's identity are placed in God's mouth which, logically speaking, are tautologies: 'I will be who I will be' (3:14) and 'Yhwh [is] Yhwh' (34:6). They make it clear that God cannot be defined by anything else, by anything apart from him. Descriptions of God by reference to something else are numerous and important. God is described through his reference to a group of people; he is the 'God of the ancestors' (Ex 3:6 and others), the 'God of the Hebrews' (3:18 and others), the 'God of Israel' (5:1). Metaphorical predicates are ascribed to God; he is 'my power' and 'my strength' (15:2), 'a warrior' (15:3) or 'king' (15:18). God is defined in comparison with other deities: 'Who is like you among the deities, O Yhwh?' (15:11). All these formulations describe essential aspects of the image of God. However, they always fall back on a dimension outside of God and relate God to it. The tautological statements add the aspect that, despite all these descriptions, God is essentially only Himself. There is no access to him unless he reveals himself. And even then he remains unavailable. These statements about God belong to a late phase in the development of biblical monotheism.

Sintflut and Sinai: Genesis 6–8's Allusion to Exodus 24–40*Zara Zhang (University of St Andrews)***51–001/2**

Ongoing debates in Pentateuchal study often pivot around the relationship between Genesis and Exodus, between the primeval history and Sinai, and between P and non-P. This paper touches on all three by exploring the allusions in Gen 6–8 to Exod 24–40. The beginning of Gen 6 contains about ten parallels with Exod 32; the parallels are evenly distributed in the non-P “doublet” of announcing of judgment (6:5–8), and P (6:11–13). Genesis 6:14–16, the building of Noah’s ark, features precise linguistic parallels with the making of the Ark of Covenant in Exod 25 and its completion in Exod 39–40. The initial covenant making with Noah in Gen 6:17–22 parallels with the same in Exod 24. The double entry of Noah into the ark separated by a seven-day waiting period, followed by “forty days” in Gen 7 parallels with the double entry of Moses into the cloud separated by a seven-day waiting period, followed by “forty days” (Exod 24:15–18); and the ark/Moses stayed on the top of the mountain. It is my judgment that Gen 6–8, when taken as a whole, alludes to Exod 24–40 more so than the other way around. The allusion case highlights the central significance of exodus-Sinai for the wider Pentateuchal narrative. The allusive relationship between the two accounts bolsters the coherence of each and the cohesion between the two blocks/books. Not only do the parallels between the two span across P and non-P sources, challenging the traditional source division in the Flood account, but they also help to explain some of the most notorious doublets in the Pentateuch which have served as the anchor point for source division. This study brings synchronic data to bear for diachronic investigations, and is an attempt to integrate intertextuality/inner-Biblical allusion with classic Pentateuchal criticism.

Slave Transaction, Magic Competition, and Holy War:**Three Ways to Read the Plague Cycle (Exodus 7–12)***Zhaoyu Yan (University of Zurich)***51–001/3**

The Plague Cycle in the Exodus narrative is a passage known for its complicated formation history, including different sources, redactions and additions. Based on recent literary analyses, this paper aims to explore the question: What are the basic narrative models through which the story was perceived and expressed? By closely examining the composed text, it suggests that three important perspectives within the story can be discerned: (1) the legal perspective of transferring Israel’s ownership from the old, evil master Pharaoh to the new, perfect master Yhwh (following Oswald); (2) the court legend of a competition between true and false magicians based on their sources of magical power (following Römer, Schmid, etc.); and (3) the holy war that the divine warrior Yhwh waged against the rebellious Pharaoh (and Egyptian deities) as shaped in a suzerain-vassal ideal type (following Dozeman, Brueggemann). It is the combination and interwovenness of these divergent perspectives that endows this story with its dynamics and narrative power, eventually integrating these different views into a “grand narrative” about salvation and punishment – an imperialist Pharaoh hardens his heart while the imperially imagined Yhwh triumphs over him through “great terror and signs and wonders.” These

analyses provide insights into the complexity of the Plague Cycle by highlighting not only its multi-layered nature but also its multi-conceptuality, offering a valuable textual case of how a biblical passage can be perceived and accepted polyphonically through the eyes of ancient Pentateuchal writers and readers.

Session 2

52-001

“Stretch out your hand”: The Neo-Babylonian Origin of the Root ṭ-ṭ-ṭ in the Holiness Legislation (Lev. 25:25, 35, 39, 47; 27:8)

Tommaso Bacci (University of Chicago)

52-001/1

In Biblical Hebrew, the weak root ṭ-ṭ-ṭ , often translated as “to be(come) impoverished,” appears exclusively in texts traditionally ascribed to the Holiness Legislation (H) – namely, Lev. 25:25, 35, 39, 47; 27:8. Standard lexica, commentaries, and studies of these passages usually interpret this root as a byform of ṭ-ṭ-ṭ , “to lower, sink” (Psa. 106:43; Job 24:24; Eccl. 10:18). However, this interpretation presents several challenges: first, it suggests a problematic compresence of stative and active meanings in the G-stem for the two byforms; second, the textual connection between the ṭ-ṭ-ṭ occurrences in Leviticus and the ṭ-ṭ-ṭ occurrences is tenuous, at best; third, Northwest Semitic evidence provides no clear parallel for this specific usage that predates Classical Biblical Hebrew. Textual critical evidence also hints towards reading the two sets of occurrences of ṭ-ṭ-ṭ and ṭ-ṭ-ṭ separately – e.g., the Peshitta and Targumim use denominative forms of ṭ-ṭ-ṭ to translate ṭ-ṭ-ṭ in Lev. 25:25, 35, 39, 47; 27:8, while they employ cognate forms of ṭ-ṭ-ṭ in Psa. 106:43; Job 24:24; Eccl. 10:18.

This paper proposes that the occurrences of ṭ-ṭ-ṭ in Leviticus are better understood as reflecting a dialect-specific usage of the Akkadian verb /magāgu(makāku)/, “to stretch out.” This verb is attested in Neo-Babylonian texts to express the idiomatic phrase /qāta magāgu(makāku)/, which is used specifically to describe a state of indigency (CAD M/1, 28). Besides the immediate semantic overlapping between Hebrew ṭ-ṭ-ṭ and NB /qāta magāgu(makāku)/, I will offer phonological and morphological arguments supporting this borrowing. Finally, I will present some implications that stem from identifying Neo-Babylonian-specific linguistic borrowings in the H layer concerning the diachrony of the strata of the so-called “Priestly” texts.

Enjeux de la représentation de la bénédiction en Dt 7,12b–16a

Joël Mambe (University of Fribourg)

52-001/2

Dt 7 comporte une inclusion constituée de deux textes agressifs (Dt 7,1–5.22–26). Le thème de la bénédiction de (Dt 7,12b–16a) apparaît comme un prétexte à une théologie de séparation stricte d’avec les nations habitant le pays de Canaan. La recherche récente date Dt 7 de la fin de l’exil ou plus probablement au début de l’époque perse. Le vocabulaire d’extermination et le contenu en effet, corroborent cette estimation. Ce langage violent d’extermination est caractéristique d’un groupe minoritaire qui craint de perdre

son identité ou son pouvoir. De ce fait, il crée des stratégies idéologiques de survie notamment la critique sévère des coutumes et des cultes de peuples étrangers.

Dans cet horizon, l'opinion commune interprète Dt 7,12b–16a comme une bénédiction conditionnelle, reposant sur la préservation de l'alliance et la fidélité (Dt 7,9–10) et l'exigence d'observer les lois et les commandements (Dt 7,11–12a). Cette présentation de Dt 7,12b–16a comme une bénédiction conditionnelle occulte le développement littéraire des v. 7–8 qui fait de l'amour inconditionnel de Yhwh la base de l'alliance par laquelle Israël peut jouir des bénédictions. La notion d'obéissance aux préceptes est ici subordonnée à l'amour.

Mon hypothèse générale dans laquelle cet exposé se situe est celle selon laquelle Dt 7 est une relecture combinée de deux visions sur la bénédiction : inconditionnelle et conditionnelle. Ce double aspect façonne l'hermeneutique de Dt 7,12b–16a. Dt 7,7–8, en effet, éprouve le besoin de justifier et de fonder la bénédiction sur la motivation substantielle de l'amour de Dieu, qui est renforcé par le serment fait aux pères. Il semble former une unité cohérente et, est assez tardif dans le développement littéraire du chapitre 7. Il montre une évolution de l'attitude envers la représentation de la relation entre Yhwh et Israël. L'amour a une valeur sémantique de la bénédiction et, précède l'élection. Cette idée d'amour associée au serment juré aux pères sont interprétés dans une réflexion ultérieure des éditeurs de Deutéronome comme non seulement la base de la bénédiction, mais le langage et l'expression même de la bénédiction.

Jeremiah

CHAIR: IAN D. WILSON (UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

Room: UL6 1070

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

51-032

Jeremiah's Archival Body

IAN D. WILSON (UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

51-032/1

This paper is part of a larger research project in which I am examining the prophets as archival spaces. As other scholars have suggested, prophetic literature had an archival function in antiquity. Prophetic books were (and are) collections of texts associated with certain prophetic figures from the past. They were sites of memory, believed to be imbued with powerful divine knowledge and meant to be consulted time and again for access to that knowledge. My study breaks new ground by arguing that the prophets themselves, their bodies as represented in the literature, are archival. This paper will examine Jeremiah in particular, along these lines. In Jeremiah, the connection between the archiving of divine messages and the prophetic body is explicit. Jeremiah receives divine words, and he consumes them (Jer 15:16; cf. 20:7–18). As Rhiannon Graybill has demonstrated, the divine words, which Jeremiah first experiences as pleasing, end up

taking over and contaminating the prophet's body – they end up consuming him, from the inside out. Jeremiah's famous representation of prophetic writing, in ch. 36, also provides insights into the archival function of the prophet. Scholars have frequently interpreted this story as a behind-the-scenes look at biblical composition, a proof-text for the redaction of scrolls in antiquity and justification for modern historical-critical methods. But, if we think about the story in relation to archives and archival bodies, all that is beside the point. In my reading, the point is that Jeremiah himself is a secure corpus of divine words, at the ready to communicate Yhwh's indestructible messages. It is Jeremiah's archival body that makes this scribal scenario possible.

From Textual Criticism to Editorial Work: New Insights in LXX-Jer

Avital Cohen (Sorbonne Université)

51-032/2

Recent research on Jeremiah has shown the importance of the Greek version (LXX-Jer) in the study of the history of its Hebrew text. Since the discovery of the Hebrew Qumran manuscripts, the existence of a Hebrew substratum that shares both the arrangement of verses and omissions with LXX-Jer has been proved. This discovery led critics to consider LXX-Jer an indirect witness to an alternative version of the Masoretic text (MT-Jer). The Qumran manuscripts of Jeremiah represent both MT-Jer and LXX-Jer; they testify to the plurality of forms of Jeremiah's text around the Christian era.

I propose a methodological renewal of the literary criticism of the book of Jeremiah through the examination of differences between MT-Jer and LXX-Jer. In particular, I wish to study the case of logical connectors. These elements are generally neglected, and it is customary to consider that these words may have been omitted by the translator or by the copyist of the Hebrew text underlying LXX-Jer. I will demonstrate how these elements are decisive since they testify to an intense elaboration of the text's argumentative structure. I will also address the question of grammatical persons, verbal tenses, and technical vocabulary. A precise analysis of the text allows us to propose new reconstructions of LXX-Jer into Hebrew that take into account these often overlooked linguistic features.

The establishment of both the two states of the text allows us to return to the literary analysis of Jeremiah's text. Reflection on the composition of Jeremiah's texts has produced important contributions that allow us to discriminate the sources used in the composition of the texts; it also highlights the editorial work that articulates these sources. I will show how working with the versions allows us to test and refine the hypotheses provided by the literary criticism of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 14:10: a Hoseanic Lens on Jer 14:2–12

Nehara Meinemer (Georg August University of Göttingen)

51-032/3

Within a short poetic saying in Jer 14:10, we read: *בְּן אֶהְיֶה לָנוּעַ רְגֵלֵיהֶם לֹא חָשְׁבוּ*. This bicolon condemns the restless movement of the people. However, it is unclear where they are headed and for what purpose. Most scholars interpret this as describing the people's pursuit of other gods, translating it as "they have loved to wander thus; they have

not restrained their feet" (RSV). However, this interpretation fits uneasily with the rest of v. 10. I propose a novel interpretation of Jer 14:10.

An examination of the structure of Jer 14:2–12 reveals that v. 10 is likely a late addition. Vv. 2–9 contain an account of severe drought and the people's subsequent prayer for Yahweh's help, so that v. 10 seemingly conveys Yahweh's rejection of the people's prayer. Oddly, in vv. 11–12, we find another rejection of the people's prayer. I show that vv. 11–12, not v. 10, constitute the original rejection.

It is acknowledged that the ending tricolon of v. 10 (וַיִּהְיוּ לֹא רַצָּם...) was borrowed from Hos 8:13. I take this further, and argue that the entire stanza in Jer 14:10 is modeled on Hos 8:13. In Hos 8:13, the people enthusiastically seek to please Yahweh with sacrifices, but are rejected. I suggest that this dynamic is replicated in Jer 14:10: the people are portrayed moving zealously between Yahweh's cultic sites – "So they love to move here and there, They do not restrain their feet" – yet are nevertheless rejected by Yahweh (cf. Hos 4:15; Amos 4:4–5; 5:4–6). I hypothesize that the composer of Jer 14:10 was initially reminded of Hos 8:13 by אֵינִי רַצָּם in v. 12. This prompted him to illuminate Jer 14:2–12 with the thought of Hos 8:11–13 by inserting an alternative rejection, modeled on Hos 8:13.

Session 2

52–032

The Magical Background of Jeremiah's Tripartite Expressions:

The Case of "O Land, Land, Land" in Jer 22:29

Cristiana Conti-Easton (Austin Community College)

52–032/1

In the 1950s, Herrmann identified a parallel between the emphatic threefold invocation אֶרֶץ אֶרֶץ אֶרֶץ ("land, land, land") in Jer 22:29 and a similar Akkadian formula in the first tablet of Maqlû, the foremost Assyro-Babylonian anti-witchcraft ritual from the first millennium BCE. This echoed an earlier observation by Duhm (1901) regarding the presence of magical formulas in Jeremiah. In Maqlû I (37), the tripartite formula eršetu eršetu eršetum-ma ("Netherworld, netherworld, yea netherworld") occurs within an incantation intended to invoke the Sumerian hero Gilgamesh during the Mesopotamian ritual. McKane later supported Herrmann's interpretation in his 1986 commentary on Jeremiah and, noting the prophet's recurrent use of tripartite expressions in oracles of doom (cf. Jer 7:4), he also suggested a magical function for these phrases. Building on these initial observations, my paper examines this potential correlation for the first time in greater detail, adopting a comparative lens to explore whether the author of Jeremiah 22:29 employed "magical rhetoric" (i.e., a specialized form of persuasive discourse that weaves language, imagery, and concepts associated with magico-ritual practices) – and, if so, to understand the theological motivations behind this choice.

Disintegrating Israelite Identity in Jer. 42–44: Reverse Exodus, Curse, and Ideology*Keith Pinckney (University of St. Andrews)***52–032/2**

In recent research Jeremiah has undergone significant analysis regarding the redaction of the book and plausible contact with Egypt in light of the passages that mention the nation Jer. 2, 42–44, 46 (Wilson-Wright, 2023). This paper takes a different methodological approach in analyzing Jer. 42–44 intertextually, I argue that this is a pathway for the reader to see that intertextuality here is in service of discourse related to ideology and identity. In short, the thesis of this paper is that Jeremiah 42–44 makes the argument that the return to Egypt by a portion of the rebellious Judean remnant is presented as a reversal or undoing of the exodus from Egypt, and this has implications for the identity of these Judeans in the Egyptian diaspora. And the text of Jer. 42–44 makes this move by alluding to earlier texts and traditions within the Hebrew Bible.

As Mastnjak and Fischer have shown Jeremiah sees the unfolding events as narrated as an actualization of the covenant curses of Deut. 28. The contribution of this project is to demonstrate that the curses are not only used to explain the exile and Babylonian Invasion but also the final movement of the Judean remnant to Egypt (cf. Deut. 28:60, 68), that already has its own influence of reverse exodus imagery. This portion of the nation is then placed on analogy with the Mosaic generation who is tempted to invert the same trajectory (Ex. 13:17, 14:13). By elucidating this textual coordination and analogy the rhetorical purpose(s) that accompany the motif (death, divine abandonment, and a measure for measure punishment) are brought into focus. The narrative placement of 42–44 immediately preceding the OAN (which begins with Egypt) can be thoroughly accounted for and the reader can detect the serious implications for the remnant that are to come.

Ezekiel

CHAIR: DANIEL SEIFERT (RUPRECHT KARL UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG)

Room: UL6 2095B

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

51–033**Traumatisierter Exulant oder prophetische
Idealgestalt? Ezechiels Zeichenhandlungen***Andrea Beyer (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg)***51–033/1**

Zeichenhandlungen bieten (auch) im Ezechielbuch einen maßgeblichen Beitrag zur Buchkomposition, zur literarischen Figurenzeichnung und zur theologischen Akzentuierung prophetischer Kunde. Dieser Beitrag diskutiert ein Verständnis von Zeichenhandlungen in ihrer Körperlichkeit und ihrem antizipierenden Charakter im Gespräch mit den neuesten Beiträgen von Stefano Salemi und Penelope Barter/Tyler D. Mayfield.

Ezechiels Zeichenhandlungen und er selbst als Zeichen erhalten neuerdings vermehrte Aufmerksamkeit. Dabei wird einerseits eine Lektüre als Traumaliteratur neu als hermeneutischer Horizont diskutiert, andererseits wurde zurecht die programmatische Gestalt der Texte als Literatur hervorgehoben. Zudem gilt Ezechiel als Musterbeispiel eines Propheten. Anhand von Ez 4,1–5,4 und Ez 12 bietet dieser Beitrag Überlegungen zum Verhältnis dieser drei Perspektiven von Idealprophet, programmatischer Literatur und traumatischer Erfahrung. Er fragt nach den Funktionen der Zeichenhandlungen für das Verständnis ezechieler Prophetie und für das Bild, welches das Buch in diesen Texten von Ezechiel als prophetischer Person zeichnet. Als Zeichen wird er selbst zur Botschaft und zur Idealgestalt, was – entgegen einer Engführung von Prophetie auf die Wortverkündigung – sein Handeln einschließt. Dabei erhalten gerade die Texte über Zeichenhandlungen auch programmatisch-prominente Plätze im Buch. Wie sich die Exilierung als Trauma hierin einfügt, und wie sich prophetisches Individuum und Volk dabei zueinander verhalten, ist Thema dieses Beitrags.

Turning Back to Justice: A 'Synoptic' Comparison of Ezek 18 and 33

Adrian Marschner (University of Tübingen)

51–033/2

Justice and repentance (literally 'turning back') are leitmotifs in biblical prophetic literature. Two key texts in the theological development of these motifs are Ezekiel chapters 18 and 33. While their general significance and close relationship are widely acknowledged, a thorough redaction-critical investigation of the nature of this relationship remains pending. The similar and, in many parts, identical ideas, expressions, and structure of both texts suggest the application of synoptic comparison methods, which are well-established in New Testament scholarship. This approach makes it possible to clarify the specific profiles and interdependence of Ezekiel chapters 18 and 33. As chapter 18 is situated between chapters 17 and 19, which are generally considered some of the oldest texts in the entire book of Ezekiel, an investigation of this specific chapter offers insight into the principal phase of its historical and theological development. In contrast, Ezekiel 33 is closely connected to texts such as chapters 3 and 14, which address the central theme of the 'watchman' in Ezekielian thought. Different versions of the prophetic message of 'Ezekiel' become evident through the various layers of the book, which, in turn, reflect the struggles in post-exilic Judah regarding responsibility for exile and the claims to the 'promised land.' The seemingly abstract concepts of justice and repentance come to life by exploring the theological challenges faced by thinkers and scribes in Judah as they grappled with issues such as transgenerational guilt and the nature of justice, whether as a status or a process.

Some observations on the Hebrew and Greek texts in Ezekiel 40–48 and their religious and cultural background

Siegfried Kreuzer (Kirchliche Hochschule Wuppertal)

51–033/3

As a fruit of the revisional process of the book of Ezekiel in BHQ, the paper will present some new insights on the textual history, and how the different versions reflect

a different religious and cultural background, esp. if one avoids an all too atomistic approach of textual criticism. The passages discussed represent different categories of sin (Ez 40:39), practical aspects of the weighing system (45:12), of grammar (examples of Mimation), and of scribal practice (the use of numerals in P967).

Session 2

52–033

Ein Gott, der über Leichen geht. Raumkonzeption in Ez 8–11*Philipp Seinsche (Philipps University of Marburg)*

52–033/1

In Ez 8–11 wird der Prophet Ezechiel in einer Vision in den Jerusalemer Tempel der vorexilischen Zeit entrückt. Dort wird er kultischer Praktiken ansichtig, die mit einem JHWH gemäßen Gottesdienst unvereinbar sind und die JHWHs richtendes Eingreifen provozieren. Zunächst lässt er diejenigen erschlagen, die in Tempel und Stadt an den unorthodoxen Praktiken Anteil nahmen, anschließend zieht JHWHs Herrlichkeit aus dem Tempel aus. Die erste ezechielische Tempelvision ist ganz wesentlich räumlich strukturiert: Der Visionär und JHWHs Herrlichkeit bewegen sich durch verschiedene Bereiche des Tempels; die von JHWH gerufenen Männer ziehen vom Tempel aus in die Stadt und durchkämmen ihre Straßen und Gassen. Die im Zuge dieser Bewegungen beschriebenen Räume sind durch ihre jeweils unterschiedliche theologische Bedeutung, die Platzierung menschlicher und nicht-menschlicher Körper in ihnen und die Handlungen, die in ihnen vollzogen werden, unterschieden. Gleichzeitig sind diese Räume keineswegs statisch, sondern werden teilweise durch die sie durchschreitenden Figuren neugestaltet. Im Sinne der von Martina Löw präzisierten Raumsoziologie, die den Raum als das Produkt von Anordnungs- und Syntheseleistungen begreift, rücken in diesem Beitrag die in Ez 8–11 beschriebenen Räume selbst als wesentlich sinntragende und sinnstiftende narrative Elemente in den Blick. Die Umgestaltungen der Räume, die unter anderem implizit zur Folge haben, dass die Herrlichkeit JHWHs einen Vorhof durchqueren muss (Ez 10,18f.), in dem zuvor Leichen platziert wurden (Ez 9,4–8), sollen hinsichtlich ihrer theo-logischen Implikationen dargestellt werden.

Divine Violence and Ezekiel 16: An Analysis of Metaphor*Asia Lerner-Gay (Emory University)*

52–033/2

My paper offers a re-examination of Ezekiel 16 with close attention to the legal nature of the extended metaphor within the chapter to suggest a reading that is sensitive to the violence of the text. This chapter has received significant, and well-founded, attention from feminist interpreters in recent scholarship. However, this paper offers a different approach to re-imagining the violent language within the chapter. The paper first engages a literary analysis of the chapter to determine the existence and character of metaphor. A key element of this argument is to understand the metaphor that the writers employ; so, the paper then gives an overview of metaphor theory to show the intricacies and entailments involved with the metaphor of marriage constructed between

Yahweh and Jerusalem. Next, the paper offers an analysis of the legal nature of the text by employing metaphor theory and rhetorical analysis to argue grievances against Yahweh exit in this metaphor, and the suggested form of the passage is better understood as a prophetic lament. Thus, this paper analyzes the metaphor of marriage in Ezekiel 16 to understand the chapter as a lamentation directed at both Jerusalem and Yahweh, in response to the trauma of exile. By attending closely to the legal nuances implicit to the metaphor, one can observe a shift in perspective from divinely enacted violence to the imagination of the prophet that implicates both Yahweh and Jerusalem. Finally, this re-examination can supplement modern interpretations engaging with gender-based violence in the Hebrew Bible.

Book of the Twelve

CHAIR: KIRSTEN SCHÄFERS (UNIVERSITY OF BONN)

Room: DOR24 1.103

14:30–16:00

51-034

The Same over All the Earth: Semantic Nuances of אֶחָד in Zech 14:9

Giorgio Paolo Campi (University of Warsaw)

51-034/1

The prophetic logion in Zech 14:9 (וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהוָה יְהוָה) :אֶחָד וְשָׁמוֹ אֶחָד plays a paramount role in the Jewish liturgical tradition: this verse concludes the 'Aleinu prayer, which is recited daily at the end of every service. Besides celebrating YHWH's kingship, this formula also embeds a firm monotheistic statement: YHWH is אֶחָד 'one', at least in the eschatological hope expressed in the passage. The dating of Zech 14 to the Late-Persian or Early-Hellenistic period further corroborates the monotheistic background of this statement. Consequently, the meaning of the adjective אֶחָד in this verse has never been adequately problematized. This paper will argue in favor of two main points: 1. The predicate אֶחָד is attributed to YHWH not absolutely, but in his capacity as king, and cannot be detached from this characterization. 2. A slightly different interpretation of אֶחָד is possible and indeed more likely. This interpretation implies the idea of 'sameness' without rejecting the idea of 'oneness', and it is not at odds with a monotheistic reading of the logion but rather clarifies it and refines it further. The argument will develop in three steps. First, an analysis of the semantic flexibility and fluctuations of the term אֶחָד in its various occurrences within Zech 14. Second, a traditional-critical investigation of the motives underlying Zech 14:9 in both biblical (Deut 6:4bβ; Mal 2:10a) and non-biblical (KTU 1.4 VII 49b–52) literature. Finally, a contextualization of the image of YHWH אֶחָד in this passage in the wider perspective of the Dodekapropheton discourse, especially in relation to the image of the foreign nations or peoples (גוֹיִם / עַמִּים) as literary and theological construct.

Some oblique undercurrents in Hab 1*Anna Mátiková (Pontifical Biblical Institute)***51-034/2**

The discourse contained in Hab 1 (or Hab 1,2–2,5) evolves around the Chaldean invasion that is overtly presented as a divine response to an unbearable situation of injustice. Some peculiar textual phenomena, however, suggest that caution is advised when assessing the message of the prophetic text because more than one equally plausible interpretative solutions seem to be at hand. The present paper argues that ambiguity is not merely an undesirable and preliminary side-effect of the reading process but a strategic argumentative device that can be reliably identified with certain features of language. The study therefore analyses some of the textual crossroads by which more than one interpretative solution is plausible and outlines the possible consequences of such a multiplicity of available solutions.

The Supposed Literary History of the Twelve Minor Prophets and the Book of Malachi*Isaac Kalimi (Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz)***51-034/3**

In the recent years, some biblical scholars suggest the diachronic growth of the complex of the Twelve Minor Prophets (Dodekapropheton) as an outcome of long redactional process. This paper exams the validity of those suggestions and shows the uncertainty of them. Instead, it offers a fresh and solid approach.

Wisdom Literature

CHAIR: YANNIK EHMER (HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN)

Room: DOR24 1.205

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

51-042**Alienable and inalienable possessions in the narrative frame of the book of Job***Stefan Fischer (University of Vienna)***51-042/1**

This paper analyses the narrative frame of the Book of Job from the perspective of possession. It distinguishes between alienable and inalienable possessions and relates this to the Hebrew expressions for possession. A distinction is made between ordinary possession, usually expressed by a possessive pronoun or the status constructus, and possessive dative, expressed by the preposition 'le'. It is shown how these two ways of expressing possession differ and that the latter implies that the Job of the framing action is particularly affected by the action denoted by the associated verb.

The Rhetorical Function of the Figure Elihu in the Book of Job

Tobias Siegenthaler (University of St. Andrews)

51–042/2

Setting the redactional-critical question aside, this paper explores the rhetorical function of Elihu's speech within the book of Job (chaps 32–27). Drawing on Wolfgang Iser, I argue that Elihu unsettles the reading of the book of Job as his inclusion forecloses a reading that allows for the resolution of the problem of theodicy. Without Elihu, the reader potentially could conclude that Job was right and his friends were wrong. As Elihu is not mentioned by God in 42:7, such a reading is frustrated. After expounding how the figure of Elihu affects the ones reading I return to the diachronic question in order to understand if the literarkritische exclusion of Elihu. My paper attempts to challenge the exclusion of Elihu's speeches on the grounds that their inclusion complicates the reading and understanding of the book of Job as a whole.

Re-Imagining the Gattung of Job

Hiyab Tsige (Evangelical Theological College)

51–042/3

Despite the number of scholars who have argued for a methodology of rhetoric criticism, I will present that a faithful method to the Book of Job is narrative criticism. I shall do so by exegeting Job 19 to show a strong textual evidence as well as narrative tools to support the thesis. Possible Parallels in the OT and Ancient Near Eastern texts will also be surveyed. Other Gattungs, I argue, will not portray God in the Book faithfully for the reader today when presented in the light of a rhetoric and disputation conversation.

Many have attempted to neatly categorize the Book of Job as a Wisdom literature. When doing so, this leaves the exilic/post-exilic readers to simply get the didactic lesson and move on. But is this a faithful representation of God's character in the plot? The relation between God and man in this artistic prose will project one towards the forthcoming Messiah. Only when the Book is seen as an inter-connected unit can one grasp the essence of the story of Job.

Scholars such as David Clines are inclined to believe that the Book of Job's Gattung belongs to a group of books known as "Wisdom" literature – Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job, The Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus (or Sirach). Against this belief, this research will attempt to re-imagine a method of studying Job with narrative criticism.

Session 2

52–042

Encomiastic Erotic Speech in LXX-Song of Songs

Evangelia Dafni (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

52–042/1

As is well known, the Septuagint (LXX) is a Hellenistic Koine source text that overlaps with the scholarly Greek-language tradition. The Song of Songs is a collection of love songs that belong to both the Jewish and the early Christian canon of the Old Testament.

In this paper, the encomiastic love-lyrical language of the book of Song of Songs will be examined on the basis of the quantitative and qualitative changes in sentence boundaries, direction of speech and meaning in the LXX compared to the Masoretic text. Keywords and images in the encomiastic love speeches of the LXX Song of Songs will be analyzed synchronically and their intertextual references will be examined diachronically. Special consideration will be given to the relationship between allegory, metaphor and metonymy. The basis for my investigations are the love speeches of the woman and the man in the LXX Song of Songs, in which the following images and motifs can be highlighted: God – man – woman, Eros and agape, marriage (coniugium vs. conubium), sense and senses (especially smell). In addition, there are also self-reflections and stichomythies as stylistic and staging means for lively, retold conversations between the protagonists, who reveal their names, external appearance, feelings and thoughts, as well as their intentional or unintentional, controlled or uncontrolled, active and passive actions. The following comparative texts are selected and will be analyzed on the basis of the motifs, style, staging and characterization just mentioned: 1) Genesis 2–3 and 2) Ps. Theocrit Idyll 27 (Gow). These texts not only show parallels of their narrative characters, but also literary dependencies.

From the comparison, typical features of love-lyrical language will be identified and highlighted, and it will be explained to what extent they are able to contribute to clarifying the formal and content-related peculiarities as well as the special anthropological and theological content of the LXX Song of Songs, which then lead to allegorization and eschatologization in the Synagogue and in the Early Christianity.

Fürchtet Hiob Gott umsonst? Ja, sogar in seinem Leid

Cha-Yong Ku (Juan International University)

52–042/2

Das Buch Hiob thematisiert die fundamentale Frage nach der Gottesfurcht des Menschen in Bezug auf Glück und Unglück. Der Satan setzt sich mit Gott über die Frömmigkeit Hiobs auseinander und stellt das unerschütterliche Vertrauen Jahwes auf Hiob subtil in Frage. Er behauptet, dass sich Hiobs Frömmigkeit nur auf sein Glück beziehe nämlich aufgrund eines dreifachen Umschließens zum Schutz durch Jahwe um ihn selbst, sein Haus und seinen Besitz. Im Rahmen dieser Untersuchung werden ausgewählte Stellen von Hiobs Monolog einer eingehenden Analyse unterzogen. Insbesondere werden Hi 3,23, 10,11, 19,6ff zur Aussage Satans in Hi 1,9b.10a und 2 46.5a verglichen, wobei sich ein signifikanter Kontrast herausbildet. Hiobs Rede in Hi 19,6ff erweist die signifikante Diskontinuität des dreifachen Umschließens Gottes. Dennoch scheint Hiob inmitten seines Leidens weiterhin in der Gottesfurcht zu verharren.

Diese Struktur manifestiert sich durch die Verkettung des Umschließungsmotivs, welches in den jeweiligen Textabschnitten distinkt differenz zur Anwendung kommt. Der Satan interpretiert es im prosaischen Teil als eine protektive Aktivität Gottes, während Hiob dasselbe Motiv als deren Ironie bzw. eine offensive Aktivität Gottes deutet. Diese Perspektive entwickelt sich von Hi 3,23 bis zu ihrem Höhepunkt in Hi

19,6ff, wo Hiob seine beharrliche Hoffnung auf seinen Erlöser artikuliert. Angesichts dieser Analyse stellt sich die grundlegende Frage. Was kann der Mensch inmitten seines Leidens überhaupt tun?

Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature

CHAIR: NN

Room: DOR24 1.201

16:30–18:00

52–005

The Need to Explain Evil – The Problem of Monotheism in the Enoch Traditions

Mirjam Bokhorst (Göttingen Academy of Sciences)

52–005/1

In the Enoch traditions, God is characterized as creator of the cosmos and as universal ruler, who dwells in heaven which is normally inaccessible to humans. In this way, direct communication with God is no longer possible. Instead, angels as well as Enoch as the chosen sage function as mediators between the heavenly and the earthly world. Furthermore, God as universal ruler also stands beyond the question of whether he is righteous or unrighteous and to what extent he can be held responsible for evil in the world. First, it is up to each creature to choose between good and evil. Second, as it is described in the Book of the Watchers, God has already taken arrangements at the creation of the cosmos in order to be able to act against deviant creatures. Both becomes paradigmatically evident at the so-called fall of the Watchers. With regard to theodicy, God is thus immunized in several respects; consequently, the existence of evil seems only to underline the sovereignty and power of God. But is this really the case?

In my paper, I would like to take a closer look at the meaning and function of evil and evil beings in the Enoch traditions and explore the question of how their existence is an answer to the problems that monotheism causes. Does the separation of evil from God merely serve to provide theological relief, so that God is distanced from inappropriate behavior? Or is it rather a matter of demonizing the danger inherent in disloyal behavior toward God? Or, finally, does the existence of evil and evil beings simply have the function of emphasizing God's power, since he can only appear as the perfect ruler in the face of evil?

Ben Sira, Rhetoric, and Memory in Hellenistic Judaism

Lindsey Davidson (University of Bristol)

52–005/2

Known ancient techniques of orality and rhetoric may have informed how Ben Sira structured his poems on banqueting and greed (Sir 34.12–31 [31.12–42]; 35.1–13 [32.1–17]), but whether the sage's compositional strategies themselves, like the poems' topics, are Hellenistic in origin has not yet been explored. The question will be investigated with philological analysis, insights from cognitive linguistics, and comparison to both classical Hebrew techniques and principles in Aristotle's *Rhetorica*. Such an appraisal will help

ascertain whether Ben Sira's acquaintance with Greek culture extends to rhetorical arts, thereby commenting upon the longstanding debate regarding the political and cultural setting of Ben Sira within Hellenism. This paper will also consider the extent to which cognitive linguistics and ancient modes of rhetoric might add to our understanding of the overall structure of Sirach as a book.

Dead Sea Scrolls

CHAIR: FLORIAN OEPPING (TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY)

Room: DOR24 1.102

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

51-006

The Authority of God's Law at Qumran

Peter Altmann (Fuller Theological Seminary)

51-006/1

Hellenistic-period (and earlier) Judean communities conceived of the authority of God's law first and foremost in connection with cultic practices and group-identity customs. Those communities provide little indication that they understood the function of their traditional and divinely promulgated legal material as something like a "rule of law" implemented by an executive authority. On the contrary, an important development occurs in the Qumran community's preoccupation with pentateuchal law which is on view in the intense textual attention granted to these texts. Furthermore, one also finds archaeological evidence of the concrete implementation of some pentateuchal regulations. This paper evaluates the extent to which evidence from Qumran—both literary (focusing in this paper on the Rule of the Community and Damascus Document traditions) and material—documents a change in the way that pentateuchal legal texts function as authoritative in this community.

The Temple Tax and the Tyrian Silver Coin Hoard: Considering Currency Debasement and Circulation

Lindsey Davidson (University of Bristol)

51-006/2

The Tyrian silver hoard of Khirbet Qumran (L120) remains a tantalising piece of the puzzle of the Qumran Essene community's position on the Temple "half-shekel" tax. The hoard contains 561 coins, mainly Tyrian silver tetradrachma, dating from 138 to 9/8 BCE. While we know more about the origins and development of the Temple tax in the late Second Temple period, additional insights could be gained in wider recourse to other findings in Roman numismatics, primarily contemporary Roman coin hoards in the Levant and evidence of fluctuating silver purity levels in the period. Alongside the information from coins, this paper also considers the relevant textual passages in 4QOrdinancesa-c, 11QMelchizedek, 1QDivre Moshe, and the New Testament. This paper weighs up the evidence of whether

the hoard is a private store or a community tax collection – drawing closely upon studies of the long circulation of Tyrian tetradrachma, currency debasement, and inflation during the period – as these issues bear upon both fiscal and savings patterns.

Session 2

52-006

**The “Seekers of Smooth Things” and the “simple people of Ephraim”
in 4QpNah: Comments on their relationship**

Arie van der Kooij (Leiden University)

52-006/1

The Nahum Peshier is well-known for its references, among others, to a group of people designated “the Seekers of Smooth Things” and another group alluded to as “the simple people of Ephraim”. The paper aims at addressing the question of how these two groups are related to each other. Obviously, the “simple people” are the followers of the “Seekers ST”, but even so it remains to be seen what kind of relationship might be involved. In order to deal with this, comments will be made on terminology used (esp. *memshelet*, *‘edah*, *qahal*) from the perspective of the Constitution of the Jews at the time. It will be argued that data found in passages about leaders and their followers (e.g. Dan 11:33, 34; 1 Macc 1:11; 1QS 5:21–22) may shed light on the issue at stake. In addition, terminology used in 4QpNah such as the verbs underlying “seek” and “misdirect”, and the adjective underlying “simple”, will be given attention in light of literacy in antiquity.

**Moons and First Fruits: Linguistic and Thematic
Divisions in Qumran’s Calendrical Scrolls**

Anna Shirav (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)

52-006/2

One of the distinctive findings from Qumran is the considerable number of scrolls that address the calendar and its associated events. These scrolls encompass a cyclical description of years, delineating a range of events and phenomena, exhibiting considerable variation in their literary genre, the method by which the scribes record dates in their scrolls, and the information provided in each calendrical list. In some cases, calendrical information is integrated into a broader composition. For example, the calendar in MMT is embedded within legal discussions. Other scrolls are dedicated solely to constructing the 364-day calendar, enumerating key dates. Manuscripts also differ in form: 4Q321 for example records only calendrical lists, whereas 4Q319 was penned together with a copy of the Community Rule. Even among those solely focused on the calendar, there is considerable diversity, each offering different details about dates and events.

While various scrolls make reference to the calendar to varying degrees, this paper will primarily focus on those that present lists enumerating features and events within the 364-day calendar. First, I will reflect on the content of each scroll or list – the information each provides – and propose a classification of the scrolls into three clusters. Subsequently, an analysis of the vocabulary of the scrolls will be presented, establishing correlations between the use of shared language and the proposed clusters. This analysis

will elucidate the relationships between the scrolls and clarify their compositional process, demonstrating how this classification can be used to establish the kind of data that each list could contain.

In conclusion, the paper will consider the contexts of these scrolls in relation to other writings that share characteristics. The aim is to identify consistencies in the composition of calendrical documents in Qumran and to examine the motivations for composing the lists as reflected in the manuscripts.

Theology, Ethics, and Hermeneutics

CHAIR: MARK SNEED (LUBBOCK CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY)

Room: DOR24 L204

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

51-009

Trial, Temptation, and Ethical Dilemmas in Biblical Narratives:

Abraham (Gen 22:1–19) and Jephthah (Judg 11:29–40)

Irena Avsenik Nabergoj (University of Ljubljana)

51-009/1

This paper examines trial and temptation in two biblical narratives: Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22:1–19) and Jephthah's vow leading to the sacrifice of his daughter (Judg 11:29–40). The analysis focuses on the relationships between God, parents, and children, exploring emotions such as fear, sorrow, love, and courage, alongside the values of faithfulness and obedience. It also addresses the temptation of the protagonists to avoid obedience to God in favour of preserving life.

The methodology combines semantic analysis of key vocabulary and literary analysis of stylistic features such as ellipses, dialogues, and implicit meanings. Intertextual comparisons are made with texts like Ps 22 (fear and trust), Job 1–2 (trial of faith), and Lk 22:42 (Jesus in Gethsemane), chosen for their thematic parallels. Jewish midrashic and Christian-patristic interpretations provide historical and theological insights. Special attention is given to how ellipses create interpretive spaces and dialogues highlight ethical dilemmas. The approach reveals how these narratives shape an understanding of trial, temptation, and relationships with God and others.

In Abraham's story, obedience is central, while Isaac's emotions remain unstated, allowing interpretations of his role as a voluntary participant. Jephthah's narrative highlights the tension between his love for his daughter and his duty to God, with the dramatic tone and ellipses intensifying the tragedy. Dilemmas of the fathers Abraham and Jephthah are reminiscent of the Maccabean mother (2 Macc 7) as a contrast. She is extremely active in her role of mother who encourages her sons toward martyrdom, elevating suffering to spiritual victory.

The paper reveals how trials and temptations in these narratives shape the understanding of faith, family dynamics, and ethical dilemmas. The interplay between

minimalism in style and emotional depth uncovers complex relationships between individuals, their families, and God.

Joseph, saviour or slave master?

Arie Versluis (Theological University of Apeldoorn)

51–009/2

The episode of Joseph dealing with the hungry Egyptians (Gen. 47,13–26) is evaluated quite differently. On the one hand, Joseph is viewed as a wise administrator, who makes the best of the Egyptians' dire situation. On the other hand, he is seen as a shrewd ruler who leads people into slavery, thus paving the way for Israel's own slavery. Moreover, the function of this episode in the Joseph cycle is unclear. Finally, the passage is relevant because it touches on modern discussions of slavery and anti-Semitism (for which it has been used in its reception history).

This contribution offers an ethical reading of the episode. First, it argues why narrative texts are relevant to the study of the ethics of the Hebrew Bible. It then explores the method of an ethical reading of narrative texts, in dialogue with (among others) the model of 'implicit ethics' developed by Ruben Zimmermann. Finally, and most importantly, the episode of Genesis 47,13–26 will be examined in the context of the Joseph cycle and of the Hebrew Bible. It will be shown that the image of Joseph, while seemingly positive at surface level, is more ambiguous in a wider context.

Beyond Eden: Rethinking the AI Dilemma through Insights from the Genesis Creation Narrative

Young Gil Lee (University of Sheffield)

51–009/3

The rise of AI has sparked intense debates, presenting two opposing perspectives. Proponents highlight its benefits, such as vast access to information, personalized learning, data organization, and advancements in societal welfare, particularly in environmental sustainability, healthcare, and global connectivity. Critics, however, caution against risks like replacing human interaction with AI, over-reliance, ethical irresponsibility, uncontrollable uncertainty, transhumanism, and the rapid automation of jobs displacing human labor.

Theologically, concerns center on the potential deification of humanity through AI, manifested in concepts like a "virtual kingdom" or "digital Eden." The doctrine of *imago Dei* in Genesis 1:26–27 highlights humanity's unique status as bearers of the divine image, while also establishing boundaries by emphasizing relationality, vulnerability, and limitation – qualities that distinguish humans from AI.

This paper explores the Genesis creation narrative (chs. 1–3) as a product of similar tensions. The Genesis account highlights boundaries, order, and human limitation, while also incorporating ambiguity and contradiction. While eating the forbidden fruit brings punishment – mortality and expulsion from Eden – it paradoxically enables human continuity through reproduction, both a divine punishment and a mechanism for cultural heritage. Humanity's history unfolds outside Eden, where separation from God's direct presence and the tree of life marks the beginning of civilization.

This dual-edged nature echoes today's AI dilemma, which oscillates between dystopian fears and utopian hopes. Ancient reflections on human nature grappled with the tension between respecting limits and surpassing them – an early philosophical exploration of the human condition. Similarly, the trajectory of AI hinges on human choices, balancing its promise and peril. Whether AI becomes a tool for flourishing or harm ultimately rests on our decisions. What can be a punishment – cultivating and regenerating – may also turn into the ultimate blessing.

Session 2

52-009**The immutability of God in the book of Deuteronomy***Albert Coetsee (North-West University)***52-009/1**

The book of Deuteronomy is arguably one of the richest books of theology in the Old Testament. Some scholars argue that a whole biblical theology on the being and attributes of God can be composed from Deuteronomy alone. Consequently, various studies have been published on God's being and attributes from Deuteronomy, including his righteousness and faithfulness, and studies on monotheism and/or monolatry.

This paper investigates an attribute of God from the book of Deuteronomy that has not enjoyed the same amount of scholarly investigation, namely his immutability. While Deuteronomy does not explicitly state that God is immutable, there are a number of references to his unchanging character and faithfulness (e.g., Deut 4:31; 7:9; 29:28; 32:4). These passages suggest that God's mercy and covenant faithfulness are unchanging, that he remains faithful to the promises he made to the patriarchs, and that his revealed will is constant.

The paper starts by providing a critical survey of passages from Deuteronomy that touch on the attribute of God's immutability. Next, the paper draws the lines together by synthesising what the book as a whole reveals about this attribute of God. The paper concludes by reflecting on Deuteronomy's contribution to the doctrine of God's immutability in the Old Testament.

This paper is part of a bigger project of a research unit of the EABS which investigates God's attributes from a biblical theological point of view.

Women, Life and Death in the Books of Samuel*Christel Koehler (Faculté Loyola de Paris)***52-009/2**

Reading the pericopes about three women in the two books of Samuel points out an interesting thread about women having a unique relationship to both life and death in the ancient world. Indeed, the narratives of Anne (1 Sm 1–2), the Endor Necromancer (1 Sm 28) and Ritspah (2 Sm 21, 1–14) show us women at the service of life. Although their stories are different, each of them takes care of the human body and experiences that life can be stronger than death. At a point of Israel's history where people probably did not believe in life after death, these women can be milestones on the way to the emerging

faith in resurrection. Moreover, each of them are resisting successfully against social structures that can be unfair, and confront male rules, which can teach us how Scriptures can promote a feminine theology. In this respect, they contribute to theology of life after death and ethics in this life.

We will briefly review the exegesis of the Books of Samuel, with particular reference to the state of belief in life after death in ancient Judaism. Then, for each of the three passages, we will look at what is at stake in terms of women's liberation, resistance against injustice, and the experience of the body. We will then see how this experience puts these women at the service of life. Indeed, we will analyse how it can be an expectation of a hope in life that is stronger than death, a hope that will only come later in the faith of Israel.

Reception History

CHAIR: LUCAS MÜLLER (HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN)

Room: UL6 3053

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

51–010

The Prince of Tyre and the Politics of Early Modern Ezekiel Commentary

Andrew Mein (The Queen's Foundation, Birmingham)

51–010/1

Ezekiel's oracles against the Prince of Tyre (28:1–10; 11–19) offer dramatic images of a royal fall from grace. Early and medieval interpreters of this material tend to move in two directions, the moral and the spiritual. The prince, exalted and cast down, is read as a warning against the sin of pride or an allegory of the Devil's fall. However, as polities without princes became an increasing part of the landscape of early modern Europe, a more political interpretation of this text also became possible, not least through the practice of typological interpretation, through which the identification of biblical characters with historical figures also allowed their redeployment as exemplars for the present context (cf. K. Killeen, *The Political Bible in Early Modern England*, 2017.) Might the fall of the prince of Tyre imply the fall of all princes? This 'republican' reading of Ezekiel is clearly visible in the commentary of the English Puritan preacher William Greenhill (1591–1671), who observes in the midst of the English Revolution that 'it is the princes' sins which shake the crown from their heads; their injustice, tyranny, covetousness, profaneness, throw them out of their thrones, lead them with scorn, and cause the Lord to pour his indignation upon them'. In this paper I will trace the development of this more political reading of Ezekiel 28, attending especially to the commentaries we know were in Greenhill's library, including both Catholic authors like Hector Pinto (1528–1584) and Gaspar Sanchez (1553–1628), and Protestants like Johannes Oecolampadius (1482–1531) and Amandus Polanus (15161–1610).

Eve in Dystopian Literature

Hanne Løland Levinson (University of Minnesota)

51-010/2

In contemporary dystopian novels Eve is the literary character from Genesis 2–3 that is most often explored. This is not so surprising when we take into account the immense reception Eve has had through history; documented most recently in *The Routledge Companion to Eve* (2024). In dystopian literature Eve is cast in several distinctive roles. She is mother or potential mother, prophet, savior, a Christ like figure, and even God. Different novels emphasize different aspects of her character, but they also combine diverse traits and produce something entirely new. This paper will focus on the representation of Eve in the novel *The Power* (2017) by Naomi Alderman. Alderman's Allie, aka Eve, also called Mother Eve, is the prophet for 'the voice' and an influential religious leader. When 'the voice' says to her: "You heard what she said. Eve passed the apple to Adam." Allie thinks: 'Maybe she was right to do it. Maybe that's what the world needed. A bit of shaking up. Something new.'" We will explore this new Eve and the dystopian time she ushers in, in this paper.

Session 2

52-010

Sheol and Hades in the Hebrew and Greek Psalms

Philipp Brandenburg (Humboldt University of Berlin)

52-010/1

The yonder world, the realm of the dead, has ever preoccupied human thought and imagination throughout history. The Old Testament contains a variety of views pertaining to the fate of the dead in their afterlife. Within it, the biblical Psalms present a very specific and despite their diachronicity also quite unified view of the Sheol that shows some striking parallels with the Hades of the ancient Greeks. In a close reading of the relevant Hebrew psalms and their Greek translation (mostly Ps 6, 9, 16[15], 18[17], 30[29], 31[30], 49[48], 55[54], 86[85], 88[87], 89[88], 116[114], 139[138], 141[140]) this short paper will sketch the psalmists' view of the Sheol in comparison to the Greek Hades (primarily Homer's *Odyssey*, book 11). But despite the fact that pagan Greek terminology inspired the Septuagint translators to the point that 'Hades' is actually the translation of 'Sheol' in the Greek psalms, the obvious similarities in the topographical depiction of the nether world should not be taken to imply that the cultural and moral values, the perspective on death as a part of life or the theological interpretation of death are the same, too. A careful examination of the theology of death will emphasize the uniqueness of the psalmists' view. Being inextricably linked to the workings of god Yahweh, death plays a considerably different role both in the psalms and in Israelite culture in general than it does in Greek polytheism.

What is his son's name? (Prov 30:4b). Reception of Prov 30 through the ages.*Frederique Dantoni (Goethe University Frankfurt)***52-010/2**

"What is his son's name?" (Prov 30:4b). This question, taken from Prov 30:5, might be understood as an ironic and rhetorical question, perhaps similar in tone to Elijah's challenge to the priests of Baal (1 Kings 18:27) and can be understood in this way: If you are so wise, why don't you just tell us!

But which son is being referred to? The Jewish publishers understood it as a veiled allusion to Israel, while later philosophers saw it as the Logos, and Christians understood it as a not-so-veiled allusion to Jesus.

The presentation will give an overview of the reception of the Book of Proverbs. It will focus on Prov 30 and discuss significant examples that show the extent to which the reception of the Proverbs has differed and aligned over time depending on the purpose and goal set. To this purpose, the writings of the Jewish translations, the Targum, as well as the writings of the ancient philosophers and church fathers will be compared with the Septuagint and the Masoretic Text. Notable examples will be Prov 30:1.3.4.19.

Gen 30:25–43: Its reception in Rashi's commentary and in Luther's translation*Jonathan Hirschberger (Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen)***52-010/3**

In his treatise "De servo arbitrio" (1525) the Wittenberg reformer Martin Luther states "esse multa loca in scripturis obscura et abstrusa [...] ob ignorantiam vocabulorum et grammaticae." (M. Luther, lat.-dt. StA, Leipzig 2006, 234).

If one considers the state of Christian Hebraism in the first half of the sixteenth century, one is inclined to agree. In the early 1520s there were only a handful of Hebrew dictionaries and grammars, mostly at an introductory level. When Luther began translating the Pentateuch in 1522, he thus encountered many difficulties with regard to irregular forms and syntactical peculiarities of Biblical Hebrew. Surprisingly, the quality of Luther's translations is much better than might be expected. Christoph Levin states: "Obwohl die christliche Hebraistik im 16. Jahrhundert gerade erst begonnen hatte, ist die philologische Qualität der Lutherbibel erstaunlich hoch." (C. Levin, *Durchsicht des Alten Testaments* 2017, in: M. Rösel (Hg.), *Was Dolmetschen für Kunst und Arbeit sei*, Leipzig 2014, 190f.). One explanation for the unexpectedly high standard of Luther's translation can be found in Stephen Burnetts' suggestion that Luther, along with his colleagues, Philipp Melancthon and Matthäus Aurogallus, consulted not only Christian sources, but also commentaries by medieval Jewish authorities such as Rashi. This paper wants to contribute to this topic by discussing Gen 30:25–43, its reception in Rashi's commentary as printed in the first *Biblia Rabbinica* (Venice 517), and the extent to which Luther's translation of this text is indebted to this Jewish source.

IOSOT Thematic Panels: Abstracts

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

Documented evidence for literary criticism: A paradigm shift or business as usual?

CHAIR: JUHA PAKKALA (UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI)

Room: UL6 2093

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–107

Documented Evidence and Literary criticism *Juha Pakkala (University of Helsinki)*

21–107/1

Literary criticism (Literarkritik) aims to reconstruct the transmission and scribal changes of texts, especially in cases where textual variants have not been preserved. Text-critical variants provide documented evidence for the editorial techniques and transmission processes of the Hebrew Bible. Recent studies (e.g., Müller and Pakkala's Editorial Techniques in the Hebrew Bible, SBL, 2022) demonstrate that most scribal changes could not be detected without such documented evidence. This finding raises important questions. What are the consequences of this result for literary criticism? Does literary criticism still have a future in the study of the Hebrew Bible?

What is a 'Word' and a 'Text'? A Cognitive-Linguistic Critique of the Historical-Critical Method *Raymond F. Person, Jr. (Ohio Northern University)*

21–107/2

In *Scribal Memory and Word Selection* (SBL Press 2023), I have argued for the need for a paradigm shift that takes seriously recent developments in language, especially epistemics, from the perspective of Conversation Analysis. In this paper, I will summarize my theoretical basis for this argument, drawing significantly from Conversation Analysis, and review some recent developments in biblical scholarship that I think are consistent with this theoretical basis.

**The Absence of “Sectarian Variants” in the “Biblical”
Dead Sea Scrolls as Challenge to “Tendenzkritik”**
Benjamin Ziemer (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)

21–107/3

In an essay published in 2002, Eugene Ulrich stated that he could not find any “Sectarian Variants” in the “Scriptural” Dead Sea Scrolls. That means, the scribes did not introduce their own “Tendenz”, the theological concerns of themselves or of their group, into their copies of the books of the Pentateuch, the Prophets or the other Writings. However, exactly such variants are the theoretical prerequisite for the method of “Tendenzkritik.” According to this method, the editors of biblical books have inserted their theological concerns over centuries creating version after version, mainly through additions recognizable by their specific theological tendency and thus allowing the reconstruction of continuous literary “growth”. Therefore, taking the lack of evidence seriously, hypotheses on the basis of “Tendenzkritik” should be treated with caution. Beyond producing a theologically actualized version, there were other options for theological updating an older work, all well-documented among the Dead Sea Scrolls: Placing the work, excerpts or quotations in a new context (4QTestimonia, 11Q5), commenting the work (Pesharim) or even writing a new work that henceforth existed alongside the other (Jubilees, Temple Scroll, Chronicles). In all such cases, even if a tendency of the newer work is clearly visible, its elimination will not unearth an older work or older version. Against this background, I will reassess Ulrich’s observation with regard to the possibilities of “Tendenzkritik,” focusing on themes of the Pentateuch in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Session 2

22–107

Changing Places: Reading David’s Last Words in Different Contexts
Cynthia Edenburg (The Open University of Israel)

22–107/1

David’s Last Words (2 Sam 23:1–7) is placed within the appendix to the Book of Samuel, but it also appears towards the end of the long Psalms scroll from Qumran (11QP^a), where it directly precedes the summary of David’s compositions. Josephus’s account of David’s career reflects all the narrative material included in the Samuel appendix (2 Sam 21–24), but instead of the inset songs (2 Sam 22, 23:1–7) with a summary of David’s work as a psalmist and musician, much like the section “David’s Compositions” at the end of 11QP^a. This case not only demonstrates the mobility of a literary unit from one context to another, but it also inevitably raises questions regarding its “first contexts”, as well as how its different placements impacts reading strategies by the first readers (composers and editors) of the Samuel and Psalms scrolls.

Manuscript Evidence on the Editing of the Book of Ezekiel*Reettakaisa Sofia Salo (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg)***22–107/2**

The translation technique of the Greek Ezekiel is very straightforward and faithful to its Hebrew Vorlage. Thus, a careful comparison between the Greek and Hebrew manuscripts contributes to the literary history of the Book of Ezekiel. My paper shows that in this prophetic book the classical historical-critical methods of literary and redaction criticism and their typical arguments are supported by the manuscript evidence. Accordingly, I argue for the need of a stronger interplay between textual and literary criticism.

Geography and Composition in the Books of Samuel

CHAIR: JEREMY HUTTON (UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MADISON), STEPHEN GERMANY (UNIVERSITY OF LAUSANNE), AND SARA KIPFER (TU DORTMUND UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 1070

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–111**“Judah” and the Scribal Imagination in the Books of Samuel***Mahri Leonard-Fleckman (College of the Holy Cross)***21–111/1**

This paper explores the geographic, social, and political representations of Judah in the books of Samuel. While recent scholarly attention has often centered on the meaning of “Israel” in the books of Samuel, and in biblical literature more broadly, the significance of “Judah” remains a compelling area of study. Israel was clearly of deep and ongoing value to the scribal imagination, and it dominates the books of Samuel. But what, then, of Judah? By analyzing the varied portrayals of Judah in the books of Samuel, this paper aims to shed light on the historiographic value of these representations and their implications for composition-historical inquiries.

David at Hebron: Reading Samuel Among the Ruins*Daniel Pioske (University of St. Thomas)***21–111/2**

In his *The Early Monarchy in Israel* (2007), Walter Dietrich observes that the site of Hebron poses particular challenges for readings of the story of David’s rise to the throne in the Book of Samuel. These difficulties, he notes, stem predominantly from an absence of large, systematic excavations of the settlement and from the dearth of excavation reports from the more limited archaeological fieldwork that had been performed. In the two decades since the publication of Dietrich’s classic work, however, two new publications on Hebron’s Bronze and Iron Age remains have come to light (Chadwick 2018, 2019). In this paper, I ask how these recent insights into the material remains of Hebron factor into our understanding of the compositional history of the story of David’s rise by

focusing on two texts—1 Sam 30:26–31 and 2 Sam 2:1–4a—in which the site of Hebron and its broader geography feature prominently. After reviewing recent studies of these passages, this paper argues that compositional-historical approaches to these texts must now contend with what appears as a formidable location during the era (ca. late Iron I/early Iron IIA) in which these writings situate David's activity at the site.

In Search of the Early Philistines

Ido Koch (Tel Aviv University)

21–III/3

The Philistines occupy a crucial role as the “Other” in the narratives surrounding the emergence of the monarchy in Israel, serving as the antagonists against which the plot unfolds. According to the overarching narrative presented in 1 Samuel 4 through 2 Samuel 8, the Philistines are depicted as formidable warriors who threatened the highland tribes, prompting them to unite and establish a monarchy. Decades of conflict culminated in the crowning of Saul, his heroic deeds, his eventual demise, and the rise of David, who ultimately vanquished the Philistines. Following their defeat, these “Others” appear only sporadically in the historical records of the monarchy in Israel and Judah. This literary portrayal of the Philistines has significantly influenced the archaeological study of the Southern Levant and the discourse surrounding the material remains excavated during the early 20th century. However, over time, an alternative image has emerged, one of cultured colonizers responsible for introducing innovations in construction techniques, pottery production, cultic practices, and culinary traditions. In my presentation, I will assess the discrepancies between the image derived from textual sources and the image reconstructed from material remains. I will focus particularly on the geography, toponyms, and descriptions of the landscape to gauge the historicity of the narratives. Furthermore, I will propose an alternative interpretation of the historical Philistines and their role in the historical processes that transpired during the early first millennium BCE.

Session 2

22–III

1 Samuel and Its Geographie(s) of Belonging.

Ekaterina Kozlova (London School of Theology)

22–III/1

“The term “belonging” is often used in two broad contexts: social and spatial. Social belonging refers to attachment to a particular social group, which can vary in size and scale from the family or local community to the nation or transnational community. Spatial belonging refers to attachment to a particular place, which can also vary in size and scale, from the home to the state.” (<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/>). Drawing on attachment theory and research in geography, space, and place (as well as “belonging” as a key concept within these fields of scholarly enquiry), this paper will explore the intersection of “personal” and “political” in the significance of Ramah in the life of the prophet Samuel as it is presented in 1 Samuel (e.g., 1 Sam 1:1, 19; 2:11; 7:16–17; 8:4–22; cf. 15:34; 16:13; 25:1; 28:3).

The place names of the second part of the Biblical account of David

Wolfgang Zwickel (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

22–III/2

The books of Samuel contain a large number of place names (about 170 place names of nearly 1500 mentioned in the Old and New Testament). Most of them focus on the south of the country, primarily the tribal areas of Judah and Benjamin, and are found in the sections traditionally referred to as the history of David's rise (1 Sam 16–2 Sam 1). However, fewer place names are documented in the texts about David's actions as king (2 Sam 2–12) and in the so-called succession narrative (2 Sam 11–20; 1 Kings 1–2). The paper deals with these last two groups and asks whether the settlement history of the securely identified locations allows statements to be made about the dating of the biblical texts.

Mystery and Esotericism

CHAIRS: ARJEN BAKKER (UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE)

AND HINDY NAJMAN (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

Room: UL6 2097

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–II4

Ethicisation of Ritual and Esotericism in the Levi Traditions

Christoph Nihan (University of Münster)

21–II4/1

One of the defining features of the Levi traditions (as broadly understood) is the supplementation of priestly rituals with an ethical perspective, so that Levi and related figures (Qahat, Amram) somehow become models for both ritual mastery and moral excellence. While this phenomenon corresponds to a larger trend in texts from the Late Persian and Hellenistic periods (e.g., Psalm 24:3–5), in the Levi traditions the trend toward ethicization of rituals also intersects with a priestly discourse on esotericism and mystery. The paper will explore three aspects of this intersection, before drawing some larger conclusions: (a) access to heavenly secrets; (b) dualism and priestly exorcism; and (3) the role of esoteric wisdom.

Holiness and Mystery: A Reexamination of their Relation in Priestly Texts

Annie Calderbank (University of Zürich)

21–II4/2

Holiness is often associated in biblical scholarship with mystery and esotericism. Holiness is seen as a numinous quality, linked to the ineffability of God. Holy things are said to be set apart from ordinary access. This paper qualifies these understandings of holiness with an eye to Priestly texts. I will focus on the tabernacle account at the end of Exodus and the Holiness Code. I will explore the way that language of holiness in the Holiness Code expresses not inaccessibility but rather integration and connectedness. Holiness is used to describe connections between Israel, the priests and sanctuary, and

even the deity. God as holy in the Holiness Code is not transcendent mystery but God in relation to Israel and open to being affected by Israel's behaviour. I am interested in the ways the Priestly texts themselves participate in this by making holy things and the laws about holiness accessible to the reader. For instance, the tabernacle account unveils the sanctuary and its sancta in description, even beyond where an ordinary Israelite could enter. I ask whether the Priestly texts might be said to be anti-esoteric, bringing their reader within the relationship of holiness. But could this emphasis on integration and accessibility also imply its opposite? Are these texts responding to the risk that holiness be hidden? Priestly texts thematise the revelation of knowledge around holy things. It is commanded of the priests to make known the distinction between holy and profane. The very plan of the sanctuary and its laws are framed as divine revelation to Moses alone. Israel's own sanctification is a prerequisite for its receipt of this knowledge and its access to holy things. This paper will thus highlight the intertwined dynamics of integration, accessibility, and esotericism in the portrayal of holiness in Priestly texts.

**(A Hymn) Pregnant with Meaning: Life and Death
of the inner self in Hodayot Column XI**

Christine Rosa De Freitas (University of Oxford)

21–114/3

This paper looks at birth imagery in Hodayot Column XI as a poetic device to address the themes of life, death, mystery, and divine knowledge. I propose that the womb is conceptualized as a sacred place connected to the human potential to know about the cosmos and the inner self in its struggle to access divine mysteries. Using Jer. 1:5, Ps. 139:15–18, and other texts, I analyze words such as שְׂאוֹל and כּוֹר as metaphors of the womb that tap into the hymnist's desire to access God's knowledge despite his human frailty. The paper engages with current work with the Hodayot that explores the philosophical creativity of these compositions as more than just an intertextual hermeneutical exercise.

Grasping the Unfathomable: Hidden Knowledge in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

Noam Mizrahi (Hebrew University)

21–114/4

The paper will explore a key theme of the Songs, namely, that of divine and angelic knowledge, which is, in principle, unattainable by human intellectual understanding yet can nonetheless be partly shared via other channels, such as lived experience.

Session 2

22–114

**Unsearchable Light: The Quest for Knowledge in
4Q392 ("Works of God") and Second Isaiah**

Ruthanne Brooks (University of Oxford)

22–114/1

This paper explores how darkness and light are implemented as conceptual spaces for knowledge in 4Q392 and Second Isaiah. The Qumran text known as "Works of God"

emphasizes God's unique relationship to darkness and light. Notably, the text represents the two as equal from the divine perspective and exhibits no negative appraisal of darkness. This discussion uses images of creation to recognize the inscrutability of the nature of God; at the same time, it invites the audience to seek to gain further knowledge of the divine. This tension acknowledges the question explored in many texts of the Second Temple period: what exactly are the limits to humanity's knowledge?

In order to understand 4Q392's contribution to the debate, after analyzing 4Q392 on its own terms, this paper puts the text in dialogue with Second Isaiah. By offering conflicting perspectives on the extent of revelation, Second Isaiah performs the act of mystifying knowledge; in claiming to reveal, it simultaneously conceals. Isaiah 45 in particular provides an apt comparison; it describes God equally as the creator of both darkness and light while framing God's revelation in terms of darkness and light. By putting these texts into conversation, this paper aims to demonstrate how ancient Jewish authors took advantage of mystery as an invitation for creative thinking. Darkness becomes not a space of emptiness or negativity but an opportunity to reflect on the divine.

In Praise of Darkness – rituals of mystery and initiation from Ancient Egypt

Robert Kade (Humboldt University of Berlin)

22–114/2

Concealment and secrecy are recurring elements in the Ancient Egyptian scribal tradition. As part of initiatory rituals, the scribes had to prove their familiarity with esoteric secret knowledge in order to be admitted into the 'Chamber of Darkness' (i.e. their profession), while the search for (divine) knowledge is also expressed as a motif in narrative texts. Beyond the literary traditions, traces of these practices can be discovered in the everyday life of temple communities, as the scribes were able to develop complex techniques with which they encrypted their writings and thus only allowed access to a limited, local circle of specialists. In this paper I will give an overview of some of the most prominent sources in which the restriction of knowledge is thematised or implemented and discuss the multi-layered significance of mysteries and secrets in Egyptian ritual practices.

The Spirit of the Sofer and the Gathering of the Lost Tribes: Scriptural Mysteries in the Pesher on Psalms (4Q171) and 4 Ezra

Florian Neitman (University of Münster)

22–114/3

The proposed paper examines two previously unidentified points of connection between the Pesher on Psalms (4Q171) and 4 Ezra, which are frequently discussed in the context of esotericism and the revelation of divine mysteries. Firstly, both texts make reference to Psalm 45:1–2 and relate it to (the) holy spirit, which is involved in the revelation of divine words or teachings. Secondly, both texts envision the regathering of lost tribes of Israel in the future. The two points of connection constitute the two main sections of the paper.

In the initial section, I will analyze the nature of the references to Psalm 45:1–2 in both texts. In the Pesher, the reference is explicit. By contrast, in 4 Ezra the reference is

so allusive that, thus far, it has eluded scholarly notice. As I will demonstrate, the link between the Ezra figure and Psalm 45:1 is grounded in the syntagma *sofer mahir*, which occurs only in this instance and in Ezra 7:6, where it refers to Ezra. Thus, the expression *sofer mahir* is applied both to the Teacher of Righteousness in 4Q171 and to Ezra in 4 Ezra 14 through the intertextual references.

This raises the question of the meanings of the word *sofer*, which will be discussed in the following subsection. While the word is typically understood to mean “scribe,” Paul Mandel recently proposed an alternative interpretation, suggesting that it often refers to a revealer or transmitter of divine knowledge or instruction. In view of the previously unidentified link between 4Q171 and 4 Ezra, I will reexamine the semantic capabilities of the term in both texts. By synthesizing these findings, I will elaborate on the implications for our understanding of scribal and revelatory figures in ancient Judaism and the interrelation between those two categories.

The second main section of the paper is devoted to the topic of the regathering of the lost tribes. This section begins with an analysis of how that prospect is formulated and contextualized within each of the two writings. The second subsection considers a specific aspect of this: how does the prospect of the lost tribes’ regathering relate to the scriptural, scribal, and revelatory concepts of both writings and their central figures?

In the concluding section of the paper, I will discuss the ways in which the two writings can be considered esoteric literature and the interrelationship between the esoteric and the revelatory elements.

By bringing the Peshier on Psalms and 4 Ezra into dialogue, the proposed paper aims to contribute to a discussion on esotericism and mystery in ancient Jewish literature, moving beyond the traditional boundaries of “apocalyptic” or “sectarian” literature.

Secrets of Prayer: Esotericism in the Book of Daniel

Sarah Wisialowski (University of Oxford)

22–114/4

Why are moments of prayer shrouded in mystery in the Second Temple period? This paper will examine the function of secrecy within the final eschatological vision of the book of Daniel (chs. 10–12) as prayer becomes a type of revelatory experience for Daniel. The case of Daniel receiving secretive, perhaps even angelic, knowledge implies the human capacity to know and to understand. Prayer disrupts the constant progress of time, allowing for introspection and renewal. This renewal comes in the form of revelation. Revelation is not a passive activity; instead, it is visceral and physical.

Prayer’s physical reactions help propel visionary experiences toward understanding the secrecy of revelation. Thus, access to the knowledge at hand is not a simple task. Instead, the receiver must wholeheartedly and whole-body put himself in the position to receive, just as one does with prayer.

This paper draws upon recent work on prayer and performance, exploring how prayer and revelation overlap to unlock secret knowledge. Using comparative scholarship and the blending of history and liturgy, I will explore how the revelatory experiences in Daniel 10–12 allow the secretive aspects of prayer to become accessible to a human, such as Daniel.

Scribal Culture and the Hebrew Bible

CHAIRS: NATHANIEL GREENE (UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN)

AND MATTHIEU RICHELLE (UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN)

Room: UL6 2094

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–119

A Day in the Life ... How to Situate Writing Within the Chaîne Opératoire of Iron Age Vessels

Alice Mandell (Johns Hopkins University)

21–119/1

Scholars of Levantine epigraphy have pushed past the scribal/non-scribal binary and adopted social-semiotic approaches to study ancient literacy. The material turn has further set the embodied and technical aspects of text-making on par with the more traditional language and script-based approaches to literacy acquisition. As a result, scribal communities are less treated as closed circuits. Scribes (i.e., literacy specialists) were ancient craft practitioners who shared similar tools and practices as other material-based specialists. This perspective highlights the interactive and collaborative nature of text-making and the varied knowledge and skills needed to craft inscriptions on different media and writing surfaces. Certain inscriptions preserved in the archaeological record involved material culture specialists, familiar with specialized tools and writing techniques (the people that we today call potters, metalworkers, and seal cutters, etc.). Other inscriptions more clearly involved the writing specialists that we today call scribes. Yet in certain cases, it is not always clear whether or not the text-maker was the object maker. The present paper addresses the blurred lines between text-makers (people creating the words of a text) and text-object makers and designers (the people involved in the making of inscribed things, who may or may not have been scribes) with a focus on Iron Age inscribed vessels. It outlines a methodology for evaluating the technical aspects of text-making to distill (to the degree possible) the timeline and process of inscription within the chaîne opératoire of vessels of different media. This approach has the potential to offer more precision regarding the people engaging in alphabet-based literacy.

Gab es institutionelle Schulen in der Welt des alten Israel?

Erhard Blum (Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen)

21–119/2

Die Diskussion über mögliche epigraphische Evidenz für Schulunterricht jenseits familiärer/privater Unterweisung im Raum der südlichen Levante (10.–6. Jh. vC) konzentriert sich gegenwärtig aus guten Gründen auf Kuntillet 'Ağrud und Tell Deir 'Alla. In dem Vortrag werden einschlägige Hypothesen und Befunde zu/in beiden Fundstätten kritisch diskutiert. Zu Tell Deir 'Alla wird überdies ein für diese Fragestellung entscheidender, bislang aber verkannter textlicher Befund vorgestellt.

**The Contribution of Undeciphered Ancient Middle
Eastern Scripts to the History of the Alphabet**
Madadh Richey (Brandeis University)

21–119/3

The potential presence of Early Alphabetic inscriptions in the northern Levant and in Mesopotamia can be understood in the context of other apparent experiments in script development in the Bronze and early Iron Age Levant. The present paper proposes to re-examine the depositional contexts, material manifestations, and graphic repertoire of three undeciphered scripts -- from Byblos, Kamid al-Loz, and Deir 'Alla -- with the goal of articulating broad comparisons and contrasts with those of the Early Alphabet. Visible in these scripts collectively is a complex interplay of influence from the better established writing systems of the ancient Middle East, namely Egyptian hieroglyphs (and related systems) and Mesopotamian cuneiform. Despite some graphic similarities between the other named scripts and the Early Alphabet, the failure of attempts at deciphering the former on Early Alphabetic foundations suggests the relative independence of these script experiments; the restricted nature of their manifestations also suggests their ephemeral nature, with script-historical implications.

**How old are the Ethiopic letter names? And why does it matter
for the study of Northwest Semitic Epigraphy?**
Aren Wilson-Wright (University of Chicago)

21–119/4

The Ethiopic letter names have played an important, if perhaps unexpected role, in the ongoing decipherment of the earliest alphabetic inscriptions. Since Alan Gardiner's 1916 article establishing the acrophonic principle as the key for unlocking these texts, scholars have assigned values to three early alphabetic letters solely on the basis of Ethiopic evidence. Gardiner, for example, assigned the snake pictograph the value {n} because the Ethiopic name for {n} is nahās, which resembles the Hebrew word nāḥāś 'snake'. But the Ethiopic evidence is not without potential pitfalls. The Ethiopic letter names are only attested quite late, first appearing in the preface to a 1548 translation of the New Testament into Ethiopic. This fact has led Edward Uhlenkopf and Peter Daniels to question the antiquity of the Ethiopic letter names and argue that they were invented in the 16th century CE on the basis of either the Hebrew letter names or the letter names found in the acrostic psalms from the Ethiopic translation of the Bible. If they are correct, then the Ethiopic letter names cannot provide evidence for the value of any early alphabetic letter.

In this paper, I will argue in favor of the antiquity of the Ethiopic letter names and their continued use in early alphabetic research. I will show that the Ethiopic names appear in at least two indigenous texts prior to the 16th century, the *Awda Negast* and an Amharic vocabulary list. I will also demonstrate that the letter names found in the 1548 translation of the New Testament do not match either the Hebrew letter names or the names found in the acrostic psalms. Finally, I will compare the letter names found in the 1548 New Testament, the *Awda Negast*, the Amharic vocabulary list, and Hiob Ludolf's *Grammatica Aethiopica* to show that the Ethiopic letter names formed part of a living tradition of indigenous Ethiopian scholarship with several variants.

Session 2

22–119

Paleographic networks: Towards automated paleographic dating*Eythan Levy (University of Zurich) and Silas Klein Cardoso (University of Bern)*

22–119/1

This paper will present the SPARK research project “Paleographic networks: Towards automated paleographic dating” (<https://data.snf.ch/grants/grant/221210>), funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, and carried out at the Institute of Jewish Studies at the University of Bern. The project aims at developing a quantitative methodology for paleographic dating based on the explicit modelling of ground paleographic data, allowing for an automated extraction of dating estimates from digitally encoded paleographic models. To this end, we introduce the notion of paleographic networks. A paleographic network consists of inscriptions, paleographic features, and datable archaeological contexts, interconnected through several types of relations: (a) relations between an inscription and its find context and paleographic features, (b) chronological relations between inscriptions, between features, and between contexts. We are developing a digital humanities framework allowing paleographers to encode such paleographic networks on a computer, and to extract a dating of paleographic features in an automated way. The system will automatically deduce dating estimates for each feature, based on the network’s ground data. These dating estimates will be fully traceable, thus helping avoid circular reasoning in paleographic dating. We apply this methodology to the full corpus of provenanced Iron Age Hebrew stamp seals and seal impressions. The presentation will describe our theoretical premises and models, present our database and software tools, and showcase preliminary findings related to the Old Hebrew script.

Statistical Analysis of Orthographic Use Patterns in the Isaiah Scroll*Barak Sober (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)*

22–119/2

Studying ancient manuscripts presents a unique opportunity to intersect mathematical modeling, statistical analysis, and the humanities. In the presented research, we introduce a new avenue of researching ancient manuscripts by analyzing the use patterns of orthographic phenomena. We will lay down explicitly the underlying hypotheses that make our approach meaningful and then showcase its application to the Isaiah Scroll (1QIsaa). The approach we develop is based on the following hypothesis: scribes who copy texts word-by-word have inherent tendencies (frequencies) of usage of permissible orthographic forms (that is, orthographic use patterns). In other words, each time a word is written, the action of sampling from an innate categorical distribution occurs, where the various categories are the various permissible forms. Using this model, we analyze the 54 columns of 1QIsaa on a column-by-column basis and show that there is a sharp stylistic transition at the 27th column ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$), as was identified by scholars for various other reasons. Moreover, using this methodology, we also observe a third hand, previously unnoticed, with high statistical significance.

The Multimodality of Royal Inscriptions: The View from Ancient South Arabia

Mario Tafferner (*Tyndale Theological Seminary*)

22–119/3

Recent research has demonstrated that Iron Age Sabaean scribes shared literary techniques with their northern colleagues who worked in the Levant (Monroe 2007; Hatke 2013; Tafferner 2022; Tafferner 2024). In light of this observation, the corpus of Old Sabaic royal inscriptions has the potential to provide a fresh angle for studying the integration of materiality and textuality in West Semitic inscriptions. Epigraphs such as RES 3945/3946 and DAI Şirwāḥ 2005–50, while closely paralleling a number of literary features in compositions such as the Mesha Inscription and 2 Sam 8:1b–14, exhibit a unique physical profile through both their monumental size and their highly regular layout. Moreover, both inscriptions are characterized by a purposeful arrangement of the inscribed text on their respective monoliths which responded to both literary and aesthetic needs as well as to the monuments' physical placement in the Almaqah temple of Şirwāḥ. These features appear to suggest an intended integration of the royal narrative and its material shape on part of the scribes to effectuate a particular performance for an assumed audience in the Almaqah temple of Şirwāḥ.

Scribes and/as Ritual Specialists: Writing Prayer in the Iron Age Levant

Spencer Elliott (*KU Leuven*)

22–119/4

The effect of prayer is in its pronouncement, when a deity can listen and react favorably to the words of the speaker. Writing prayer is a secondary development, creating new means of contact with readers, performers, and the deity themselves. The Psalms, as written prayer, represent a movement away from orally performed prayer, but how far removed are they from moments of practice? A new approach which incorporates research on writing practices, writing communities, and epigraphic evidence has the potential to redefine the reasons why prayer was first written in ancient Israel.

Few examples of prayer exist in Iron Age Hebrew epigraphy. The Ketef Hinnom (KH) amulets represent the best examples of something like a prayer in their use of speech to effect a divine response. These amulets are a product of craftsmanship in their material construction (Mandell 2023), but are also a type of composition which would require training to produce. Such training would happen within specialized scribal communities (Schniedewind 2023), where the written form of prayer and its application would be taught. Texts are written by people, and defining the types of communities that would or could write prayer(-like) texts, such as the KH amulets, has the potential to explain the reasons why a book of Psalms exists as a scribal product.

I will argue that written prayer in the Psalms, in its earliest stages, was the product of ritual specialists who were trained in both the writing and performance of prayer. These communities of prayer writers are evident in the Iron Age through the technical skill of crafting prayer texts like the Ketef Hinnom amulets, but they are also found elsewhere, such as in the Arslan Tash incantations and among the priestly groups within the Arad temple epigraphs. These conclusions have implications for the Psalms, and I will briefly discuss Ps 45 and its status as a scribal composition written by specialists trained to compose and perform prayer.

Theorizing Transmission and Textuality in Biblical Literature

CHAIR: JACQUELINE VAYNTRUB (YALE UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 1072

16:30–18:00

22–121

Josiah's Books: Depicted and Actual Transmission in 2 Kings 22–23

Timothy Hogue (University of Pennsylvania)

22–121/1

Josiah's so-called "law book" has been a fixture of studies of biblical transmission – especially concerning the book of Deuteronomy – since the seminal work of Wilhelm M. L. De Wette in the early 19th century. What has gone largely unremarked upon, however, is that Josiah actually discovers two separate texts in the Temple: The Scroll of the Torah and the Scroll of the Covenant, each of which imply connections to separate Pentateuchal corpora. Moreover, recent work on the phrase "cutting a covenant" (2 Kgs 23:3) may suggest that Josiah wrote still a third text. Of course, it is likely that these multiple texts were superimposed onto each other in the course of this passage's redaction, but it is striking that this superposition would happen in a narrative about textual transmission. This paper explores the material practices of textual transmission and reception attested in ancient West Asia and North Africa that appear to underlie this account. Special attention will be paid to the location of different texts as well as who can read and write them. I then argue that these practices were recruited in this narrative to situate literary transmission in the practices of the Judahite monarchy. 2 Kgs 22–23 thus provides an opportunity to explore the nature of transmission as a part of material culture as well as some emic perspectives on that transmission.

Textualization, New Mediations of Material Religion

Ingrid Lilly (Wofford College)

22–121/2

This paper proposes that ancient Hebrew textualization reconfigured the materiality of ancient West Asian knowledge practices. What moderns mean by text is usually abstracted from the materialities of writing, yet there are fascinating studies about the emergence of what we would call "literature" on objects like the tokens of trade, funerary offerings, and magic bowls. In this paper, I will assume a diverse culture of material religion, but reverse the inquiry – How might the material transformation of ancient knowledge practices be detected in textuality? Informed by what we know about Babylonian exorcism in the first millennium (knowledge, practices, scribalism), I will analyze several cases of Hebrew textualization: Job's folk tale, the narrative of the garden of Eden, woman Zion's lamentations, symptoms in the Psalms, or the textuality of prophetic embodiment. The primary focus will be exploring the "fit" between how and what Hebrew texts are building and the materiality of exorcist knowledge practices (like liver divination, diagnostic medical observation, or apotropaic and therapeutic ritual).

Now and Forever: Textual Transmission and the Poetics of Change

Francis Borchardt (NLA University College)

22–121/3

The life of a text, in some sense, begins even before it is born. Prior to a text's formal composition and existence in (quasi-) physical form, it already begins to take shape as an idea. Its subject, scope, and many of its characteristics come together to begin the text's biography, even as the legible and widely-accessible text has not yet taken shape. This early appearance of the text both brings it into being and looms over its continued existence. As the text is composed, edited, and circulated in new settings, this idea of the text remains. It gives the (quasi-) physical text its value and provokes it to take specific shapes. Moreover, that idea of the text is itself re-formed as new (quasi-) physical forms of the text appear. That is to say, the idea of the text is not replaced by the (quasi-) physical text; it continues to exist alongside it. Each affect and is affected by the other. In conversation with the theory of multiple ontologies developed by Bruno Latour, this paper argues that textual transmission takes place in the space between the temporary and imperfect (quasi-) physical text and its eternal and perfect ideal. By examining a selection of Greco-Roman, early Jewish, and Christian works that discuss the reasons for which texts change, this paper shows how ancient composers envisioned the transmission and adaptation of the (quasi-) physical text as an attempt to close the gap between it and the timeless idealized text. Further, it will show that the practices of contemporary authors and editors do the same as they write, edit, and circulate texts.

Perspectives and Prospects on a Scroll Approach to the Formation of the Hebrew Bible

CHAIR: JOSEPH CROSS (HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN)

Room: UL6 209I

16:30–18:00

22–124

Prospects and Problems for a Scroll Approach

Drew Longacre (Duke University)

22–124/1

In this panel presentation I will discuss the future prospects for what David Carr has called a “scroll approach” to the formation of the Bible, as well as the key material and methodological challenges that remain. I will illustrate these dynamics with the example of the Psalms and the formation of the Psalter.

A Scroll Approach to the Books of the Prophets

Nathan Mastnjak (University of Notre Dame)

22–124/2

Over the last several years, David Carr and others have put forward a “scrolls approach” to the literature of the Hebrew Bible. Material philology is a maturing discipline with many wonderful insights into a variety of manuscripts and manuscript culture. The

real trick is finding a way to use some of these insights for literatures for which we have no direct manuscripts evidence such as the literature of the Hebrew Bible at the time of its composition. This is precisely what Asaf Gayer and David Carr were able to do in a recent important study of textual density, in which they definitively demonstrate a huge spike in density that occurs in the Hellenistic period. In my own work, I have suggested along different lines that a scroll approach to the prophets can upend certain assumptions scholarship has tended to make about the composition of prophetic books, especially concerning the phenomenon of the variant arrangements of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. In this paper, I will discuss the application of Gayer and Carr's work on textual density for these questions in the prophetic corpus and make suggestions for future needed work in this area.

How Long Can Egyptian Texts on Papyrus Get

Joachim F. Quack (Ruprecht Karl University of Heidelberg)

22–124/3

My presentation will take a look at the attested lengths of papyrus scrolls in late period Egypt, with a focus on non-funerary material. The funerary material will be excluded because typically it was not conceived for repeated reading. It will be demonstrated that a conception of a standard roll of 20 sheets is too simplistic, and that genuine scroll-lengths can be quite divergent. Still there were limits up to what extend the use of one single scroll was realistic. Possible cases where long texts were occasionally divided over several scrolls will be presented.

Response

David M. Carr (Union Theological Seminary)

Demotic Egyptian Papyri and the Formation of the Hebrew Bible: The Berlin ERC Project

CHAIR: JOACHIM F. QUACK (RUPRECHT KARL UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG)

Room: UL6 2091

14:30–16:00

21–125

Beyond Closure: Transtextuality and Openness in the Ending of the Judean and Egyptian Novella

Joseph Cross (Humboldt University of Berlin)

21–125/1

The distinction of the Judean and Demotic Egyptian novella as a genre of literary storytelling is particularly visible in their endings: they effect poetic closure by resolving quickly and dramatically their complex and entertaining plots, and by returning back in different ways to their beginnings. In a few cases, this closure also has a transtextual basis, going beyond the closure of resolution and return. I will explore this in three cases, in the novellas of Jonah, Tobit, and Setna 2. At its ending, each

fictionalizes the very basis of its text. Unlike, for example, the Standard Version of Gilgamesh, which ends by affirming its opening fictional framing that it was copied from a lapis lazuli inscription of its hero, these novellas go further in their fictionalization by transforming their genre and by rewriting at their endings the contract between text and audience. Thus, the novella of Jonah becomes (despite itself) a prophetic message; the novella of Tobit, a testament; and the novella of Setna 2... a novella (sic). The result is that their texts are left open to the same degree that they are elegantly closed as works of verbal art. Such a sophisticated posture presupposes an equally sophisticated ancient notion of genre, and reveals the value of self-consciously literary storytelling within Judean and Egyptian reading communities during the Persian and Hellenistic periods.

The many Uses of Demotic and Late-Egyptian Literature for Biblical Research

Meike Röhrig (Humboldt University of Berlin)

21–125/2

Meike J. Röhrig will give a brief overview of her work in sub-project two (“inventing the future – prophetic and wisdom texts in the Hebrew Bible and Demotic literature”). The results can be categorized in two groups: 1) comparable motifs and 2) comparable structures.

ad 1): In the context of a larger study on Ezekiel 29–32 (a cycle of seven prophetic oracles against Egypt), it has proven fruitful to pay attention to Late-Egyptian, especially Demotic texts. Ezek 30:1–19, for example, was successfully compared to a passage from the Demotic “Oracle of the Lamb”. Another, recently published, Demotic text sheds light on the conceptual nexus between Ezek 32:5–6, a passage that is informed by the Egyptian theology of the putrid fluids of Osiris, and the following verses Ezek 32:7–8, which envision cosmic disturbances. These are but two out of numerous examples in which Demotic literature can be a fruitful source for tradition-historical analyses in Old Testament research.

ad 2): Comparable structures were uncovered with regard to the hermeneutics of prophecy in Persian/Hellenistic texts from the Hebrew Bible and Egypt. This could be shown in a study of the Graeco-Egyptian “Oracle of the Potter”, which can be described as an Egyptian example of “scribal prophecy” – a genre otherwise known from the Hebrew Bible – and which cites and alludes to not only older Egyptian and Greek texts, but also a verse from Ezek 26.

Scribal strategies and similarities between Demotic wisdom instructions and Hebrew Proverbs

Robert Kade (Humboldt University of Berlin)

21–125/3

In this paper, Robert Kade will summarize his work on wisdom texts, the second literary genre studied in sub-project two (“inventing the future”) of the DEMBIB project. His research is centered on the so-called Great Demotic Wisdom Book, the most complex composition from Ancient Egypt, in which proverbs were arranged in thematic chapters. The comparative analysis with the Hebrew Proverbs led to the discovery of a number of

structural similarities. Examples will illustrate the arrangement of proverbs in the individual chapters, which in previous research were often considered to be widely incoherent and random. Another compositional strategy involves the repetition and interaction of motives that allow for a better understanding of how proverbs were deliberately positioned in-between the sections of the book. The critical and discursive elements found at the end of the chapters are of particular importance, as they are not only also attested in the Hebrew Proverbs, but otherwise not known from any other wisdom composition from Ancient Egypt.

Jakob Wöhrle's Contribution to Hebrew Bible Scholarship

CHAIR: RUTH EBACH (UNIVERSITÉ DE LAUSANNE), FRIEDERIKE NEUMANN (CARL VON OSSIETZKY UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG, EBERHARD KARL UNIVERSITY OF TÜBINGEN)

Room: UL6 1072

14:30–16:00

21–127

On March 25, 2025, Jakob Wöhrle, professor of Hebrew Bible studies at the University of Tübingen, passed away unexpectedly. This session will focus on his contributions to research on the Hebrew Bible and ancient Israel in honor of his memory. Framed by smaller contributions, the central part will consist of three presentations by academic colleagues and internationally recognized experts reflecting on Jakob Wöhrle's exegetical work in three fundamental areas of research:

- (1) Pentateuch and Political Interpretation (Mark Brett, University of Divinity, Melbourne)
- (2) Literary history and the Book of the Twelve Prophets (Anselm Hagedorn, Osnabrück University)
- (3) Israelite History and Archaeology (Oded Lipschits, Tel Aviv University)

The Berlin-Chicago-Beersheba excavations at Tell Keisan (Israel)

CHAIR: AREN MAEIR (BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY)

Room: BUR26 013

16:30–18:00

22–128

Excavations at Tell Keisan: Tracing Early Phoenician Development and Mediterranean Interactions

Gunnar Lehmann (Ben-Gurion University)

22–128/1

This paper explores the archaeological site of Tell Keisan, a key location in Southern Phoenicia, to understand the development of early, pre-Hellenistic Phoenicia. Located on the Akko plain, south of the modern Lebanese border and north of Mount Carmel, Tell Keisan offers insights into the region's role during the Iron Age when it was influenced by the city of Tyre. The site, an artificial mound with a history of settlement

from the Middle Bronze Age, provides a unique view into the architectural and social changes over millennia.

The recent excavations at Tell Keisan, conducted by a joint team from the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Ben-Gurion University, and Humboldt-University of Berlin, have revealed complex layers from the Middle Bronze Age to the Persian period. These findings highlight the area's shifting political economies, from the fragmented city-states of the Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age to the emergence of independent entrepreneurial communities in the Iron Age, which facilitated the early Phoenician process described by Ayelet Gilboa.

This paper discusses changes in settlement patterns, the impact of maritime trade, and the transformation of political structures leading to the rise of territorial polities in the Iron Age. The transition from Iron Age I to Iron Age II, particularly, shows a dynamic shift with the decline of older urban centers and the rise of smaller, rural settlements reflecting changing political economies. The excavation results from Tell Keisan thus provide critical evidence for understanding the broader socio-economic shifts that shaped early Phoenician culture and its expansion across the Mediterranean.

The absolute chronology of Tell Keisan: initial radiocarbon results from the Late Bronze through early Iron Age strata

Lyndelle Webster (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)

22–128/2

A reliable absolute chronology is essential for reconstructing the local site history of Tell Keisan, as well as for situating it in the context of region-wide history and key ongoing debates. Thus, the development of a substantial radiocarbon dataset has been a high priority. In this paper we present more than 30 new dates from short-lived organic remains in well-defined contexts. They represent successive occupation phases exposed in Areas B, G and H that are associated with Late Bronze Age through Iron Age material culture. We present all three sequences but focus primarily on Area B, which currently offers the largest chronological model, incorporating both new and previously published data. The results put us on a much firmer time-scale than has previously been available for Tell Keisan and attest to continuous occupation of the site from the 13th through 11th centuries BCE.

A Petrographic Characterization of Iron Age IIA Pottery from Tell Keisan and Horbat Rosh Zayit in Western Galilee

Charles Wilson (University of Chicago)

22–128/3

This presentation shares the first results of a petrographic study of a broad range of pottery forms from two important Iron Age IIA sites in the Western Galilee, Horbat Rosh Zayit and Tell Keisan. Selecting a wide range of vessel forms was designed to cover as much of the pottery economy as possible. It is anticipated that the breakdown of the origin of the Iron IIA pottery assemblages from these two sites will reflect the latter's shared situation of being on an important, coastal, interregional crossroads: much of the pottery will reflect local production, while smaller subsets will likely prove

to have originated from the surrounding regions, including further inland, up and down the coastline, and Cyprus. After establishing the fabric groups through petrography, a subset of samples will be selected for chemical data collection, gathered by scanning electron microscopy. The additional chemical data will serve to test the validity of the groups established petrographically. The presentation will conclude with a brief discussion on geopolitical implications.

Sheep and Goat Mobility at Iron Age IIC Tell Keisan through Sequential Oxygen, Carbon and Strontium Isotope Analyses

Stefanie Eisenmann (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

22-128/4

The settlement at Tell Keisan was re-established with the Assyrian expansion into the region during the late 8th century BCE, which was followed by a short period of Egyptian domination at the end of the 7th century BCE. Only small parts of the site are excavated and it remains difficult to establish Keisan's significance during this period of foreign domination. With isotope analyses of sheep and goat remains we seek to explore herding practices and catchment areas from which these animals were brought to the site. This data will provide insights into the settlement's role within the Akko Plain and its contacts to other regions.

We present oxygen ($\delta^{18}\text{O}$) and carbon ($\delta^{13}\text{C}$) isotope data measured from sequentially sampled tooth enamel of 13 caprine individuals as well as tooth enamel data of three taurine individuals. Two additional strontium isotope ratios ($^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$) were measured per individual with sample locations along the tooth crown corresponding to minimum and maximum $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ values.

We investigate the range of inter-individual variation in the amplitude of intra-tooth oxygen isotopic change, and how this might relate to herd mobility, source of water intake, or both. In conjunction with the $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ values, seasonality in carbon isotopic values might provide an additional vector of geospatially sensitive information but may also hint at fodder provisioning during the wet season. Based on the link between strontium isotopic composition of bedrock and bioavailable signatures, the $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ data provides an additional measure for location and can be used to differentiate pastures in the coastal plain from the sedimentary hill zone to the east.

Taken together, the isotopic data at Tell Keisan suggests variable pastoral practices that included different locations of pasture as well as the occasional import of animals.

Wednesday, 08/13/2025

Apocalyptic Thinking in Antiquity

CHAIR: MORITZ ADAM (UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH)

Room: UL6 1070

14:30–16:00

31–102

**A Utopian Imagination? Exploring the Intersection
of Utopia and Apocalyptic Thought in Second Temple Judaism***Madhavi Nevader (University of St. Andrews)*

31–102/1

Despite John J. Collins' (2015) call for the sui generis nature of apocalyptic, a theological swerve made possible only by a unique alignment of circumstances under Hellenistic rule, there are nonetheless grounds to argue for biblical antecedents to apocalyptic thinking. Where most look to biblical genres (e.g. Prophecy [Barton 1986, Najman 2014] or Wisdom [Nickelsburg 2005; Wills and Wright 2007]) or to the social setting of certain scribal communities (Kvanvig 2018) as the bridge to or catalyst for apocalyptic thought, I turn in this paper to some of the Hebrew Bible's utopias, arguing that they can and should act as important conversation partners for our study of apocalyptic. Without necessarily arguing for a genetic relationship between the two corpora, I nevertheless suggest that much of the rich, theoretical work done in Utopian Studies may help us to theorise and to map more fully the apocalyptic turn in nascent Jewish thought. And so where scholars will look to Ezek 40–48, for example, as a precursor to Ascent Literature (e.g. Himmelfarb 1993; Joyce 2007; Tuell 1996) and will agree or disagree on the extent to which the text features of a prophetic vision map onto heavenly ascent narratives, I argue that it is the function of Ezek 40–48 as utopia – critical, alternative world-construction or dreaming (Ashcroft 2007; Jameson 2005; Levitas 1990; Sargent 1994) – that is more instructive for understandings of the function of apocalyptic. The hermeneutical benefits are innumerable. Most immediately, the comparison brings a new textual data set to bear in discussions of apocalyptic. But it also creates a conversation between apocalyptic and certain types of literature (e.g. legal utopias) that scholarship has otherwise assumed are worlds apart.

Revealing Plato: Platonic Influence Upon the Origins and Development of Apocalyptic*George Athas (Moore Theological College)*

31–102/2

This paper examines the influence of Platonic Philosophy on the development of apocalyptic thinking within Second Temple Judaism. It proposes that apocalyptic thinking was not solely a development of pre-existing prophetic and wisdom traditions within Judaism, but also a Jewish appropriation of Platonic philosophical categories. Plato's realm of the forms/ideas provided Jewish thinkers with new categories for asserting the notion of a spiritual realm, from which the nature of mundane earthly reality was

derived. Along with prophetic and wisdom traditions, this allowed the expression of a worldview which soon became the dominant perspective within Judaism. Understanding this Platonic influence upon apocalyptic gives us a better platform for understanding all the disparate works of the apocalyptic genre within Judaism. It also explains the worldview of most Jewish writers in the Second Temple Period, including the Qumran sect and the writers of the New Testament.

The Apocalyptic Job: On the Contribution of Job's Latest Editors

Urmas Nõmmik (University of Tartu)

31-102/3

The literary and redaction history of the Book of Job is a complex and debated topic. In research history, the book has been mainly ascribed to the wisdom tradition, and the apocalyptic perspective has played a marginal role. However, after reading the Testament of Job or similar literary pieces and returning to the Book of Job, one might be surprised by the potential of its certain parts to be discussed in the framework of apocalyptic thinking. It becomes particularly relevant if the same passages are regarded as the youngest additions in the Book of Job, partly originating in the 2nd century BCE – a tendency apparent in recent research. Among these are the two heavenly scenes of the frame story in 1:6–12 and 1:22–2:10 (including the dialogue between Job and his wife), the dialogue between Yahweh and Job in 40:1–6, and the conclusion of the confrontation with friends 42:7–9a+10a, which can be considered the work of the last editor of the book. The editor is related to the apocalyptic milieu because of the heavenly court and the elevated position of Job being the only human who directly communicates with God. The additions release Job from all possible faults and rationalise his case since Satan's bet explains Job's over-dimensioned suffering. Furthermore, several very late Fortschreibungen stand in close relationship with the apocalyptic milieu. They discuss, e.g., the angel saving from the pit (33:23–30) and Job's unique ability to see God (19:25–27; 42:1–6) or understand the world against the backdrop of the opposition of light and darkness (3:4–6+9; 24:12–16+18).

The Parasitic Apocalyptic: Instability of Genre in Job, 4 Ezra, and Daniel

Mateusz Kusio (KU Leuven)

31-102/4

The paper will make an initial case for understanding apocalyptic as 'parasitic'— a genre rarely existing in pristine separation and more often found in conjunction with other literary forms. Three Jewish works of postexilic, Hellenistic, and Roman periods will be discussed to corroborate this thesis. Firstly, relying on Johnson (2018), I will argue that in Job, an apocalyptic solution to a cataclysmic crisis is embedded within a sapiential dialogue, suggesting that apocalyptic was not so much a distinct genre, but instead a narrative technique. A similar claim can be made in reference to 4 Ezra where a meditation on the nature of evil and the sinners' fate is concluded with an extended eschatological vision (see Knibb 1982, Hogan 2008). Finally, the intricate compositional history of Daniel will be brought into the mix where the court tales and stories of mantic interpretation from Daniel 1–6 provide a background and structure

to the visions of the latter half of the work. Further examples from beyond Second Temple Jewish literature, e.g., the Book of Revelation and the Sibylline Oracles, will be briefly surveyed in order to evidence the larger applicability of the proposed claim. It will be concluded that it is more fruitful to move away from considering apocalypses as a genre and instead see them as narrative accretions on the already existing literary structures, traditions, and compositions.

Boschwitz on Wellhausen: Interdisciplinary Book Review Panel

CHAIR: BERNARD M. LEVINSON (UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA)

Room: UL6 1072

14:30–16:00

31–105

**Paul Michael Kurtz, *Boschwitz on Wellhausen:
The Life, Work, and Letters of a Jewish Scholar in Nazi Germany*
(Critical Studies in Hebrew Bible), Eisenbrauns/Penn State Press, 2024.**

Julius Wellhausen was a monumental figure in the field of biblical studies, but his work has been denounced as antisemitic in recent years. This book offers a nuanced view of Wellhausen's scholarship through a critical edition and translation of one of the last doctoral dissertations by a Jew in Nazi Germany: Friedemann Philipp Boschwitz's *Julius Wellhausen: Motives and Measures of His Historiography*.

Boschwitz presents a deep, holistic analysis of Wellhausen's thought, examining his work on ancient Judaism, early Christianity, and formative Islam within the framework of comparative religion and cultural history. He also situates Wellhausen in the context of German intellectual history, tracing the influence of Johann Gottfried Herder on Wellhausen and of Wellhausen on Friedrich Nietzsche.

This review panel has special significance for the 2025 IOSOT meeting in Berlin. The focus of the volume on Friedemann Philipp Boschwitz provides a window into the academic life and social and intellectual history of the Berlin Jewish community during the 1930s and 1940s in Berlin. It brings to light connections between biblical scholarship and other disciplines, and details, with remarkable use of archival materials, the extraordinary obstacles and challenges faced by Boschwitz in seeking to have his dissertation accepted and published. We have assembled an interdisciplinary panel to do justice to this fascinating volume.

Panelists

Anselm Hagedorn (Osnabrück University), René Bloch (University of Bern), Cynthia Edenburg (Open University of Israel), Daniel Weidner (Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg), and Paul Michael Kurtz (University of Ghent)

Labor as an Approach to the Persian Empire in the Southern Levant

CHAIR: JASON SILVERMAN (UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI)

Room: UL6 2094

14:30–16:00

31–112

SOURCE-IT: forced labour and indirect taxation in the Southern Levant

Lucia Cerullo (University of Helsinki), Filippo Pedron (University of Helsinki), Mitchka Shahryari (University of Helsinki), and Daniele Soares (University of Helsinki)

31–112/1

The WORK-IT team, led by Jason Silverman at the University of Helsinki, investigates forced labour and indirect taxation in the Southern Levant during the Persian period using a multidisciplinary approach, drawing on the expertise of each team member. The research integrates archaeological findings with epigraphic sources and religious contexts. Lucia Cerullo examines the influences of Achaemenid economy and culture in religious buildings in the Southern Levant and Elephantine, while Mitchka Shahryari and Filippo Pedron are working on epigraphic corpora respectively the Idumean corpus, a regional collection of Aramaic ostraca, and the central archives of Persepolis mostly in Elamite, including the Fortification and Treasury tablets, to identify administrative patterns and instances of forced labour. Finally, Daniele Soares explores the religious beliefs and practices in the Levant under Achaemenid rule, focusing on the Hebrew Bible, mainly the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. This presentation aims to introduce these sources, sparking discussions and fostering further collaborative insights.

Towards Rethinking Economy and Society in the Persian Levant through Informal Taxation and Bourdieu

Jeremy Land (University of Helsinki) and Jason Silverman (University of Helsinki)

31–112/2

The WORK-IT project has two main theoretical approaches it seeks to apply to the issue of forced labor in and around temples in the Persian Southern Levant. The first is informal taxation, a concept from developmental economics that takes seriously social structures for economic contexts in weak states. The second is Bourdieusian field theory, which integrates consideration of large-scale social structures with practices on the individual scale. The paper is a very preliminary sketch of ways we think these two perspectives might be mutually informative for our source material, and how they can prompt us to ask new questions of the economy of the period.

**The Babylonian perspective: a response to papers on sources
and methods in the WORK-IT project on informal taxation
in the Southern Levant during the Achaemenid period**

Odette Boivin (University of Toronto)

31–112/3

In Babylonia, taxation during the Achaemenid period left behind a wealth of short-term archival documents. We can infer from them for instance in what currency taxes were paid, the officials and institutions collecting them, the profile of tax payers, and the basis of taxation. With an approach essentially based on reconstructing a hierarchical extraction, concentration, and redistribution of wealth, moving up and down the imperial administrative structure, assyriologists do shed light on several aspects of Achaemenid taxation. However, sources suggest that higher-level segments of that system are barely visible to us, perhaps because corresponding documents were written on perishable supports. But also, in a “weak” (pre-modern) state, such a system was probably only one part of the story. The WORK-IT project, under the lead of Jason Silverman, is applying the concept of informal taxation to examine labour and taxation in the Southern Levant during the Achaemenid period, a region of the empire that yielded very different textual sources when compared with Babylonia. Informal taxation is a highly promising approach to address situations in which collective undertakings were embraced and goals were internalized by groups of potential taxpayers. It is also a method that approaches social groups in a more flexible way than a centralized, hierarchical model connecting every taxpayer bureaucratically – via as many echelons as required – with the king. This response to the papers on sources and methodology used in the WORK-IT project will engage with them from the Babylonian perspective, commenting on parallels, differences and similarities in sources as well as in methods used by scholars.

Response: Informal Taxation in Context

Rhyne King (University of St Andrews)

31–112/4

In this paper, I will give a response to the WORK-IT team’s presentation. I will consider their response in two contexts. First, I will discuss the methodology in comparison to works of historical sociology. Second, I will consider the historical sources in comparison with other primary sources from the Achaemenid Empire, with a focus on the Babylonian material.

Myth and Mythmaking

CHAIR: GUY DARSHAN (TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 2091

14:30–16:00

31–115

Myth and Mythmaking Across Media: Theoretical Considerations and a Case Study

Christoph Uehlinger (University of Zurich)

31–115/1

This paper will address some theoretical issues regarding myth and mythmaking and illustrate these with a particular case study. Regarding theory, how to conceptualize myth is both an inevitable and crucial challenge, which I shall discuss by considering myth as a special kind of knowledge. Mythmaking thus relates to practices of knowledge construction and transmission, the conditions of which may vary according to media. How myth is implemented across various media can inform scholars about different functions of myth and mythmaking. These theoretical considerations will be illustrated by a case study focusing on a well-known mythologem, heroic combat against a dragon.

Late Developments of the Storm-god vs. Sea in the Eastern

Mediterranean: Echoes from Ascalon, Jaffa and Beirut

Noga Ayali-Darshan (Bar-Ilan University) and Guy Darshan (Tel Aviv University)

31–115/2

The combat of the Storm god against the Sea is known from numerous texts in the ancient Near East of the second and first millennia BCE in two major types. The paper delves into the later renditions of this myth as preserved in Greek texts from the first centuries BCE that situate the myth on the Levantine coast. It suggests a new explanation for the roots of these texts and explores their connection to the two older types found in Aleppo, Egypt, Hatti, Ugarit, Mesopotamia, and ancient Israel.

Saul, David and the Myth of the Servant

Christopher Metcalf (University of Oxford)

31–115/3

In recent research I have attempted to identify a mythical story-pattern that was widely used in the ancient Near East (and neighbouring regions) to explain how an outsider ascended to kingship and founded a new, powerful royal dynasty. The central feature of this myth is that the future king initially acted as the servant of another, largely fictitious royal figure. Examples include Sargon of Akkad, Cyrus the Great, Gyges of Lydia, Semiramis of Assyria and – I suggest – David of Israel and Judah.

Representation and Idealisation of Power

CHAIRS: ROBERT KADE, YANNIK EHMER (HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN)

Room: UL6 2093

14:30–16:00

31–125

Joshua the Law-bearer: Torah as Imperial Power in the Conquest Narrative

Sophia Johnson (Ruhr University Bochum)

31–125/1

As has long been noted, the Deuteronomistic reframing of the conquest narrative emphasises Torah observance as the key to Israel's – and more specifically Joshua's – successful campaign of Canaan. The re-settlement and peace of the land is explicitly stated as a product of Joshua's complete adherence to divine commandments: "he left nothing undone of all that the Lord had commanded Moses" (Josh 11:15). However, analysis of Joshua's pious leadership as a representation of power has often overlooked the imperial nature and context of the conquest account, as a text (re)written and read under foreign occupation and forced exile. This paper uses the concepts of "mimicry" and "hybridity" from postcolonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha to explore Torah as a tool of imperial power which translates the hope of reclaiming the land into actionable practices, at once subverting and submitting to the ancient ideals of empire. By focusing the finer points of Joshua's successful campaign on Torah observance rather than military might, the editors are able to not only model the conquest on that of their powerful imperial conquerors but also cast a vision for how it might be ideologically reinstated through religious practice – within the current imperial system and without the need for force. Specifically figuring Joshua as keeper of the law additionally elevates scribes who themselves become delegators of such power through the teaching and transmission of the Torah.

Representing the King When Requesting It

Hananel Shapira (Harvard University)

31–125/2

In this lecture, I argue that the people's request for a king in 1 Samuel 8 should be read in light of its specific literary context, particularly its placement after 1 Samuel 7, to reveal the author's perception of royal power and agency. While the author represents kingship as a decline from the ideal of divine sovereignty – a view that is quite straightforward in the chapter – he also uses the chapter's textual context and literary devices to nuance this perspective, depicting the king as an independent entity rather than a representative of God. This portrayal positions the king as a substitute for the deity, on whom the people are expected to rely, rather than a figure who acts on God's behalf and depends on divine authority for legitimacy. This characterization necessitates a significant redefinition of the relationship between divine and human agents in Israel's historiography. Thus, 1 Samuel 8 suggests a reconsideration of theological and political concepts, presenting royal power in a distinctive and, at times, extreme manner.

Gender and Power in Translation in Daniel 5*Aubrey Buster (Wheaton College)***31-125/3**

Daniel 5 presents a feast on the eve of the fall of Babylon. This feast is attended by Belshazzar, who is described as “king of Babylon,” and “son of Nebuchadnezzar,” though neither of these are accurate historical statements. The feast also features several women, a notable feature in a book that otherwise lacks mention of women entirely. In this chapter, however, the feast is attended by several classes of women, described as šēglātēh, ləḥēnātēh (Dan 5:2, 3, 23), and malkētā’ (Dan 5:10), respectively.

My paper will focus on the way that the official roles of women, and their power, are often mis-translated, both literally, in the sense of translation across languages, but also culturally, in the sense that female power is often misconstrued across cultural lines. This can be demonstrated on two levels: firstly, in Daniel 5, the rendition into Aramaic of female roles in the Neo-Babylonian court (Akkadian), and secondly the rendition into contemporary vernaculars of these Aramaic terms.

Secondly, this linguistic translation mirrors an act of cultural translation. Recently, portraits of the Persian and Babylonian harems in Greek historiography, portraits that have influenced our understanding of the Mesopotamian and Persian “harem,” have been re-considered in light of our recognition of the ways in which Greek historians misunderstood or misrepresented the women of other cultures, and based on the analysis of new data that offers insights of an emic nature into the roles and status of women in Mesopotamia and Persia. Thus we note how female authority is represented differently in Greek historiography and the administrative texts that have more recently been used to re-construct official female roles in the court of the king.

Thus, through a re-consideration of the role of these women at Belshazzar’s feast in Daniel 5, and a comparative look at the way in which Babylonian and Persian women are represented and mis-represented in Mesopotamian administrative texts and Greek historiography respectively, I will present a critical re-evaluation of the characterization of royal women and their power in early Jewish literature.

Foreign Powers in the Service of Royal Propaganda: Memory and Ideology in the Hasmonean Representation of the Persian Period and the Roman Empire

*Davide D’Amico (University of Lorraine)***31-125/4**

The story of the Hasmonean dynasty is conveyed through the narrative of a family whose zeal for their fathers’ faith enabled them to rise on the political scene of the ancient Middle East and establish an independent Jewish state, where they ruled first as political leaders and high priests, and later as kings. The establishment of a non-Davidic line of kingship, which from a certain point onward claimed both the honors and responsibilities of the high priesthood, required significant effort from the Hasmoneans to legitimize this claim historically and ideologically. In this sense, the propagandistic approach and methods of court historiography initiated and supported by the Hasmoneans were not confined to chronicling the heroic deeds of the dynasty’s

founders. Instead, they necessitated a new “memorialization” of Israel’s national past and the development of new frameworks for interpreting the present. This contribution aims to show how the representation of foreign powers preceding and contemporary to the dynasty served this goal. In particular, I will explore two perspectives: the first pertains to the need to convey a new memory of the period of Persian rule, framed as an ideal and “mythologically” foundational era. The second relates to the formation of the dynasty’s military and political self-understanding, for which the propaganda image of Rome expanding into the Mediterranean proved an effective point of comparison, facilitating its terms of formulation.

Thursday, 08/14/2025

Between Foreign Politics and Scribal Theology: Prophecy Concerning the Nations

CHAIRS: MEIKE RÖHRIG (HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN),
HELGE BEZOLD (EVANGELISCHE AKADEMIE FRANKFURT)

Room: UL6 3075

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–103

Introduction

*Meike Röhrig (Humboldt University of Berlin),
Helge Bezold (Evangelische Akademie Frankfurt)*

**Political Threat and Scribal Interpretation:
Jeremiah’s Emergence as Prophet to the Nations**
Christl Maier (Philipps University of Marburg)

41–103/1

Although there are collections of so-called “Oracles against the Nations” (OAN) in all the major prophetic writings, only Jeremiah is explicitly called “a prophet to the nations” (Jer 1:5) and set over kingdoms to uproot and build up (Jer 1:10). After Nebuchadnezzar’s victory at Carchemish in 605 BC, the neo-Babylonian army threatened the small Levantine states, most obviously with the destruction of Ashkelon in 604. In my view, the fear of this “foe from the north” inspired Jeremiah’s words about Egypt, the Philistines, Hazor/Kedar and Damascus, in which scholars have identified basic layers from Jeremiah’s time. These words describe dramatic events similar to the war poems in Jeremiah 4–6 through calls to fight or flee, lamentations, rhetorical questions, and quotations. Naming them “oracles against the nations” is therefore not a meaningful generic term. In my paper, I will show that these poems were later expanded to include phrases from other texts in Jeremiah and/or recurring motifs that linked them more closely. This literary growth also

changed the function of these texts. My paper will trace this development, its possible historical contexts, and its relationship to the figure of the prophet.

The Importance of the OAN in Jeremiah

Jordan Davis (Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg)

41–103/2

At least since 1901 when Bernhard Duhm proclaimed that Jer 46–51 were a late (2nd century BCE) addition and were therefore not “authentic” Jeremiah, scholars seem to have devalued Jeremiah’s oracles against the nations (OAN). More recently Rainer Albertz, for example, has argued that Jer 1 and 45 represent two clear bookends, both of which demonstrate Deuteronomistic influence. These book-“ends” obviously exclude the OAN, Albertz thus resorts to the idea that the OAN must have been added by a yet later Deuteronomistic redactor (JerD3), whose motivations for doing so remain somewhat unclear.

This paper will suggest that the idea of Jeremiah as the “prophet to the nations” as well as the oracles against the nations are an integral part of the book’s goal to explain the tradition-contradicting loss of the Davidic dynasty (cf. 2 Sam 7), Jerusalem and its Yhwh temple (cf. Zion theology). The oracles reflect on the historical reality of the Babylonian dominion, they demonstrate Babylon’s (often violent) imposition upon these nations. Importantly, the OAN do this via the idea that God stands behind and is directing Babylon. The OAN are thus both theological and historical.

Against the nations? Outward-oriented and inward-oriented perspectives in the oracles against the Ammonites, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines in Ezekiel 25

Markus Saur (Rhenish Friedrich Wilhelm University of Bonn)

41–103/3

The oracles against the nations in Ezekiel 25–32 are characterized by a combination of outward-oriented and inward-oriented perspectives: On the one hand, the announcement of the downfall of the neighboring nations looks outward, in some cases referring to historical constellations. At the same time, the oracles have an inward function within the book and in relation to their readers in Persian and Hellenistic times.

The disproportion in the distribution of the texts in Ezekiel 25–32 is remarkable: While the words against Tyre (and Sidon) in Ezekiel 26–28 and the words against Egypt in Ezek 29–32 are very detailed, these texts are preceded by a series of much shorter oracles against the Ammonites, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines in Ezekiel 25.

Both the words against Tyre and the words against Egypt can be related to events in the history of the Ancient Near East. The outward-oriented and inward-oriented perspectives are closely intertwined: the downfall of Tyre and Egypt is presented as a lesson for the readers of the book, thus functionally linking the outward-oriented perspective to the inward-oriented perspective.

Against this background, the paper will take a closer look at Ezekiel 25 and address the following questions: (1) Which outward-oriented and inward-oriented perspectives can be identified in the oracles in Ezekiel 25? (2) What is the function of these oracles in the collection Ezekiel 25–32 and in the book of Ezekiel as a whole? (3) And what is

the intention of the authors regarding the reception of these words in the Persian and Hellenistic periods?

Philistia, Phoenicia and Edom in the Oracles Against the Nations

Yigal Levin (Bar-Ilan University)

41–103/4

It is widely understood that the so-called “Oracles Against the Nations” that are featured in most of the books of the Latter Prophets were not really aimed against those nations, but rather were meant as a rhetorical device aimed at the Israelite/Judean audience of the book. There is, however, a debate on whether the OAN also reflect specific historical circumstances of the relationship between Israel/Judah and that particular nation at the time of that particular prophet or whether they were only rhetorical, building upon textual traditions rather than on contemporary events. This, of course, also reflects the debate on the date and authorship of the prophetic books in general.

This paper will examine three “nations”: The Philistines, the Phoenicians (Tyre and Sidon) and Edom, as they are represented in the OAN, from Isaiah to Zechariah. Since we have a fairly good historical and archaeological picture of all three throughout the biblical period, we will attempt to ascertain if the way in which they are represented in the OAN reflects known specific historical circumstances or rhetorical trope.

Response

Anselm Hagedorn (Osnabrück University)

Session 2

42–103

Justice for the Fugitive: Foreign Politics and Scribal Theology in Isaiah 16:3–5

Alicia Hein (Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen)

42–103/1

Isaiah 16:3–5 is part of a larger oracle against Moab that describes the scattering of its inhabitants as they flee, weeping, from its destruction (Isa 15–16). In the midst of this vividly detailed passage is placed a call to compassion: “Bring counsel, give a verdict: make your shade like night in the midst of noonday; hide outcasts, do not reveal the fugitive. Let the outcasts of Moab sojourn with you, be a hiding place for them from the face of the ravager” (16:3–4a).

The keen imagery of destruction and mourning in the surrounding oracle suggests a background in a concrete incident in Moabite territory that led to the escape of refugees. If so, a call to compassion towards Moab within an Israelite text such as this would indicate a conception of “foreign politics” in which compassion towards foreign refugees is considered admirable. Further, in the current form of Isa 16, this call to compassion is followed immediately by what is likely a redactional insertion (16:4b–5) that associates the end of violence, like that portrayed against Moab, with the coming of the Davidic king. The rhetoric of the passage in its current form, then, not only supports a political policy of compassion towards fugitives, but redactionally associates this “verdict” (16:3) with the

“justice” and “righteousness” (16:5) that will be characteristic of Israel’s own future restoration. In other words, the redactor’s image of an idealised Davidic kingdom includes compassion towards foreign fugitives. Thus, this portion of the oracle against Moab in Isa 15–16 reveals both inward- and outward-oriented tendencies. First, fleeing fugitives are to be treated with compassion even in foreign political relationships. Secondly, such compassion is idealised and made a marker of Israel’s own righteousness in its own future restored state.

“All nations over whom my name has been proclaimed” (Am 9:12).

**The Levantine Restoration in the Masoretic Text of Amos 9
and Its Extension to All Nations in the Septuagint**

Hervé Gonzalez (Collège de France)

42–103/2

Who are the nations over whom Yhwh’s name has been proclaimed and of which Israel will take possession together with the remnant of Edom in Am 9:12? This question is not only debated among scholars, but it also puzzled the ancient Greek translator, who slightly changed the text to read that the remnant of men and all the nations over whom Yhwh’s name has been proclaimed will seek Yhwh. This reading is best understood as an interpretation of a key passage in Amos in a cosmic perspective favorable to all nations, not unlike the image of cosmic restoration at the end of the Twelve in Zech 14, which probably dates from the Hellenistic period. While some scholars argue that the LXX reading of Amos 9 does not differ significantly from the meaning of the Hebrew text, this paper argues that the latter has a different view of the restoration, namely that of a future Davidic territorial kingdom of Levantine dimensions. This perspective is visible when the passage is read in the context of Amos, especially in light of its oracles against the nations in chapters 1–2. Within the Twelve, a comparable view of a Levantine restoration can be found in Zechariah 9. A similar trajectory can thus be observed in the Greek translation of Amos 9, and in the literary development of Zechariah, from chap. 9 to the later chap. 14. It appears that, during the Hellenistic period, the territorial, Levantine conception of the restoration in the Twelve has been revised into a cosmic restoration of Israel including all nations, by the addition of Zech 14 and then in the Greek translation of Amos. The stabilization of the Hellenistic rule and the increasing Judean diasporas can be seen as key sociohistorical factors behind this literary trajectory in the Twelve.

“... and It Shall Consume the Palaces of Ben-Hadad”

**(Am 1:4b; Jer 49:27b): The Formation and Historical Background
of Jeremiah 49:23–27 and the Oracles Against the Nations**

*Friederike Neumann (Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg,
Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen)*

42–103/3

The oracle against Damascus in Jeremiah 49:23–27 is one of the shortest oracles against a nation in the collection of Jeremiah 46–51. It has often been recognized that the passage has various literary parallels with other texts such as Isa 13; 17; Jer 6; 50 and Am 1–2. In current research, therefore, the literary coherence of the oracle and its original affiliation

to the oracles against the nations are part of the ongoing discussion. It is also controversial whether the word concerning Damascus can be traced back to the prophet Jeremiah himself or whether it is a much later literary creation.

The paper will shed new light on the literary formation of Jer 49:23–27 and investigate in particular the intertextual references. Based on this, the historical background can be examined, and the question will be raised whether the word to Damascus is still to be understood in the late pre-exilic period in the context of the Babylonian threat and thus takes up current political events or whether the saying is rather to be assumed as a literary invention of a later time. In this context, the juxtaposition of lament and prophecy in Jer 49:23–27 is noteworthy and gives then an important indication of the intention of the passage and its theological conception.

The paper thus examines the literary formation of the word against Damascus in Jer 49:23–27 and answers the previously mentioned questions concerning its historical and theological background.

Response

Terry Iles (Harvard University)

General Disucssion

Brothers and Aliens: Negotiation of Identities in the Ancient World

CHAIRS: RUTH EBACH (UNIVERSITY OF LAUSANNE)

AND CYNTHIA EDENBURG (THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF ISRAEL)

Room: UL6 2095A

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–106

Emic and Etic Approaches to Constructions of Israelite Ethnicity

Mark Brett (University of Divinity, Melbourne)

41–106/1

The very concept of ethnicity has suffered decline in recent years, but a few of the critiques of this concept have not clarified the differences between emic and etic research questions. In some respects, the concept of ethnicity might be seen as a relatively modern development, but this critique does not greatly affect an etic methodology in the study of ancient biblical texts. Similarly, the recent emphasis on fluid and constructed identities generally belongs within an etic approach to interpretation, but this constructivist emphasis does not preclude evidence of primordial sentiments in ancient texts when read through an emic lens. An interesting illustration of this methodological complexity arises in the sibling discourse in Deuteronomy: in some contexts, the “brother” becomes metaphorical language for constructing a level of solidarity above the level of the tribe, whereas in Deut 13:7 [MT] the brother – now in a more narrow

sense – is subjected to the ban for departing from a primordial religious attachment. Thus, the attachment to Yhwh can be seen as primordial in Deut 13:7 when the text is viewed through an emic lens, even though an etic history would see the Yahwism of Deuteronomy as a novel construction of religion and social identity.

Complex Tribal Identities: Aramaeans and Patriarchal “Israel” without the Bible

Adrianne Spunaugle (University of Helsinki)

41–106/2

In 2005, Mario Liverani proposed a theory that the earliest biblical patriarchal narratives had been written to encourage the return from central Babylonia to the Levant (261). In the two decades since, much work has been done on Neo-Babylonian society and the communities that comprised it. Of especial relevance to Liverani’s proposal are the publication of “deportee” communities in the environs of major Babylonian cities, such as Nippur and Sippar, and the recent work on disambiguating “aramu” in the Akkadian, Aramaic, and biblical sources. What has yet to be suggested, however, is how the polyvalence of aramu could impact our interpretation of the patriarchal narratives of Genesis.

Most presume that the “Aram” and “Arameans” of these passages must be equated with the Kingdom of Aram-Damascus or the Luwian-Aramaic princedoms in Syria. However, if Liverani is correct in his suggestion that the Abraham and other patriarchal narratives were written to appeal to persons living in exile, then such references would have greater connection to the knowledge of Aramaeans from living among them in Babylonia. The location of several deportee communities in the midst of Aramaean and other tribal territories within Babylonia may explain the inclusion of several ethnic groups attested in the etiological genealogical lists of Genesis – otherwise unfamiliar to residents of Judah and Israel according to Kings and the latter prophets.

Few have seriously entertained such a hypothesis regarding the Aramaeans of Genesis, yet it may serve to further explain the differences in attitude toward the “neighboring” societies of the Judahites and Judeans. The patriarchal narratives of Genesis contain the most decided interest in connecting the Judeans to other tribes and the Aramaeans, thus reevaluating this portion of the Hebrew scriptures considering life at deportee communities such as Āl-Yāhūdu is enlightening.

Session 2

42–106

“Khnum is against us”: The Rise and Fall of Ḥananiah and the Persecution of the Yahwists in Egypt (ca. 419–404 BCE)

Gad Barnea (University of Haifa)

42–106/1

According to the Elephantine Yahwists’ own dramatic portrayal, the figure of a certain Ḥananiah played a key role in the misfortunes they experienced since his arrival in Egypt in or around 419 BCE. Therefore, understanding who this person was and how he might have helped cause these calamities can provide important context to the analysis of the final decades of this community. This paper looks at all available evidence – both internal

and external to Egypt, reviewing textual, linguistic, and archeological data – all pointing to the conclusion that Ḥananiah was, in all probability, a scion of the Sanballat dynasty, an aristocrat and future governor of Samaria, who is known from various mid-fourth century BCE documents discovered in Palestine. The identification of this eminently unique and dramatic character in Egypt at an exceptionally critical time in the satrapy has important implications, regarding which some speculative options are offered. It also provides a new perspective on the overarching context of the events endured by the Yahwists in Elephantine, as well as on the general state of Yahwism in the Achaemenid period. Specifically, it offers a new hypothesis regarding the reasons for the persecution of the Yahwists and the destruction of their temple.

**Revisiting the ‘lists of pre-Israelite nations’ in the Enneateuch in Light
of Recent Research on Identity Discourses in the Persian period**
Stephen Germany (University of Lausanne)

42–106/2

Since Tomoo Ishida’s 1979 study on “The Structure and Historical Implications of the Lists of Pre-Israelite Nations,” much has changed in the field of Hebrew Bible studies concerning the date of composition of many of the texts in which these lists appear as well as the identity discourses that they reflect. Among other developments, more recent research has rightly focused increasingly on the ways in which many texts in the Hebrew Bible negotiate complex (and evidently disputed) “intra-Israelite” identities such as Samaritan, Benjaminite, Judean, Transjordanian, and Diaspora identities (see, e.g., Hensel, Adamczewski, and Nocquet, eds., *Social Groups behind Biblical Traditions*, 2023). This paper will consider to what extent these disputed “intra-Israelite” identities may have been linked with “non-Israelite” labels (such as “Hivite,” “Canaanite,” “Jebusite,” etc.) by the authors (reporting agents) of certain biblical texts with the aim of “othering” particular groups that may have considered themselves as Israelite.

Digital Humanities and Computational Approaches to the Bible

CHAIRS: FRÉDÉRIQUE REY (UNIVERSITY OF LORRAINE), SOPHIE ROBERT HAYEK
(UNIVERSITY OF LORRAINE), AND DAVIDE D’AMICO (UNIVERSITY OF LORRAINE)

Room: UL6 2094

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–108

Natural Language Processing, AI, and the Origins of the Ethiopic Bible
Timothy Lee (University of Cambridge)

41–108/1

This paper provides a computational and statistical methodology to assess which Septuagint manuscript families lie behind different books of the Ethiopic Old Testament. It draws upon the latest technologies of Natural Language Processing and AI to tag

words with parts of speech and morphology which can then be aligned with the Greek Septuagint. Different Greek manuscript families can then be statistically compared against an Ethiopic text to find the best matches for each book. Scholars have long been aware of different Greek textual families underlying the Ethiopic text, such as Lucian, hexaplaric, and pre-hexaplaric (Rahlfs: *Septuaginta-Studien*, I, 85–87; Knibb: *Translating the Bible*), but we now know the pre-hexaplaric text was far more diverse than imagined with texts such as kaige revision inconsistently occurring in manuscripts (cf. *Judges B and Kingdoms*. Kreuzer: *Septuaginta und äthiopischer Text*). This approach complements research on the Textual History of the Ethiopic Old Testament Project (THEOT), because – rather than looking between Ethiopic manuscripts – it looks backwards to the Greek texts that lie behind the original translations.

**Toward a Visual Exegesis: Interpreting Distant
Reading Results in Biblical Scholarship Marburg**
Timo Glaser (Philipps University of Marburg)

41–108/2

Distant reading has significantly impacted biblical studies by enabling large-scale textual analyses, revealing patterns, themes, and intertextual relationships. However, its outputs – frequently in the form of abstract data – demand sophisticated interpretive strategies to move from computational insights to meaningful understanding of the text. This paper argues that visual hermeneutics provides a crucial methodological bridge for interpreting these results. Techniques such as thematic mapping, intertextual network diagrams, and other forms of data visualization offer innovative tools to render distant reading results intelligible, contextualizing them within broader theological and historical frameworks. While visual hermeneutics is still emerging in biblical studies, disciplines such as linguistics, history, and digital humanities have already developed more advanced discussions. Influential works such as Cetina's *Viskurse* (2001), Kath et al.'s *New Visual Hermeneutics* (2015), Bubenhofer's *Visuelle Linguistik* (2020), and Haas and Wachter's *Visual Heuristics* (2022) provide essential insights into the interpretive potential of visualization and inspire the development of a „visual exegesis“ approach. This approach integrates computational, visual, and traditional hermeneutical as well as exegetical methods to address the unique epistemological and theological questions posed by visualizing religious texts. The paper will present case studies demonstrating how visualizations can enrich biblical scholarship while acknowledging challenges such as the abstraction of meaning, the potential for oversimplification, and the interpretive decisions embedded in visualization design. It highlights the potential of „visual exegesis“ to foster deeper engagement with distant reading results, offering a more nuanced understanding of biblical texts.

**Uncovering Old Testament Intertextuality in Coptic Literature:
A Computational Analysis using TRACER and Passim**
So Miyagawa (University of Tsukuba)

41–108/3

This paper presents a new computational methodology for examining Old Testament quotations and allusions within Coptic literature, combining text-reuse detection

tools (TRACER and Passim) with a large-scale digital corpus. Our approach addresses longstanding challenges in philological research by systematically analyzing the entire non-biblical corpus available through Coptic SCRIPTORIUM. This corpus encompasses a wide range of genres, including sermons, homilies, hagiographies, and theological treatises. Traditional methods for identifying and interpreting scriptural references are limited by the sheer volume of texts and by the subtleties of orthographic and dialectal variation in Coptic. To overcome these hurdles, we employ computational techniques that detect and visualize textual reuse at an unprecedented scale and level of detail. The workflow begins by standardizing all texts and preparing both the Coptic Old Testament and the non-biblical corpus for automated comparison. TRACER and Passim, known for robust text-reuse detection, then systematically identify quotations, paraphrases, and adapted biblical passages. Through iterative refinement and the use of gold-standard training sets, we improve the accuracy of detection, ensuring a significant reduction in false positives. This data-driven approach not only reveals intricate networks of biblical reception but also offers scholars a dynamic interface to explore patterns of scriptural adaptation. Researchers can trace how certain passages gain prominence, how authors manipulate biblical source material for theological or rhetorical purposes, and how these texts circulated and evolved over time. Our methodology encourages interdisciplinary collaboration, enabling philologists, theologians, and computer scientists to engage with the data from complementary perspectives. By demonstrating how computational workflows and specialized tools can complement and enhance traditional scholarship, this project contributes to a deeper understanding of Old Testament reception in Coptic literature and serves as a model for future studies of textual reuse in other traditions.

Unlocking the Potential of Open Old Testament Research Data:

An HTR Workflow for Coptic Manuscripts

Eliese-Sophia Lincke (Free University of Berlin)

41–108/4

Availability of raw texts in electronic form is a prerequisite for any text processing, whether for digital editions, full-text searches, or analytical methods. Yet, many manuscripts remain inaccessible to computational processing due to the lack of electronically available transcriptions. This is all the more true for Coptic texts because the modern European interest in oriental manuscripts led to the dispersal and fragmentation of Egypt's monastic libraries, scattering torn manuscripts worldwide. To this day, many remain unpublished due to limited resources, particularly the lack of expert workforce for cataloguing, transcription and publication. Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR) could expedite this work by producing raw text transcriptions more efficiently. Building on advances in OCR for printed Coptic texts (Lincke 2021; Lincke, Büchler, Bulert 2019; Miyagawa et al. 2019; Miyagawa, Bulert, Bühler 2017), the current challenge is achieving state-of-the-art HTR results for Coptic manuscripts. To address this, we utilized material from the Göttingen Academy Project "Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament" (directed by Prof. Heike Behlmer, coordinated by Dr. Frank Feder). This project aims to create diplomatic and critical digital editions

and translations of the Coptic Old Testament. Thanks to its open licensing policy and its API, the project provides thousands of expert transcriptions paired with manuscript images. These pairs formed the basis for a first training corpus for Coptic HTR presented in this talk. Using the controlled vocabulary from the SegmOnto project (Gabay et al. 2023) to standardize manuscript descriptions, we developed a schema for the layout analysis of Coptic manuscripts. The eScriptorium workspace (Stokes et al. 2021) was employed to perform all key steps of the HTR workflow, including region and line segmentation as well as the training of Kraken HTR models (Kiessling 2019). In this talk, we will present the workflow from acquiring the raw data to processing it into training data, followed by model training and evaluation (HTR accuracy rates). As a consequence, we are able to propose an HTR-based workflow for manuscript transcription to simplify and accelerate the process.

Session 2

42–108

Visualizing Overlooked Syntactic Alternatives in the Greek New Testament

Tony Jurg (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

42–108/1

The Greek text of the New Testament contains numerous unresolved ambiguities, leading to notable translation differences. Eugene A. Nida identified over 500 grammatical ambiguities in the Greek Gospels, noting that context can resolve about 90% of them. This paper introduces a research tool designed to assist biblical scholars in addressing some of the remaining ambiguities. Built upon the open-source Python package Text-Fabric (TF) – a framework for the syntactic analysis of textual corpora – the tool enables the storage, querying, and display of possible alternative syntactic interpretations. This allows for a more nuanced analysis of the Greek biblical text, going beyond fixed syntactic treebank interpretations. The current dataset is based upon the Nestle 1904 (7th edition), ensuring that the resulting dataset is available under a favorable license for further use. Developed as part of a Research Master's thesis, this project involved creating a dataset based on existing treebanks. A new NLP pipeline was designed to enable a detailed analysis of the New Testament Greek text, capturing alternative interpretations at various stages. The project specifically aimed to showcase Text-Fabric's ability to manage and analyze multiple syntactic interpretations within a unified framework, independent of the corpus language. This required extending TF's Python code with additional functionality tailored to the dataset, ensuring its complexities were handled effectively. The framework was validated by examining ambiguities in the Johannine Prologue, alongside punctuation in verses 4 and 5 and other interpretive challenges. Identified syntactic parallels were compared with known instances in contemporary exegetical literature, demonstrating the tool's effectiveness for nuanced textual analysis.

**Out of Darkness, Light: Illuminating Biblical
Hebrew with Interpretable Machine Learning**

David Smiley (University of Notre Dame)

42–108/2

As machine learning increasingly influences the work of biblical scholarship, the need for the ability to interpret such models becomes paramount. Machine learning models are often described as “black boxes” because of their inherently obscure decision making, and this study bridges the gap between cutting-edge data science and ancient textual analysis by applying interpretable machine learning techniques to the Hebrew Bible. The presentation demonstrates how these methods can predict grammatical insights in the Hebrew Psalter by using these computational tools while attempting to remain transparent in their modeling process. I focus on key properties of machine learning explanation, including expressive power, feature importance, comprehensibility, and degrees of certainty as applied to biblical texts. The analysis employs both model-specific and model-agnostic methods, balancing translucency and portability to ensure broad applicability to questions in the Hebrew Bible. Preliminary results indicate that high-fidelity explanations can reveal nuanced discourse features in biblical Hebrew poetry. These interpretable machine learning methods demonstrate highly confident results in identifying verbal choice as prominence markers in the Hebrew Psalter. This research serves as a case study for applying interpretable machine learning to complex, culturally, and religiously significant texts. It provides a framework for responsible AI application in biblical studies by not just merely predicting linguistic features in the biblical text, but also illuminating latent authorial decisions with the aid of modern tools in data science.

**Quantitative Approaches to Biblical Translations:
Comparing the Syriac and Hebrew Verbal Systems in Genesis**

Matthias Benabdellah (University of Lorraine)

42–108/3

Founded in 1977, the Eep Talstra Centre for Bible and Computer (ETCBC) maintains a comprehensive, searchable and open-access database for the linguistic analysis of the Hebrew Bible and the Peshitta. ETCBC employs a form-to-function and bottom-up approach, collecting the data without a preconceived linguistic theory, allowing the theory to emerge from the data, progressing from words to clauses, sentences and finally to the textual level. Currently at the ETCBC we are working on the morphological analysis of the Peshitta in order to gather all the valuable information at the word level, such as number, gender, stem, tense. This morphological analysis is now complete for the Book of Genesis, representing more than 32,000 analyzed lexemes. This extensive dataset allows us to carry out initial studies on the morphological elements of the Syriac text of Genesis, and more specifically on its verbal system. This study will analyze the more than 5,000 verbs that are present in the Syriac text of Genesis, according to three axes: 1. A quantitative analysis of the verbal forms of the Syriac text, studying the distribution of tenses, voices and grammatical persons. 2. A comparison between the use of tenses in the Syriac text of Genesis and its Hebrew equivalent. 3. An analysis of how

the Syriac text deals with the peculiarities of the Hebrew verbal system that do not have a direct equivalent in Syriac, such as the nifal and wayyiqtol forms. We will aim to identify some of the key characteristics of the Syriac verbal system of Genesis. This research will provide an in-depth analysis of the similarities and differences between the Hebrew and Syriac verbal systems in Genesis and will offer new insights into the context of translating Genesis into Syriac. Its data-driven approach can offer a methodological framework for future comparative studies.

The Concept of Love in the Latin Vulgate

Eva Elisabeth Houth Vrangbæk (Aarhus University)

42–108/4

In this paper we wish to analyse the concept of love in the Latin Vulgate, offering novel insights into the semantic relationships between terms such as “caritas,” “dilectio,” and “amor.” Utilizing word embedding models, we represent these Latin words as vectors in a high-dimensional space, enabling a quantitative examination of their contextual usage and relationships. Our analysis reveals distinct clustering patterns among love-related terms and their associations with other theological concepts. This computational approach complements traditional philological methods in biblical studies, providing a data-driven perspective on the semantic nuances of love in the Latin Vulgate. Our findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the conceptualization and expression of love in early Christian literature, demonstrating the potential of digital humanities techniques in theological research.

Empathy and Body-Imagination in the Study of the Hebrew Bible

CHAIRS: ALEXANDRA GRUND-WITTENBERG (PHILIPPS UNIVERSITY OF MARBURG)

AND KATHERINE SOUTHWOOD (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

Room: UL6 2093

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–109

Reading the Minor Prophets from the Body

Johanna Stiebert (University of Leeds)

41–109/1

This short paper examines imagery patterns from Minor Prophets with particular emphasis on shame, exposure (particularly of the naked body), and gloating in Nahum and Obadiah. Focus is placed on Obadiah's denunciation of Edom's rejoicing over Jerusalem's destruction, alongside Nahum's depiction of Israel's joy at Nineveh's downfall. It juxtaposes such key instances from the biblical text with recent news media examples of humiliation and Schadenfreude in contexts of recounting military one-upmanship. The paper probes why these emotively charged techniques remain so especially visceral and inflaming and explores how what may be at play is a form of weaponised empathy.

**Words travel worlds – Empathy in the shared history
of the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint**

Nancy Rahn (University of Bern)

41–109/2

Dynamics of empathy are also a question of language and translation. The paper explores aspects of this fact in examples from the Hebrew Bible and their translations in the Septuagint. Moving in and between (at least) two linguistic spaces for empathy may induce helpful questions for our discussion: Is David shivering or angry? How is emotional communication received and transformed into another world? What does this tell us about emotional cultures and their reflections about what may be called empathy? Are we able to map the roots for later developments in Jewish and Christian texts and traditions?

The compassion of God in the Old Testament – not just a feeling, but an action!

Achim Behrens (Lutherische Theologische Hochschule Oberursel)

41–109/3

This paper looks at a number of biblical texts in which the verb *nhm* occurs in a wide range of meanings. For example, in Gen 6, Am 7 and Jon 3–4, in all of these cases it is God who ‘does’ *nhm*. Each of these texts not only expresses an “emotion” of God, but the use of the verb produces certain effects both in the human actors of the texts and in the lives of the readers.

Session 2

42–109

Feel the Power! Body-imagination and the senses in Hebrew Bible Royal Texts

Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme (University of Oslo)

42–109/1

In the Hebrew Bible, texts about royalty are packed full of information that speaks directly to the senses with descriptions of polychrome textiles, glittering gold, and enticing scents. These texts underline the relationship between beauty, luxury, wealth, and power in biblical literature and cognate texts. With this presentation, I wish to investigate the interplay between body-imagination and the senses in the reading of three selected Hebrew Bible passages, the description of the king and his bride in Psalm 45, the queen of Sheba's visit to Jerusalem in First Kings 10, and queen Jezebel's death in Second Kings 9. For all three examples, I ask if approaching these texts through the use of sensory perception stimulates body-imagination, and if the aesthetic of these texts triggers mechanisms of identification and empathy in the reader.

**Upstanding Speech, Upstanding Bodies:
Ephemerality and Endurance in Biblical Textuality**

Jacqueline Vayntrub (Yale University)

42–109/2

How did the authors of the Hebrew Bible conceptualize the production of textual objects and their corresponding meaning-making properties? Considering text and its

production alongside the broader ancient Levantine context of memorializing and commemorating monuments, I argue that for the biblical authors, texts contained animate presence on the model of the human body as a vessel containing and transmitting speech. Specifically, I will identify intersecting metaphors for speech in biblical Hebrew that underscore its ephemerality and need for maintenance in human social groups; how the voice is maintained and transmitted in entities meant to contain it; and finally, that textual objects were meant to be physically experienced by the bodies of others and thereby affect them.

Ezekiel and the Priestly Texts of the Pentateuch

CHAIRS: REETTAKAISA SOFIA SALO (UNIVERSITY OF ERLANGEN – NUREMBERG)
AND WALTER BÜHRER (RUHR UNIVERSITY BOCHUM)

Room: UL6 3059

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–110

Ezekiel's Alignment with Leviticus: The Case of the Purity Laws

Christophe Nihan (University of Münster)

41–110/1

The Holiness legislation (Leviticus 17–26) and Ezekiel both document the emergence of a (more or less) comprehensive discourse on “moral” (or better: internal) impurity. In both collections, this discourse adapts and transforms language that was previously used to describe ritual (i.e., external) forms of impurity in Leviticus (especially chapters 11–15). The scribal strategies through which purity language is thus re-used and re-signified in both H and Ezekiel presents significant similarities but also some substantial differences. While this phenomenon has often been noted, it has seldom been studied in-depth, especially from a text- and redaction-critical perspective.

This paper will offer a close analysis of some key passages dealing with moral/ internal impurity in Ezekiel, such as Ezek 7:19–20 or 36:17. In particular, it will discuss (1) the literary contexts in which these passages are found, (2) the way in which they re-use and re-signify purity language from Leviticus, as well as (3) the scribal strategies exemplified in the discourse on moral/internal impurity in Ezekiel, and how these strategies relate to, or differ from, those present in H. Overall, the paper will argue that references to moral/internal impurity are found in late passages of the book, often post-dating H, and that they are characterized on the whole by a greater semantic extension of purity language than in H. These findings, in turn, have some significant implications for the composition of Ezekiel, which will be discussed in the final portion of the paper.

**Between Lev 21 and Num 19: A Text-historical Analysis
of the Instruction on Corpse Impurity (Ezek 44:25–27)**
Martin Tscheu (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)

41–110/2

The MT of Ezek 44:25–27, providing instruction for priests that became impure through exposure to corpses, poses manifold exegetical problems. It is argued, on the basis of a comparison between MT and the reconstructed Vorlage of the LXX, that these problems arise from the textual history of the instruction.

The problems posed by MT concern mainly the embedding of the text within the instructions for the Zadokite priests in Ezek 44:17–31, and its relation to priestly texts from the Pentateuch. In contrast to the extensive textual correspondence between Ezek 44:25 and Lev 21:2–3, which both stipulate exemptions relating to deceased close relatives of a priest, the purification rite in Ezek 44:26–27 deviates and even contradicts parallel texts in the Pentateuch. Nonetheless, MT Ezek 44:26–27 agrees with the provisions of Num 19 in so far, as the ability to partake in the cult after a defilement by corpses is only regained by means of a ḥaṭṭā't-rite.

The paper demonstrates that LXX Ezek 44:25–27 is based on a Hebrew text, in which verse 27 introduced the instruction on priestly inheritance (Ezek 44:28), whereas verse 26 referred to a purification rite without a ḥaṭṭā't-offering, which does not presuppose the provisions in Num 19. MT Ezek 44:25–27 emerged from a scribal intervention that aimed to adjust this older textual version to Num 19, by integrating verse 27 into the instruction on the priestly conduct with corpse impurity.

Assessing the Relationship between Ezek 44 and Num 16–18
Michael Lyons (University of St Andrews)

41–110/3

A number of commentators have suggested that there is a relationship of some kind between material in Ezek 44 and Num 16–18. In this paper I will examine the literary and conceptual similarities and differences between these two texts, reflect on the possibility that these similarities might constitute an instance of allusion, and assess the options for identifying the direction of dependence.

Session 2

42–110

The Ezekiel Priestly Covenant: Between Fatalism to Agency
Gili Kugler (University of Haifa)

42–110/1

Ezekiel is commanded to prophesy the impending destruction and death awaiting the nation, thereby illuminating that their harsh experiences are orchestrated within the divine will, a direct consequence of their unacceptable transgressions. Consequently, the logic of this dynamic could indicate that the nation's fate would only change through fundamental correction of their ways. However, Ezekiel's prophecies shift to comforting messages of restoration and rebuilding of the nation to its former sovereign

state. With no evidence of the people's role in repairing their relationship with the deity, the renewed covenant seems almost fatalistic. This contrasts with other biblical prophecies, which attribute restoration to the people's active repentance and serving their punishment. What, then, according to Ezekiel, drives God to enable the people's restoration? This lecture will explore several motifs in the theology of Ezekiel's comforting vision, highlighting their resonance with ideas found in the Holiness Code in the Pentateuch.

Ezekiel and the Priestly Texts of the Pentateuch:

Current Debates and Future Directions

Reettakaisa Sofia Salo (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg)
and *Walter Bührer (Ruhr University Bochum)*

42–110/2

Monumentality and the Hebrew Bible

CHAIR: ERIC JARRARD (WELLESLEY COLLEGE)

Room: UL6 1072

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–113

The Judean Tomb as a Communal Monument

Alice Mandell (Johns Hopkins University)

41–113/1

In the study of ancient Near Eastern epigraphy, inscriptions that are deemed to be secondary, unplanned, or spontaneously executed are commonly classified as “graffiti.” This is especially true of the inscriptions on rock walls, which appear to be inscribed by individuals, rather than institutional elites and/or those texts inscribed in more remote or inaccessible locations. The present paper will reevaluate the inscriptions at the two elite tombs at Khirbet Beit Lei and Khirbet el-Qom, with a focus on the inscriptions inscribed on the tomb antechambers. The inscriptions do not follow expected tomb formulae. The inscriptions also include single words, single and repeated graphemes, and evidence of the retracing of certain texts on the tomb walls. They are incised and/or scratched into the rock unevenly and with a shallow writing implement. Rather than view these inscriptions to be secondary to the tomb contexts, or to have been left by people unconnected to the tomb, the present paper will argue that such inscriptions reflect the evolving monumentality of elite tomb complexes in Iron II–III Judah. Recent studies of Egyptian tomb graffiti offer insight into the potential function of these inscriptions, highlighting the performative and interactive nature of inscriptional practices in tombs. Layered and responsive writings played a role in the transformation of a cave or a rock wall into a ritual space to protect and commemorate the dead. Seen in this light, Judean tomb graffiti offers insight into the process whereby communities crafted and commemorated

spaces “bottom-up,” through the aggregate actions and material and textual depositions. This process exemplifies Felix Levenson’s proposed framework of “communal monumentality” (2019), which offers a theoretically grounded explanation for the process by which communities engaged in monumental discourse which was “bottom-up” and anchored in their local communities.

Monuments and the Torah in Israel and Judea

Simeon Chavel (University of Chicago)

41–113/2

This presentation will follow recent scholarship in considering some ways in which the Torah parallels the form and content of ancient monuments. It will introduce into the comparison the formative and enduring hypothesis that the Torah comprises four distinct works, each of which has its own distinct ideas about Yahweh’s nature, personality, relationship with the world, and plans for Israel. Taking the works to be narratives of scope makes the moments of monumental motifs and discourse into subordinate parts of the overarching themes and plots and affects how to understand the impact those moments have within the overarching themes and plots.

The Ark of Yhwh as a material and Imaginary Monument

Thomas Römer (Collège de France)

41–113/3

The HB contains different discourses about the Ark: the so-called Ark narrative, which legitimates the displacement of the Ark from the sanctuary of Shiloh to the temple of Jerusalem (1 Sam 4–7:1 and 2 Sam 6); the instructions of the building of the Ark as an important part of the Tabernacle (Exod 25–31), and a prophetic discourse that the lost Ark should not be rebuilt anymore. In extrabiblical literature there are a lot of speculations about the place and a possible reappearance of the lost Ark. The paper will examine the roles of the Ark as a material and imaginary monument.

Session 2

42–113

Cutting in Line: Achaemenid Monumental Architecture in the Book of Esther

Timothy Hogue (University of Pennsylvania)

42–113/1

Much of the action in the book of Esther takes place in and around monumental architecture. Movement through this architecture drives the narrative forward and reemphasizes its major themes. The monumentality of Persian palaces consisted in not only displaying the supremacy of the king but also in providing a means of submitting to his proposed social order. Certain protocols governed how the palace was navigated, and one’s movements and access determined one’s place in social hierarchies. In particular, the spatial layout and iconography of Achaemenid palaces indicates that foreign dignitaries and Persian nobility were directed to different areas,

providing them with differential access to the king. The architectonics of Achaemenid palaces especially come into play in Esther 4–5, in which Mordecai moves no further than “the king’s gate” but Esther eventually approaches the king in the “inner court” of the palace. The descriptions here indicate that Esther was approaching Xerxes in the Apadana. Her entrance opposite the king indicates that she had entered the Apadana from the east, bypassing the ceremonial entrance in the north and proceeding directly to the waiting area designated for Persian nobility. The attention to Esther’s entrance and location in the Apadana in the narrative emphasizes that she is performing her identity as a Persian noble, granting her greater access to the king than her cousin Mordecai. These chapters thus leverage the monumentality of the palace at Susa – especially its function in stratifying the Achaemenids’ subjects – to depict Esther’s unique position in the story.

Jeremiah’s Sign-Act at Tahpanhes and its Imperial Foundations

Eric Jarrard (Wellesley College)

42–113/2

The question of what a material object should mean to its custodians and how to effect (and affect) that meaning over time reverberates throughout the Hebrew Bible. The anxieties around constructing, (re-)investing meaning in, engaging, altering, defacing, and removing monuments and their inscriptions in multiple biblical texts suggest the biblical writers were aware of how the intentional manipulation of the original context(s) of an artifact was a quintessential element in its reinvention or elimination.

Jeremiah’s stone-building project at Tahpanhes (Jer 43:8–13) provides an interesting case study that demonstrates one example of anxiety around monument defacement metastasizing in the biblical text. By examining the monumental sign-act in Jeremiah alongside Neo-Babylonian inscriptions of Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar II, we can begin to see how the compositional and rhetorical strategies of Jeremiah demonstrate how material objects can and do affect their witnesses.

The Enactment of a Monumental Temple Complex in the Dead Sea Scrolls

Judith Newman (University of Toronto)

42–113/3

Of the many literary texts that describe the once and future Temple, none rivals the Qumran Temple Scroll for the enormity of its depiction. In this paper, I argue for its monumental character, not only on the basis of its imposing architectural structure, but in the materiality of the best-preserved scroll (11Q19), and its voicing as direct divine speech. As a text that was important to the Qumran Yahad, I will also consider two related texts that reflect performative enactments of aspects of temple ritual within the Yahad movement: the purification of the human structure (1QH^a) through apotropaic means (4Q444) in order to gain access to the eternal time-space as for instance envisioned in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. These texts from Qumran thus reflect the enactment of the workings of a monumental, if imaginal, temple complex according to a distinctive calendar and ritual practices.

The State of Archaeology and Inscriptions in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Persian Period

CHAIR: JAMES D. MOORE (OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 1070

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–120

“Galilee of the Nations”: The Western Upper Galilee as a Phoenician Borderland

Hayah Katz (Kinneret Collage of the Sea of Galilee)

41–120/1

The aim of this lecture is to reconstruct the extent of Phoenician expansion in the Upper Galilee from the beginning of the first millennium until the end of the Persian period with an emphasis on the interrelationships that existed between the coast and the mountain. An analysis of the archaeological data and the historical sources indicates that the geographical division of the Upper Galilee into sub-regions had a great influence on the geo-political status of the region. The sharp geographical line separating two areas – the Meron Ridges, a mountainous bloc characterized by ridges bisected by ravines and dense shrub vegetation, and the western highlands, which consisting of moderate plateaus – was not only a geographical-physical border, but also a political one. During Iron Age IIA–B, this line was the western boundary of the kingdom of Tyre, which not only extended southwards but also encompassed the western highlands of the Upper Galilee. A significant change took place during the Persian period when, unlike the previous period, the entire Upper Galilee was included in the Phoenician administrative system.

Evidence for Phoenician Magic: An inventory of excavated amulets from Persian period Levantine contexts

Helen Dixon (East Carolina University)

41–120/2

Over the last hundred years, a number of object types have been labeled Phoenician amulets. These include scarabs, stamp seals, jewelry components, metal cases for rolled papyri (the latter now mostly lost), gold items like fabric appliqués or mouth coverings, and even small figurines or glass items. However, examining the corpus as a whole, reveals that many of these object types are rarely found in the Phoenician homeland, or come primarily from unexcavated contexts. In this study, I begin with some clarifying definitional work, outlining the key features of the variety of uninscribed amulets, inscribed amulets, and textual amulets found along the Levantine coast. I then evaluate only those object examples found in excavated contexts datable to the Achaemenid Period (6th–4th centuries BCE), a surprisingly small corpus that comes mostly from wealthy burials. By analyzing the items themselves and their distribution patterns, I will make some tentative observations about Persian period grave magic (perhaps a subset of protective magic) in the Phoenician Levant. Limiting the analysis to archaeologically

recovered exemplars from specific historical periods allows new observations about ancient religious behaviors and beliefs to emerge from imperfect legacy data.

**From the Iron Age to the Persian Period: Preliminary Results
of the Excavations at Tell Bleibil in the South-Eastern Jordan Valley**

Alexander Ahrens (German Archaeological Institute)

41–120/3

Since 2019, archaeological excavations carried out by Orient Department of the German Archaeological Institute have been taking place at Tell Bleibil, located in the south-eastern Jordan Valley (Jordan). The excavations have uncovered an exceptionally well-preserved casemate wall from the Iron Age IIB (late 9th century, ca. 840/820 BCE, radiocarbon dates based on a series of well-stratified and short-lived samples) which formed part of the fortifications of the settlement in the Iron Age. Within the settlement dating to this period (8th–7th centuries BCE), the excavations have revealed parts of probable storage facilities. After a massive destruction event towards the end of the Iron Age IIC, i.e. in the early 6th century BC, the site was abandoned and apparently resettled only after some time during the Persian period (most probably spanning the 5th–3rd centuries BCE). The architecture of this phase consists of simple house plans, but also included storage areas. Additionally, several Aramaic inscriptions were found dating to this phase. The excavations uncovered an extremely well stratified sequence from the late Iron Age and the subsequent Persian period. The lecture presents the features and finds uncovered so far and attempts to place the site in the larger historical context.

Session 2

42–120

**Epigraphs and Empire: Texts from Persian Mediterranean
Coast and Transjordan in the OSU DLATO Project**

James D. Moore (The Ohio State University)

42–120/1

The Mediterranean Coast, the Judean and Samarian hill countries, and the (trans) Jordanian region continue to yield a number of important Aramaic and Phoenician finds that date (or should be dated) to the Persian period. This paper surveys the data and discusses the objects, which are mostly vessel labels and ostraca, within their administrative contexts. Special attention will be paid to the Ammonite corpus. Assessing the data philologically while considering the imperial dynamics at play in the late 6th–4th centuries BCE raises new historical questions about the corpora.

**NIR Multispectral Image Fusion Technique for Epigraphic Analysis
of Persian and Hellenistic Period Ostraca from Tel Maresha**

Ariel Schwarz (Jerusalem College of Engineering) and Esther Eshel (Bar Ilan University)

42–120/2

Despite significant technological advancements in recent decades – particularly in combining advanced electro-optical methods with artificial intelligence across various

fields such as medical imaging, bio-optics, and industrial processes – the application of these technologies in the study of ancient epigraphy remains limited and does not fully leverage current capabilities.

The research of epigraphy faces challenging decoding issues due to the condition of archaeological objects and the texts they bear. In two-dimensional handwriting, primarily created with ink, issues like ink fading, absorption, two-sided writing (known as opisthographs), surface wear (on materials like leather and papyri), and patina layers on ostraca create a “noisy” image of the objects. These factors complicate the deciphering process, which currently relies heavily on human expertise and can often be difficult or impossible.

The goal of this research is to incorporate advanced methods and technologies from the fields of electro-optics, image processing, artificial intelligence, and machine learning into the study of epigraphic objects. This study introduces an optical method for a non-invasive diagnostic procedure applicable to epigraphic artifacts. By employing a sophisticated near-infrared (NIR) multispectral image fusion technique, we can extract epigraphic data that is not currently visible with standard visible light or infrared photography, which are the conventional methods used for analyzing archaeological texts. By utilizing image processing and AI techniques, we can reduce noise and enhance the visibility of epigraphic characters, leading to improved recognition.

A few hundred ostraca and inscriptions discovered at the Maresha excavation have been entrusted to Esther Eshel for publication, some of which have already been published. These inscriptions, dating to the Persian and Hellenistic periods, will serve as the basis for presenting the results of the experiments in this study.

The Aramaic Idumean Corpus in its Imperial Context

Mitchka Shahryari (University of Helsinki)

42–120/3

A significant corpus of 2,250 Aramaic ostraca documents from Transeuphratia, with nearly 1,900 attributed to Idumea, offers valuable insights into the socio-historical context of the southern Levant. Most of these ostraca lack precise archaeological provenance, as they surfaced on the antiquities market without an associated context. However, comparisons with ostraca from known sites like Makedah and Maresha indicate they are part of a similar text group from the same period and region, Idumea, specifically during the Persian period starting from the reign of Artaxerxes II and into the early phases of Hellenistic occupation. Initial studies, primarily philological, were conducted by biblical scholars, and since 1996, there have been numerous publications, with major contributions by researchers such as Lemaire, Eph'al, Naveh, Porten, and Yardeni. These publications, especially the Textbook of Aramaic Ostraca from Idumea (TAOI), have been valuable for translating these texts. While earlier work focused on translation, recent studies increasingly integrate historical interpretation, with Lemaire pioneering an administrative and fiscal analysis of the corpus. A re-examination of these documents, using modern methodologies and connections to Achaemenid studies, is crucial for a deeper understanding of Idumean administration under Persian rule. This reevaluation will benefit from technological advancements, including databases, to better explore

the corpus's potential for revealing the region's administrative structures and economic activities within the empire. This Idumean corpus, alongside documents from Egypt, Babylonia, and Fars, contributes a more detailed view of daily life, trade, and governance across the Achaemenid Empire.

Writing Commentaries on Psalms

CHAIRS: SUSANNE GILLMAYR-BUCHER (CATHOLIC PRIVATE UNIVERSITY LINZ)

AND MARIANNE GROHMANN (UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA)

Room: UL6 2097

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–122

International Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament

Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher (Catholic Private University Linz)

and Marianne Grohmann (University of Vienna)

41–122/1

The aim of the IEKOT commentary series is to provide a multi-perspective, innovative and contemporary interpretation of the books of the Old Testament for a wide audience: scholars, theologians and interested readers. The series explicitly welcomes different exegetical approaches. However, the given scheme for commenting on the individual texts leaves only limited room for maneuver. The translation of the Psalm is always followed by three sections: the first is a synchronic analysis; the second is a diachronic analysis; and the third is a synthesis. The following challenges arise from these requirements: Since the Commentaries are aimed at a broad audience, it is necessary to present complex exegetical discussions in an appropriate manner. We also must limit ourselves to the most important information in the three sections of the commentary, given the limited number of pages. In order to give the commentary on Psalms a specific profile, we have decided to put a focus on selected aspects, which will also be the guiding questions for the third section. These are: concepts of God, concepts of human beings, and the possibilities offered by a psalm for the reader to identify with the text or with certain aspects of it.

The Jewish Publication Society Bible Commentary

Benjamin Sommer (Jewish Theological Seminary)

41–122/2

A distinctive element of the JPS commentaries involves its multiple audiences. Because biblical scholars consult them, they should present original readings and useful discussions of existing scholarship. We also write for rabbis, Jewish educators, and intellectually ambitious Jewish laypeople —of whom there are more than one might assume. The commentary will be read by non-Jews and academics in other fields, especially comparative literature and comparative religions. Serving these audience simultaneously

is an exciting challenge. Many Jewish readers have Hebrew skills but are unfamiliar with important aspects of biblical grammar. I answer questions I know these readers ask. Because this is a Jewish commentary, I pay attention to traditional mephareshim, especially the peshat-oriented ones. Writing for JPS, I see myself as teaching a psalms seminar in a classroom filled with diverse learners. I want to keep scholars interested while providing explanations to lay readers who know just enough to misunderstand something crucial. Finally, I emphasize that psalms are not only poetry but ritual texts. There is no one correct interpretation of a psalm, because psalms were and are performed texts – in ancient Israel, in contemporary Judaism and Christianity. Worshipers make them their own, focusing on some lines more than others and resolving ambiguities differently. A major goal of my commentary is to help readers understand the legitimacy of multiple readings.

Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament

*Innocent Himbaza (University of Fribourg)
and Sophie Ramond (Catholic University of Paris)*

41–122/3

The Commentary on the Old Testament series distinguishes itself by integrating both classical and contemporary methodologies from the humanities and social sciences, aiming to deepen readers' understanding of the biblical texts.

According to the guidelines, each volume in the Commentary on the Old Testament series follows a structured approach, providing a fresh translation of the text alongside a comprehensive exegetical commentary. This includes the use of textual criticism to address variations in ancient manuscripts, historical and literary analysis to situate the text within its original context, and a survey of key scholarly perspectives.

Session 2

42–122

Illuminations Commentary Series

Melody D. Knowles (Virginia Theological Seminary)

42–122/1

The Illuminations commentary series, published by Eerdmans, has commissioned five scholars to write a volume on each “book” of the Psalter that sets out the reception history of each Psalm spanning from its ancient inclusion into a collection to its use in contemporary pop culture. The series aims to focus its presentation of the reception history of each biblical book through the rubric of “history of consequences.” This is to say, in addition to cataloging the various interpretations and appropriations of the text through time, the series aims to capture also the results (both positive and negative) of its reception. In addition, although this is not named explicitly in the series description, the two published volumes on Job and Jonah distinguish themselves by including interpretive material from Christian, Jewish, as well as Islamic contexts.

The conception of the series allows for an expansive exploration across thousands of years of scholarship and social history, as well as textual and non-textual cultures such as

visual art and film. This of course is also a challenge with regards to the capacity of the commentator, the page number of the volume, and the physical limitations of the codex form itself.

Apollos Old Testament Commentary

David Firth (Trinity College Bristol)

42–122/2

The Apollos Old Testament Commentary sits within the Protestant tradition, written from the perspective of Christian faith. It offers a theological reading of the text, including an original translation into English. In terms of format, the translation is followed by textual notes, an overview of research on each psalm (including structure), detailed comment, and a brief theological reflection suggesting how Christians might engage with it. The goal was to keep the commentary to a single volume, albeit a substantial one. Along with the general aims of the series, I have noted the place of each psalm within the Psalter.

Perhaps the greatest challenge I faced was addressing all the areas required by the series within the space available. For this, the Psalms raise additional issues because of the challenges of dealing with poetry along with the variations in contemporary research on the Psalter. Although the theological reflection has a clearly Christian slant, I hope some of the material there might also be helpful for Jewish readers throughout. I was thus constantly wrestling with how to balance the demands of the series with the desire to offer a fresh reading of the Psalter.

Biblischer Kommentar. Altes Testament

Friedhelm Hartenstein (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich), Bernd Janowski (Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen), and Judith Gärtner (University of Rostock)

42–122/3

The overall concept of the most extensive German-language commentary on the Old Testament has undergone only a few changes over time. The BK.AT is concerned with an in-depth exploration of the biblical texts in the exegetical-hermeneutical sequence of text – form – (historic) place – word – (hermeneutic) goal, expanded now to include the step of reception. All the volumes have implemented the concept in their own, quite different ways. Therefore, we have a considerable degree of freedom and space for the Psalms commentary. The following points are crucial for our approach: a) working on the Psalms each as single text contributes to a deeper understanding of their poetic and aesthetic uniqueness. But it also demonstrates anew the relevance of the approach of tradition criticism and tradition history: thematic, theological, and anthropological lines of connection between Psalms are made visible. b) This leads organically to the perspective of Psalter exegesis as well. New insights into the composition and origin of the Masoretic Psalter are already emerging in our work. Both elements finally coincide with the discovery of complex reception phenomena in the emerging *sefer tehilim*: it is not only about “intertextuality”, but also about insights into the reciprocity of Psalm reception and production. This is important for the question of transmitters/groups of transmitters of the psalms (better: productive psalmists). As our commentary progresses,

its specific profile in the interaction between the exegesis of individual psalms and the exegesis of the Psalter will become increasingly clear.

Israel and Egypt in the Persian and Hellenistic Periods

CHAIR: JONATHAN JAKOB BÖHM (HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN)

Room: UL6 2091

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–126

The Persian Period Transport jars from House k/G of the “Judaic/Aramaic quarter” of Elephantine in the Egyptian Museum Berlin

Stefanie Eisenmann (Humboldt University of Berlin),

Gunnar Lehmann (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev)

41–126/1

During 1906–1908, O. Rubensohn and F. Zucker excavated parts of a Persian period building – their so-called “Gebäude k” – on the “Westkom” of Elephantine. In the 1980s the German Archaeological Institute resumed archaeological work in this area and completed the structure’s excavation which was now re-named into “Haus G”. Both expeditions found numerous storage jars concentrated in two adjacent rooms.

Among the artifacts from the earlier excavations, only the six most intact jars were kept and are now housed at the Egyptian Museum in Berlin. Although these vessels, featuring Phoenician and Aramaic inscriptions, have been extensively discussed in several publications, their archaeological and typological aspects remain underexplored and undocumented. This project aims to address these gaps by conducting typological and petrographic analyses of the jars, which represent both Egyptian and Phoenician types. The typological analysis will shed light on the distribution of these wares, while the petrographic study will help pinpoint the production locales of the Phoenician-type jars along the Levantine coast. This research aims to deepen our understanding of the economic roles of the Judaic military colony at Elephantine by examining the vessels within their local Egyptian context and the broader Mediterranean setting. The research aims to enhance our understanding of the extent to which the inhabitants of the “Judaic military colony” at Elephantine engaged in trade, transshipment, and administrative activities within the Persian Empire.

ΙΕΡΑΕΛΙΤΑΙ: The birth and evolution of early Samari(t)an identity between the Persian and Ptolemaic empires

Gad Barnea (University of Haifa)

41–126/2

This paper traces the evolution of a distinct Samari(t)an identity within this northern community of Yahwists from the Achaemenid period into the heyday of the

Ptolemaic empire – with a glimpse into its aftermath. Samari(t)an identity evolved in parallel to Judean (Yehudy) identity and in constant cross-pollination with it. Moreover, the Samari(t)an diaspora in Egypt and across the Eastern Mediterranean also preserves traces of this evolution on a number of dimensions: onomastic, administrative, cultic, and even linguistic. Sources for this assessment include the Elephantine archives, the archive of the village of Samareia in the Fayoum, the Zenon archive, inscriptions from Mt. Gerizim, the Wadi Daliyeh papyri and various locations in the Mediterranean.

**Display for the living, display of the dead:
the Egypto-Levantine mortuary stelae in context**
Melanie Wasmuth (University of Basel)

41–126/3

First millennium BCE Egypt features a variety of monuments displaying cultural affiliations to more than one cultural tradition. Of special interest in this respect are the funerary stelae made of stone, which are to be considered as primary media of individual representation. Designed for eternity and specifically for eternal participation in ritual care, Egyptian funerary stelae have to mirror the deceased's perception of him- or herself and to induce their visitors to physical or at least mentally conducted offerings. At least to some degree this can also be argued for the various Egypto-foreign funerary stelae that were erected in the necropolis of Memphis. Some of these show a high degree of customization, which allows glimpses into what the stela honoree(s), their closest family members, and/or their further living community considered essential for representing the individual person for eternity. Starting from the only known dated Egypto-Levantine stela, the stela of Ahatabu and Abba in Berlin from 482 BCE, I address which aspects of lived realities can be gleaned from the epigraphic stela evidence: by contextualizing the Berlin Stela a) in the corpus of available Egypto-Levantine stelae, b) in the corpus of other late Saite and Persian period Egypto-foreign stelae, and c) by mapping the potential real-life practices and operational chains that finally resulted in conceptualizing, implementing, and erecting the stela of Ahatabu and Abba (= Berlin stela).

Session 2

42–126

**Shu, Thoth and Anubis at the Coast. Egyptian Amulets
in the Southern Levant during the Persian Period**

Laura Gonnermann (Leipzig University)

42–126/1

Egyptian amulets have a long-standing presence in the southern Levant, with evidence of their use dating back to the Late Bronze Age. These amulets, found across various sites and showcasing diverse iconographies, highlight the continuous interactions between Egypt and the southern Levant into the 1st millennium BCE. The Persian period marks

the final peak in the exchange of Egyptian amulets, characterized by notable shifts in their distribution and design. This lecture will examine the geographical, social, and iconographic aspects of Egyptian amulets during the Persian period. During this time, amulet finds became concentrated in the coastal regions of the southern Levant, and new iconographic styles emerged, exemplified by the Shu, Thoth and Anubis amulets. By situating the Egyptian amulets of the Persian period within a long-durée perspective, we can contextualize these geographical, social, and iconographic changes. This approach allows us to identify distinctive features of Persian-period amulets and understand them within the broader continuum of Egyptian-Levantine cultural exchange.

Egyptians in the southern Levant

Jonathan Jakob Böhm (Humboldt University of Berlin)

42–126/2

Various sources from the late Persian and early Ptolemaic periods attest to the presence of Egyptians in the southern Levant. In addition to two objects with names of Egyptian pharaohs of the 29th Dynasty from Gezer and Acco, these are Aramaic ostraca from Idumea as well as a few stamp seals with Egyptian names in hieroglyphic script. The paper will present and analyze these sources in detail. It will become clear that the southern Levant, especially in the 4th century, was not a stronghold of the Persian Empire against rebellious Egypt but a dense contact space in which people from different cultures were in direct contact with each other, among them Egyptians and members of Yahwistic communities.

Was there an Egyptian influence on southern Levantine imagery during the Persian period? An examination of 4th century BCE coins and sealings

Patrick Wyssmann (University of Bern)

42–126/3

This contribution examines coins and sealings from the 4th century BCE to explore whether the imagery of the southern Levant was influenced by Egypt or reflects cultural contact with it. The analysis focuses on coins from Philistia, Samaria, and Judah, as well as seals from Wadi ed-Daliyeh, most of which date to the 4th century BCE. At first glance, the imagery of these artifacts appears to be primarily influenced by the Persian Empire and Greece. However, certain motifs – such as Isis, Hathor, Bes, and Sphinxes – suggest a connection to the Egyptian pictorial tradition or at least indicate an Egyptian background. This contribution will specifically examine these motifs and consider whether they represent genuine Egyptian elements or merely Egyptianizing influences.

Friday, 08/15/2025

Anthropology of the Old Testament

CHAIRS: BERND JANOWSKI (EBERHARD KARL UNIVERSITY OF TÜBINGEN),
ANDREAS WAGNER (UNIVERSITY OF BERN), AND JÜRGEN VAN OORSCHOT
(UNIVERSITY OF ERLANGEN – NUREMBERG)

Room: UL6 2097

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

51–101

Leiblichkeit und Weltbezug. Zu einem zentralen Aspekt des alttestamentlichen Personbegriffs

Bernd Janowski (Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen)

51–101/1

In der Philosophie der Neuzeit gibt es eine starke Strömung, die von R. Descartes ausgehend bis in die Gegenwart reicht und die das Weltverhältnis des Menschen auf die Beziehung des erkennenden Subjekts zu sich selbst (Selbstbewusstsein) gründet und dieses zum Schlüssel unserer Vorstellungen von der Welt als „Gesamtheit vorstellbarer Objekte“ macht (vgl. Habermas, *Geschichte* 2, 120). Demgegenüber hat sich in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten eine Position entwickelt, die im Anschluss an M. Merleau Ponty das Ich als „leibliches Ich“ (G. Böhme, *Ethik*, 16) bestimmt und vom Handeln als „leiblichem Handeln“ spricht (Ch. Taylor, *Handeln*, 196). Dieses Axiom des leiblichen Fundaments des Weltbezugs hat nicht nur Vorläufer in den Kulturen der vorhellenistischen Antike (Ägypten, Mesopotamien), es ist auch für die Weise der Selbst- und Weltwahrnehmung im AT charakteristisch. Der Beitrag versucht, dies anhand ausgewählter Texte (Psalter, Hiobbuch) und Themen (Feindbild, Gottesbezug) deutlich zu machen.

Berührungen im Spannungsfeld von Sinneswahrnehmung und metaphorischer Kommunikation

Andreas Wagner (University of Bern)

51–101/2

Wird vom Körper geredet, sind auch Berührungen im Spiel. Betrachtet werden hier Körper und Berührungen von Mensch und Gott in alttestamentlichen Texten. Berührungen verbinden Körper mit Körpern und Körper mit Gegenständen. Berührungen werden gewollt (Jes 6,7) und vermieden (Lev 11,8). Berührungen Gottes erreichen Menschen (Jer 1,9; Gen 32,26?). Taktile Empfindungen zwischen Menschen entstehen und werden registriert. Aristoteles grenzt den Tastsinn von anderen Sinnen ab, weil Berührungen und das Empfinden und Wahrnehmen von Berührungen durch die Haut als Medium wirken und kein weiteres Zwischenmedium brauchen. Mit der Schilderung taktiler Vorgänge wird in vielen alttestamentlichen Texten kommuniziert. Welche Rolle spielen Berührungen und Empfindungen von Berührungen bei einer Anthropologie der Sinne im AT? Welchen Platz

nehmen sie im Anthropomorphismus ein? Braucht es eine historisch anthropologische Einordnung der alttestamentlichen Aussagen über den Tastsinn?

**Kontinuität und Wandel – die Suche nach dem
Konstanten in der alttestamentlichen Anthropologie**
Jürgen van Oorschot (University of Erlangen – Nuremberg)

51–101/3

The question of the constants in the images of man pervades the anthropological debate. It is posed and answered on very different levels and with very different intentions. This article uses selected examples from the debate on Old Testament anthropology to shed light on the concepts and contexts of the discussion of anthropological constants. The article concludes with a critical examination of the argumentation and a position on continuity in change.

Session 2

52–101

**Emotion und Handlung. Überlegungen zu kulturellen
Modellen in der Hebräischen Bibel und im Alten Orient**
Sara Kipfer (TU Dortmund University)

52–101/1

Emotionen-Konzepte der Hebräischen Bibel und des Alten Orients können auf Grund der Quellenlage nur partiell erschlossen werden. Während in der Bibelwissenschaft einerseits gefordert wird, den Begriff „Emotion“ als anachronistisch anzusehen und darauf zu verzichten, wird andererseits ein biologistisches und universalistisches Emotionen Verständnis impliziert und eine moderne, europäische Definition von Emotionen unkritisch auf die Antike übertragen. Dieser Beitrag basiert auf der Prämisse, dass die Bibelwissenschaft einen Beitrag zum „emotional turn“ leisten kann (und soll) und dass es ein weit verbreitetes Missverständnis ist, dass eine wissenschaftliche Untersuchung von Emotionen mit einer genauen Definition des Gegenstands beginnen muss. Eine solche Definition würde voraussetzen, dass das zu untersuchende Phänomen in all seinen Formen und Ausprägungen bereits im Detail bekannt ist, und birgt die Gefahr, das altorientalische Verständnis von „Emotion“ zu verfehlen. Am Beispiel von Angst, Trauer und Liebe wird gezeigt, dass „Emotionen“ in der Hebräischen Bibel, nicht als eine innere Erregung verstanden werden, die ein Individuum erfasst, sondern sehr stark an zwischenmenschliche Interaktionen, äußere Einflüsse und Handlungen gebunden sind.

Körperwelten – Zum Paradigma des Körpers in der Alttestamentlichen Anthropologie
Christian Frevel (Ruhr University Bochum)

52–101/2

Körperdiskurse sind in den anthropologisch interessierten Disziplinen allgegenwärtig, viel-dimensional und beileibe nicht neu. Fragen der Körperlichkeit, der Leib-Körper Differenz, das Leib-Seele-Problem oder auch die Wahrnehmungen des Körpers sind für die biblische Anthropologie zunehmend zentral geworden. Die körperaffinen Themen wie Schmerz,

Emotionen, Geschlecht, Perfektionierung, Krankheit, Behinderung etc. haben in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten auch die Diskurse in der biblischen Anthropologie wesentlich mitbestimmt. Die eingeübten Modelle des Menschen als Gliederpuppe etwa oder die Annahme körperbezogener Metonymien sind dabei prägend geblieben, selbst wenn sie immer wieder hinterfragt wurden. Es ist auffallend, wie wenig Klarheit in Bezug auf die Körperauffassung in der alttestamentlichen Anthropologie herrscht. Der Vortrag versucht daher eine systematisierende Annäherung an den Stand der Diskussion zur Rolle des Körpers in der alttestamentlichen Anthropologie anhand von ausgewählten biblischen Texten.

Kann ein Kuschit seine Haut(farbe) wandeln? Funktionen der optischen Beschreibung von nichtisraelitischen Menschen in der Hebräischen Bibel

Ruth Ebach (Ruhr University Bochum)

52–101/3

In der Hebräischen Bibel gibt es verschiedene Nennungen menschlicher Haut- oder Haarfarben. Die Farbe selbst wird als eine unveränderliche Konstante wahrgenommen (Jer 13,23), was Auswirkungen auf die Identitätskonstruktion eines Menschen oder einer Gruppe hat (vgl. auch die Beschreibung der Sumerer als Schwarzköpfige). Die verschiedenen Funktionen dieser Darstellungen sind jedoch genauer zu analysieren, wie das berühmteste Beispiel der Beschreibungen Esaus (Gen 25,25), Davids (1 Sam 16,12) und des Freundes im Hohelied (Hld 5,10) als rot (אָדמוֹנִי, אָדום) zeigt. Die gleichlautende Formulierung wurde in der Interpretationsgeschichte bei den einen als optischer Vorteil, bei dem anderen als Beweis seines problematischen Charakters gesehen. Wahrnehmung ist auf verschiedenen Ebenen kulturabhängig, denn nicht nur eine Unterscheidung in Rot, Blond oder Braun trägt Trennungslinien ein, sondern auch die Konnotationen der Farben sind mit Vorsicht aus den Quellen zu rekonstruieren. Schwarze Haut (שָׁחָר) kann durch (zu viel) Sonne (Hld 1,6), Krankheit (Hi 30,30) und Unglück (Lam 4,7–8) ausgelöst sein, aber ist hier ein grundlegenderer und auch politischer Abgrenzungsmechanismus zu erkennen? Gerade bei Machthabern und Repräsentationen von Völkern spielen die Dimensionen von Ästhetik und Politik zusammen.

The Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ) Project

CHAIR: ATTILA BODOR (DEUTSCHE BIBELGESELLSCHAFT),

INNOCENT HIMBAZA (UNIVERSITY OF FRIBOURG)

Room: UL6 1072

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

51–104

Kritische Würdigung der Edition des Buches Hiob in der Biblia Hebraica Quinta

Markus Witte (Humboldt University of Berlin)

51–104/1

50 Jahre nach der Bearbeitung des textkritischen Apparates zum Buch Hiob in der Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia durch Gillis Gerleman liegt nun mit der 16. Lieferung der

Biblia Hebraica Quinta eine grundlegende Neubearbeitung des Apparates durch Robert Althann vor. Die Neubearbeitung spiegelt nicht nur das in den letzten Jahrzehnten gewandelte Verständnis textgeschichtlicher Entwicklungen und aktuelle Fragen einer kritischen Edition wider, sondern gibt auch einen Einblick in die Septuaginta- und in die Qumranforschung. So leisten gerade die intensiven Forschungen zu den (spät)antiken griechischen und lateinischen Überlieferungsgestalten des Hiobbuches (Septuaginta, hexaplarische Fragmente, Vetus Latina, Vulgata) sowie zu den aus Qumran bekannten hebräischen und aramäischen Hiobhandschriften einen enormen Beitrag zur Textgeschichte des Hiobbuches. Hinzu kommen die im Verlauf der letzten fünf Jahrzehnte erzielten Fortschritte in der vergleichenden Semitistik und der hebräischen Lexikographie. Vor diesem Hintergrund bietet der Vortrag eine kritische Würdigung des textkritischen Apparats und der ausführlichen textkritischen Kommentierung, die R. Althann nun in der BHQ vorgelegt hat.

Hapax Legomena in the BHQ Apparatus of 1–2 Samuel

Leonardo Pessoa da Silva Pinto (Pontifical Biblical Institute)

and Craig E. Morison (Pontifical Biblical Institute)

51–104/2

One of the innovations of the BHQ is the inclusion of the major textual witnesses of the Bible, the MT, LXX, Peshitta, Targum and Vulgate, in every entry in the apparatus. For this reason, the information in the apparatus and textual commentary for hapax legomena can be particularly useful. It can suggest a different Hebrew Vorlage and/or indicate how a particular hapax legomenon has been interpreted by the versions. Specific examples from the future BHQ 1–2 Samuel apparatus will be presented (1 Sam 2,36; 5,9; 7,12; 9,4,7; 10,2) and we will offer suggestions on how to interpret the entries in these cases.

Reading Psalm 5:13: Textual and Literary Implications

Innocent Himbaza (University of Fribourg)

51–104/3

This paper suggests that the textual variants in Psalm 5:13 can be interpreted in diverse ways. The differences observed between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint, on one hand and 4QPs (4Q83), Aquila, and Symmachus, on the other, may stem from deliberate textual changes by scribes seeking to avoid anthropomorphism. In contrast, the variations between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint likely reflect differing interpretations of the same underlying Hebrew Vorlage.

Session 2

52–104

BHQ Daniel: Preliminary Observations

Marco Settembrini (Bologna University)

52–104/1

In my paper I will discuss selected readings from Daniel 8–12 that I have worked on as co-editor of BHQ Daniel. Special attention will be given to their characterizations,

elaborated according to the criteria set forth in the editorial guidelines of the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*.

The Samaritan Pentateuch in the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*

Attila Bodor (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft)

52–104/2

The Samaritan Pentateuch (Smr) exhibits numerous variations from the Tiberian Masoretic textual tradition, including the Leningrad Codex, which serves as the textual base for the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (BHQ) edition. This paper examines the representation, characterization, and evaluation of Smr variants in BHQ's critical apparatus and commentary, focusing on the published Pentateuch volumes – Genesis (2015), Leviticus (2020), and Deuteronomy (2007) – while also considering potential approaches in the forthcoming volumes of Exodus and Numbers. By analyzing specific examples, it evaluates the overall treatment of Smr variants across the BHQ volumes, concluding with new perspectives on the interpretation of Smr readings that may inform future volumes.

The Forthcoming BHQ Edition of Ezekiel: Some Challenging Aspects of Its Preparation

Matthieu Richelle (University of Louvain)

52–104/3

Compared to the BHS edition, the BHQ edition not only displays a more detailed critical apparatus; it also contains new features, such as a textual commentary dealing with special difficulties, and several new characterizations of variants. The preparation of the volume on Ezekiel in the BHQ, edited by Johan Lust, is reaching its last stages. This paper discusses two challenging aspects pertaining to the creation of both its critical apparatus and its commentary.

First, this volume will be one of the first in the BHQ series to make significant use of the characterization “lit”, which is used when the editor regards a textual difference between two witnesses as stemming from the existence of distinct literary editions. The existence of two such editions is evident in the case of Ezek 37–39, since the sequence of these chapters differs in an important witness of the LXX, namely p967. But there are various other places in the BHQ edition of Ezekiel where “lit” will be used. This paper will present several of them and raise the questions of whether they are interrelated and whether they are related to the situation in chapters 37–39.

Second, frequently the available data does not enable the editor to propose a characterization of a reading with sufficient certainty. This paper will present several cases in Ezekiel, some, where a question mark qualifies a characterization, others where no characterization is proposed, and the textual commentary explores various scenarios of equally plausibility.

Digital Humanities and Computational Approaches to the Bible

CHAIRS: FRÉDÉRIQUE REY (UNIVERSITY OF LORRAINE), SOPHIE ROBERT HAYEK
(UNIVERSITY OF LORRAINE), AND DAVIDE D'AMICO (UNIVERSITY OF LORRAINE)

Room: UL6 2094

14:30–16:00

51–108

Topical Distribution of LXX-versions of Ezekiel the Tragedian

Christian Vrangbæk (Aarhus University)

51–108/1

This paper explores the application of topic modeling techniques to analyze the fragments of Ezekiel the Tragedian's work, primarily found in the writings of Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Eusebius. Ezekiel's "Exagōgē," the earliest known Jewish play, retells the biblical Exodus story in a Hellenistic dramatic form. By employing topic modeling approaches, we aim to uncover thematic patterns and literary features within these fragmentary texts, shedding new light on the intersection of Jewish and Hellenistic cultures in the 2nd–3rd century BCE. The study demonstrates how topic modeling can reveal insights into the adaptation of biblical narratives for dramatic purposes and the evolution of religious themes in Hellenistic literature. This analysis is in continuation of Matthias Coeckelbergs and Seth van Hoolands application of topic modelling on the Hebrew Bible (2016). In this study, we contribute to LXX-studies by providing a quantitative perspective on the reception and interpretation of Exodus themes in early Jewish-Hellenistic literature, potentially illuminating broader trends in the development of biblical exegesis through literary reshaping of authoritative texts.

The uBIQUity of Sacred Texts between Past and Future: Methodological Challenges and New Tools

Anna Mambelli (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia)

51–108/2

uBIQUity is a transdisciplinary research project originating from the methodological framework of the Historical and Theological Lexicon of the Septuagint (ed. by Eberhard Bons and Daniela Scialabba, in collaboration with Anna Mambelli; 4 vols., Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020–) and is part of the larger PNRR project ITSERR – Italian Strengthening of the ESFRI RI RESILIENCE funded by NextGenerationEU. uBIQUity, which incorporates in its title the "BI" of the Bible(s) and the "QU" of the Quran, aims at investigating the sacred texts of Christianity and Islam in different environments and historical periods through two huge corpora: Greek and Latin Christian works written from the Patristic age until the Late Byzantine period, and classical commentaries on the Quran written in Arabic (tafaāsiir) from the rise of Islam until the 15th century. By entangling Computer Science and Humanities, uBIQUity aims to develop a new research tool that can identify with a high degree of accuracy quotations/allusions to the Bible(s) and the Quran in later Christian and Islamic works. For the development of this semantic

search engine, uBIQUity closely cooperates with Resilient Septuagint, an Italian Research Project of Relevant National Interest (PRIN 2022), for the Greek Bible(s) and Patristic section and includes an investigation into generative AI strategies and tools to generate new knowledge on biblical filigrees. This paper will be presented by the proponent and Dr. Laura Bigoni (University of Bologna / FSCIRE).

Resilient Septuagint and uBIQUity: Case Studies of Intertextuality in the Digital Age

Davide Dainese (University of Bologna)

51–108/3

The paper aims to present some case studies that illustrate the main results achieved by the Italian Research Project of Relevant National Interest (PRIN 2022) Resilient Septuagint, which closely collaborates with uBIQUity-WP8 of the ITSERR project within the Research Infrastructure for Religious Studies “RESILIENCE”. The goal of the project is to implement a semantic search engine that operationalizes a workflow capable of integrating syntactic and semantic analyses to detect intertextual references between the Greek Bible and patristic works. The investigation is based on finely granular datasets that consider information from both the edited texts and their critical apparatuses. Although designed for ancient Greek texts such as the Septuagint and patristic literature, this adaptable framework can be customized for other languages and corpora, bridging computational methods and humanities expertise. This paper will be presented by the proponent, Prof. Luca Arcari (University of Naples Federico II) and Prof. Laura Carnevale (University of Bari).

Philological and Linguistic Variety in Northwest Semitic Languages

CHAIRS: JONATHAN STÖKL (LEIDEN UNIVERSITY) AND ANNA ELISE ZERNECKE

(CHRISTIAN ALBRECHT UNIVERSITY OF KIEL)

Room: UL6 3059

14:30–16:00

51–117

Identifying Northern Hebrew in the Epigraphic Corpus and Hebrew Scribal Culture: A Response to Na’ama Pat-El

Jeremy Hutton (University of Wisconsin – Madison)

51–117/1

Na’ama Pat-El has recently issued a critique of Rendsburg’s hypothesis regarding the possibility of tracking Northern Hebrew (VT 67 [2017]: 227–263). This paper addresses one aspect of Pat-El’s analysis, namely, her claim that the Hebrew epigraphic remains of the Iron II period demonstrate uniformity in palaeography and orthography – and hence, in scribal training. I survey and respond to her argument, evaluating its evidentiary basis and proposing an alternative account. I then offer conclusions regarding the extent to which the epigraphic remains can reasonably inform any account of the presence or absence of geographically-based dialectal distinctions within Hebrew language.

Moab without Meša: Moabite forays from a perspective of doubt

Reinhard G. Lehmann (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

51–117/2

The Meša inscription seems to have persisted almost unchallenged as the main or only point of reference for the 'Moabite' language and script. It has been flanked for some 50 years by only a few other texts that have been accepted as undoubtedly genuine and Moabitic. From an emic point of view, however, their Moabiticity is proven only for the Meša stele and the much shorter Kerak fragment, both of which are identified as such by the authorship of a mlk m'b.

In terms of text volume, all the other 'Moabite' texts put together do not even come close to the Meša stele. The central position of the stele in the history of scholarship is therefore all too understandable. However, its supposed normativity seems to derive more from its prominence than from its written form, its script and its language itself. For this very reason, however, it may be heuristically advisable, for the time being, to disregard Meša altogether when considering the question of what actually constitutes Moabite in language and script.

Resilience: Prayer texts in Poetical Literature

CHAIR: JUDITH GÄRTNER (UNIVERSITY OF ROSTOCK)

Room: UL6 2093

14:30–16:00

51–118

God is my strength and has become my salvation

(Isa 12:2): Resilience transcends trauma

Elizabeth Esterhuizen (University of Pretoria)

and Alphonso Groenewald (University of Pretoria)

51–118/1

The book of Isaiah, a rich collection of prophetic literature, embodies a wide array of themes, including judgment, hope, and restoration, in the face of national calamity and personal suffering. The themes of trauma and resilience serve as a vital lens through which to interpret its narratives. At the end of the first section (Isa 1–12) of the Book of Isaiah the prophetic figure demands praise to God as resilience and hope comes from God. Hope looks beyond the present realities and leads to a transformation that reaches beyond the set boundaries of past experiences and perspectives.

Isaiah 12 concludes the first major section of the Book of Isaiah and this text will be interpreted as a meaning-making text. This text transcends the reader beyond trauma and anticipates survival and resilience. Isaiah 12 gives Judah a song to sing as they hope God will do something remarkable for them. The first major section tells the reader of confrontation, warning and promise, but the Isaianic community is invited to live within this story, to be resilient and to live in hope.

From remembering to resilience in the songs of thanksgiving

Judith Gärtner (University of Rostock)

51–118/2

The paper will examine the psalms of thanksgiving that can be read as meaningful for resilience: these prayers form a retrospective narrative that reflects the inevitability of suffering while at the same time preserving the relationship to God. In dealing with suffering, perspectives of hope can emerge out of the retrospective of an overcome crisis.

It investigates the hypothesis that resilience can be achieved through the act of remembering in the context of a crisis situation. These include remembering individual life stories, collective memory that supports the community, and recourse to ritual acts. The paper then considers how these different perspectives are interwoven in the songs of Thanksgiving and how strategies for overcoming life crises are presented in the text.

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mk 15:34 // Ps 22:1) – biblical perspectives on resilience in the Passion narratives.

Hannah Clemens (Humboldt University of Berlin)

51–118/3

For the first Christian believers, Jesus' death on the cross was not only a theological but also an existential challenge that demanded a willingness to suffer for the sake of faith. The Passion narratives of the Synoptic Gospels deal with this experience of crisis in the context of the outcome of the resurrection and offer identification and interpretation for the individual and the collective. In modern concepts this can be interpreted as performing increasing resilience for the readers. Quotations and allusions from the Old Testament often appear at key points in the narrative, especially in situations, when Jesus prays: In the Garden of Gethsemane and in the moment of his death. The paper examines the function of selected quotations regarding their potential of resilience, especially by expressing the ambivalence between destructiveness and justified hope. The use of Old Testament quotations and allusions points to common theological and anthropological premises of Old and New Testament texts, which open an overall biblical perspective on resilience.

IOMS: Abstracts

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

CHAIR: YOSEF OFER (BAR ILAN UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 3059

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–201

How did the Masoretes work? The Masoretes' work as reflected in three biblical manuscripts

Yosef Ofer (Bar Ilan University)

21–201/1

The Masora comments are a joint enterprise of dozens and hundreds of anonymous Masoretes, but each Masorete has its own style and its own ways of working. The work of the Masoretes is hidden, because it is very difficult to know when the Masorete copied Masora comments from manuscripts that were before him and when he contributed his part in creating new Masora comments or in processing previous Masora comments and rewriting them in a different way. In this lecture the work of three Masoretes will be examined, each of whom opens his own window and reveals some of his ways of working.

MS British Library, Harley 5710–5711 is a complete Bible, written in Italy in the 13th century. Its Masorete sometimes talks about his work methods, reveals the difficulties he had in properly filling out the lines of the Masora in every page, and tells about the ways in which he dealt with this difficulty.

MS Sassoon 82 was written by a well-known Talmudic sage (Shem Tov Gaon). As a Masorete he developed unique methods of organizing the Masora comments, mutual references and assimilating new areas of practice into the Masora comments.

MS S1 (Anu 1; formerly Sassoon 1053) is a manuscript of the entire Bible from the tenth century and is the work of two Masoretes. The fact that the work of the second Masorete was suddenly interrupted reveals a unique peek into his desk and teaches about his working methods, which include the processing of ancient Masora comments alongside the creation of new Masora comments.

The Silent Period of Hebrew Manuscripts

Mordechai Vaintrob (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

21–201/2

Hebrew manuscripts that survive from the period between the second and eighth centuries CE are remarkably rare. From the early second century, we possess writings from the caves of the Judean Desert, dating to the Bar Kokhba revolt years. However, following this period, an almost seven-hundred-year gap ensues, a period from which Hebrew manuscripts are exceedingly scarce. This paucity is particularly striking when contrasted with the relative abundance of manuscript finds in other languages, such as Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Coptic. In this lecture, I aim to explore the factors contributing to this absence and to investigate the nature of book culture during this era, drawing upon evidence from rabbinic literature.

Proofreading Marks in a 14th Century Ashkenazi Torah Scroll: Erfurt 9 (Staatsbibliothek Or. fol. 1218)

Nehemia Gordon (Institute for Hebrew Bible Manuscript Research)

21–201/3

Staatsbibliothek Or. fol. 1218 is a Torah scroll written in the early 14th century in Erfurt. In 1349, this Torah scroll passed into non-Jewish hands when the Jewish community was massacred. As a result, all Jewish scribal activity must date to the brief period between circa 1300 and 1349. The scroll contains proofreading marks that provide a rare glimpse into the process of correcting a liturgical scroll to remove common scribal errors and make the scroll conform to exacting ritual requirements. The proofreading marks reveal a multistage process involving multiple scribes – possibly working at different times – who sometimes disagreed with one another concerning halakhically stringent details such as the precise orthography of the text.

Session 2

22–201

The Features of the Masoretic Accents as Post-lexical Phenomena: Evidence from Shalsholet and the Yemenite Reading Tradition

Sophia L. Pitcher (University of the Free State)

22–201/1

While other prosodic (i.e. post-lexical) features such as melody, stress, and phrase structure are understood uncontroversially to be represented by the graphemes of the ta'ame hamiqra, this has not been recognized with regard to the phonetic lengthening (also post-lexical, see Himmelreich 2019; Himmelreich and Bat-El Foux 2021) of so-called 'pausal forms' (see Goerwitz 1993). Using evidence from descriptions of shalsholet (see Wickes 1887:13; Price 2010:71; Jacobson 2017:97; Eldar 2018:303) and its distribution within the Tiberian Masoretic Text, and Kleiner's (2017, 2019) description of the Yemenite reading tradition, this paper argues that the purpose of the graphemes of the ta'ame hamiqra is to represent the post-lexical dimension of Tiberian Hebrew – namely, intonation, stress, prosodic phrase structure, and phonetic lengthening at prosodic

phrase boundaries and for pragmatic purposes. A cross-linguistic prosodic model for the ta'ame hamiqra is adopted based on an integrated analysis of their features and functions as natural language phenomena of a prosodic system (Pitcher 2020, 2023).

**Recovering the Babylonian Recension
of the Hebrew Bible: Methodological Considerations**
Kim Phillips (University of Cambridge)

22–201/2

In the latter half of the 20th century a spate of publications in the Spanish series Textos y Estudios “Cardenal Cisneros” appears with the general title: Biblia Babilónica. The intention behind the publications was, (in Revell’s words) “to present the Babylonian tradition in its purest form, free from Tiberian influence, as it appears in MSS from the early or middle stages of the Babylonian tradition” (Revell 1979, 132). These publications have been subsequently critiqued – by Revell himself, among others – on both methodological and practical grounds.

Miletto’s recently published collation takes a different methodological stance, insisting that even the late Babylonian manuscripts must be taken into account in the attempt to recover and record the eastern textual recension. From a rather different angle, scholars of the Babylonian Masora (notably Breuer and Ofer) have begun to draw out some of the implicit recessional implications hidden among the Babylonian masoretic notes.

In this paper I will suggest that the reconstruction of a Babylonian recension of the Hebrew Bible remains a substantial desideratum within the textual study of the Hebrew Bible; I will discuss some of the difficulties inherent in the process, and propose some methodological and practical considerations to help ground future attempts on as solid a basis as possible.

IOSCS: Abstracts

Monday, 08/11/2025

Welcome Address by the President / Keynote Lecture

Room: UL6 2093

09:00–09:45

10–301

New Aramaic Text Witnesses for the LXX

From the Cairo Genizah and the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus

Christa Müller-Kessler (Friedrich Schiller University Jena)

10–301/1

Christian Palestinian Aramaic is an important text witness for the critical apparatus of LXX. It provides closely translated texts from the Greek. For this reason, every new find among the palimpsests dating to the 5th to 7th century brings new aspects for the transmission of the LXX text. Recently, new texts could be identified from the Cairo Genizah, which are housed in the Taylor-Schechter Collection, Cambridge in the form of originals and from the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, the Bruno Violet finds, as photographs of 1900 in the Brandenburger und Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaften and the Staatsbibliothek. Now new text witnesses have emerged for Joshua, 3 Book of Kingdoms, Isaiah, and Wisdom of Salomon. The last could be even joined with a folio kept in the Bodleian Library. The paper will present the new finds and their relationship with the critical study of the Septuagint.

Pentateuch

CHAIR: ALISON SALVESEN (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

Room: UL6 2095A

10:00–11:30 + 11:30–13:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

11–302

Segmentation in the Septuagint Pentateuch: Linguistic, Interpretive, and Cognitive Dimensions *Jean Maurais (Acadia University)*

11–302/1

The segmentation hypothesis was classically formulated by Soisalon-Soininen (1983) to explain a variety of phenomena in the Septuagint. Among these is the apparent lack of cohesion within larger textual units, which is potentially explained by the translator losing track of what they had already translated. The hypothesis was further refined by van der Louw (2020) and aims to explain the uneven translation approach from one segment to the next and the inconsistency sometimes found within segments. Still, the question remains: why the uneven results? Is it a function of the limitations of human cognition (as per van der Louw), the outcome of a combination of linguistic registers (Aitken, 2020), sporadic revisions (Aitken, 2021), or drawing attention to Hebrew syntax (Büchner, 2013)? In this paper, I will interact with this hypothesis by first drawing a distinction between the processes related to reading and those that pertain to linguistic production (here translation). With respect to reading, I will discuss how cognitive research in this area shows that translators (and readers more generally) do not move from one element to the next in an orderly fashion but continually move forward and backward in the text. The study of ancient reading practices (e.g., Criboire, 2001) sheds light on this issue and questions the assumption that translators were sometimes blind to the immediate context (Aejmelaeus, 2007). Secondly, I will address the main argument, that cognitive overload may explain the disjunctive nature between and within textual segments. While this is no doubt a factor, the theory also needs to explain the presence of discourse markers such as *δέ*, employed regularly by Pentateuch translators to form large textual units (Fresch, 2023). I will also draw on Chafe's theories on spoken and written discourse, particularly his concept of manageable chunks, to provide a framework for understanding how information is processed during language production. Here also, scribal practices in the Septuagint's Hellenistic context can shed light on the factors that would cause scribes to divide their writing task in segments and whether this correlates or not with the issues identified by Soisalon-Soininen and van der Louw.

A Section of the Old Greek Text of the Decalogue According to Exodus (P.Oxy 5633)

Kristin De Troyer (Paris Lodron University of Salzburg)

11-302/2

In this paper, I would like to present P.Oxy 5633, which contains a section of the Old Greek text of the Decalogue according to Exodus. I will offer the technical and scribal aspects of the fragment, as well as the main variants. I will also compare this text with the text of P.Oxy 4442, which is however much more fragmentary than P.Oxy 5633. (see Kristin De Troyer. "P.Oxy 5633," in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. Volume LXXXVIII. London: The British Academy for the Egypt Exploration Fund, forthcoming.)

The Samareitikon-Tradition: A Critical Re-Evaluation of the Surviving Fragments in Light of the Historical Transmission of the Samaritan Pentateuch, and Samaritan Translation Culture

Stefan Schorch (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

11-302/3

Fragments of Samaritan translation(s) of the Pentateuch into Greek are preserved in several contexts, above all in marginal notes of LXX manuscripts, but additionally also in a few inscriptions and papyrus fragments. Moreover, several secondary sources mention the existence of such Samaritan Greek translations explicitly, above all Epiphanius of Salamis in his *De mensuris et ponderibus*. Generally, the (so-called) "Samareitikon" is understood as one single and unified Greek Pentateuch translation, or revision, prepared by Samaritans and used in the late antique Samaritan community. While the archaeological record emerging from excavated Samaritan synagogues proves beyond any doubt that Greek was indeed used by Samaritans, both as a spoken vernacular as well as a literary language in the synagogue, including the reading of the Pentateuch, the notion that only one Greek translation was used by the Samaritan community receives extremely few supports from the sources, as will be shown in this paper. Instead, the analysis of the preserved "Samareitikon" readings and the extant secondary sources suggests that the former are to be understood as emerging from several separate Greek translations rather than one, pointing in fact to a number of "Samareitika" rather than one single "Samareitikon".

Session 2

12-302

Thirty-Six Cells on Pharos: Epiphanius' Story and the Puzzle of Ex 24:11 LXX

Maria Sokolskaya (Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg)

12-302/1

The Legend of the Seventy has two major variants: translators working together or in spatial separation. The first version is undoubtedly pre-Christian. It is not so obvious with the second: our earliest sources are Christian, but the story is also found in the Babylonian Talmud. Its most full-fledged form is the account in Epiphanius, which is commonly regarded as a distinctly Christian development of the plot. However, it displays great affinity to Jewish exegesis. First, it explicitly names Ex 24 as the "typus"

for the whole story, which seems to be a sound derivation for all Jewish forms of the Legend, including Aristeas; second, the oscillation between 70 and 72 echoes a comment on Ex 24 in BT Sanh.17a. It stands to reason that the Legend in its both versions arose from an exegetically difficult passage in Ex 24 – not only in its Greek version with its οὐ διεφώνησεν οὐδὲ εἰς (24:11), but in the Hebrew text itself, where the meaning of אֲצִילִי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל was seen as a problem, as the lists of “changes for the King Thalmi” and perhaps a discussion in Augustin’s Quaest. in Hex. show. Can it be that the striking rendering Ex 24:11 LXX, so untypically free in regard to the Hebrew, is not the origin, but a result of midrashic uses of the Sinai-Pericope for subsequent proclamations of the Torah? And can it be that some traces of an alternative Greek rendering are preserved in the Vulgate?

OG Job 11.12a: Does Job “Stay Afloat With Words” (νήχεται λόγοις, so Ziegler) or Is He “Careful With Words” (νήφεται, so Schleusner), or Is He “Caught With Words” (ἐνέχεται λόγοις, de Lagarde)? How Antiquated Proposals Live On.

Claude Cox (McMaster Divinity College)

12–302/2

In his critical edition of OG Job, in the apparatus at 11.12a, J. Ziegler says of νήχεται “he swims,” “fort νήφεται [i.e., is careful] Schleusner II 503.” Later de Lagarde took up Schleusner’s suggestion in part, but proposed that νήχεται is a corruption of ἐνέχεται “is entangled.” This paper takes up their proposals with respect to Job 11.12a, situates them in their historical context, and explains the translator’s intentions in using the striking imagery “stays afloat with words.”

Metathesis in the Septuagint: Different Vorlage or Intentional Transformation?

Eszter Csalog (Szent Pál Akadémia)

12–302/3

In the text of the Septuagint, we often find translation solutions based on metathesis. These include, for example, Moreh and Moriah in Genesis – these terms, which we usually interpret as proper names on the basis of the MT, are rendered by the Greek translator as ὑψηλή ‘high’ (12:6; 22:2), most likely on the basis of the letter substitution מריה/רמה < מרה. Since metatheses due to copyist’s error are also evident in the Hebrew textual variants, it is reasonable to attribute these loci to a different Vorlage. However, there is also the possibility that we are dealing with deliberate wordplays. How can we decide this question? If there is a chance that the translator used metathesis to make a deliberate change in content, then we can also assume that his Vorlage did not deviate from the Hebrew text as we know it, but the hand of the translator was at work. In my paper I will examine the metatheses in the book of Paroimiai. Since this translator has made relatively well-defined changes to the content of the text, it is logical to examine these metatheses from a content perspective. As a result of my investigation, I am of the opinion that these metatheses may have been intentional on the part of the translator.

Deuterocanonical Writings

CHAIR: THEO VAN DER LOUW (SIL INTERNATIONAL)

Room: UL6 2095B

10:00–11:30 + 11:30–12:30 (2 sessions)

Session 1

11–303

Stop Me If You Think You've Heard This One Before:

Doublets in the Greek Esther Version

Joshua Alfaro (Paris Lodron University of Salzburg)

11–303/1

This presentation will examine the nature and functions of doublets in Old Greek Esther; the Esther Alpha-Text; and G-III, the Greek Vorlage of Vetus Latina Esther. The textual duplications in these versions are uniquely challenging due to the extended length of several doublets and the complex relationships between the textual traditions. Despite the special character of the Greek Esther traditions, this analysis will be relevant to research on other texts and so this paper will draw comparisons to recent research on doublets in, for example, Greek Proverbs (Cuppi 2011); OG Genesis (Hiebert 2023); the Georgian text of Judith (Vashakmadze and Kharanauli 2025); and OG Job (Häberlein). Since a major question is whether doublets derive from the original translator or from later textual transmission, investigation of doublets is essential to establishing the text for critical editions.

The Outline of I – IV Maccabees in MS Rahlfs 542

Laurens Breukeleers and Reinhart Ceulemans (KU Leuven)

11–303/2

In his survey of manuscript witnesses grouped per Septuagint book or sub-corpus, Alfred Rahlfs was able to list for I – IV Maccabees “only manuscripts with the biblical text, no catenae or commentaries”, yet pointed out the presence in codex 542 (= MS Paris, BnF gr. 10; diktyon 49570) of “a prologue on Maccabees” (1914:387). In this paper we present the Greek text and English translation of this short unedited work, which introduces each of the four books individually and all of them together. We analyze the content and contextualize it by relating it on the one hand with Greek exegesis and hagiography of the books of the Maccabees (notably Gregory of Nazianzus) and on the other hand with the tradition of synopses of the Greek Bible. This comparative analysis will bring us to reflect on the genre of the short work (not so much a prologue, but rather a hypothesis with the kind of information that is offered in synopses). Finally, we will present some paleographical and codicological information on Rahlfs 542. The work on I – IV Maccabees is written on a single page by two hands: the second added the information on III – IV Macc. Furthermore, the next pages in the codex belong to a different manuscript: two separate documents were bound together. These issues raise questions about the work's view on the canonical status of the Books of the Maccabees and on its own state of completion.

Interpreting Judith Between History, Eschatology, and Fiction

Anna Angelini (University of Siena)

11-303/3

The biblical book of Judith is generally considered a text having little to do with the notion of “fantastic,” in that the commonly understood “marvelous” element is absent. However, the narrative does employ strategies of free interpretation, rewriting, and inversion of historical events (esp. the desecration of the temple in Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes, the Jewish resistance, and the Hasmonean rule) that have been variously interpreted. One line of interpretation (Zenger 1981; Nihan 2004) understands the story of Judith as an “eschatological utopia,” following a pattern that characterizes several literary products of Second Temple Judaism and finds its fulfillment in the apocalyptic genre. Other authors (Eckhardt 2009) insist on the intentional use of fictional aspects in the narrative in order to construct a subversive discourse, hence highlighting Judith’s connections with the genre of the novel. My paper aims to challenge the relevance of these categories based on the parallels that Judith holds with Greek and Hellenistic historiography (already observed by Caponigro 1992; Corley 2012; Schmitz 2020), especially with the descriptions of Persian rulers in Herodotus (Hist. 7) and Arrian (Anab. 3), and the divine epiphany in the Chronicle of Lindos. The issue of the literary genre of the book, which remains much debated, can be partly resolved by understanding the book within a framework which I would tentatively label as “positive uchrony”.

Session 2

12-303

Neither Cultural Veneer nor Systematic Thinking: The Interpretation of Philosophical Language in the Book of Wisdom and 4 Maccabees in the Light of Pierre Hadot’s Understanding of Ancient Philosophy

Raphaëlle Berterottière (University of Rouen Normandy)

12-303/1

The philosophical language of non-translated books of the Septuagint such as the Book of Wisdom or 4 Maccabees has many a time been noticed. According to a long-standing interpretation, this phenomenon was mainly a linguistic one, Greek philosophical concepts being used as a mere veneer supposed to improve the standing of the work. However, in recent decades, this view has been questioned, as other aspects of ancient philosophy have been highlighted (including existential appeal, popular philosophy, or eclecticism). Some biblical scholars (among whom Hindy Najman or Anders Klostergaard Petersen) have especially alluded to Pierre Hadot’s understanding of ancient philosophy as a « way of life », a primarily practical activity aiming at liberating the disciple from the torments of existence by means of « spiritual exercises ». The presentation will systematically examine to what extent the integration of texts such as the Book of Wisdom or 4 Maccabees into this perspective is illuminating. We will firstly expose the rhetoric of exemplarity in these works and the way they profile incarnate figures, then address the limits of this association.

**Craftsmanship and Wisdom in the Book of Ben Sira:
Text Traditions and Interpretative Perspectives**
Bonifatia Gesche (Vetus Latina Institute Beuron)

12–303/2

The pericope Sirach 38:24–34 offers a multifaceted portrayal of the relationship between craftsmanship and wisdom, providing valuable insight into ancient views on labour and intellectual activity. While previous scholarship has explored its theological and socio-cultural dimensions, important questions remain regarding the impact of textual variations on the passage's interpretation. This paper revisits the passage through a textual-critical lens, comparing key variants in the four principal ancient versions, with a special focus on the Greek tradition and its textual variants. By systematically comparing key textual differences, the study uncovers nuances that enrich our understanding of the passage's historical and literary context. Building on my involvement in a long-term synoptic project on the textual traditions of Ben Sira, this study undertakes a detailed collation of significant textual differences and examines their implications for the passage's cultural and theological framing. By linking textual form with material culture, the analysis demonstrates how craftsmanship is portrayed as a source of wisdom and how these themes were shaped through the processes of textual transmission. In doing so, this contribution offers fresh perspectives on the evolving discourse surrounding labour and intellectual engagement in Second Temple Judaism.

Prophetic Books

Chair: Jean Muraux (Acadia University)

Room: UL6 2095A

14:30–16:00

13–304

**‘The Literal Meaning of the Sacred Text’: Edward Pusey’s Use of Greek
and Latin Versions in His Commentary on the Minor Prophets,
in the Context of 19th-Century Biblical Scholarship**

Alison Salvesen (University of Oxford)

13–304/1

A prominent member of the ‘Oxford Movement’, Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800–82) is best known for his theological writings. But for 54 years he held the Regius Chair of Hebrew at Oxford, and over the course of two decades wrote *Nine Lectures on Daniel* (published 1864) and the extensive *Commentary on the Minor Prophets* (1860, 1877). The latter work gained a wide readership and was reprinted many times. The paper examines Pusey’s employment of the LXX, the Greek minor versions and Jerome’s *iuxta Hebraeos* version, in relation to Pusey’s professed goal of expounding the Hebrew text. It discusses Pusey’s attitude towards these versions, traces his possible sources (including Walton’s *Polyglot* and Field’s *Origenis Hexaplorum quod supersunt*), and situates his work within the rapidly evolving field of 19th-century biblical scholarship.

Of Evil Kings and Tax Collectors: Economic Terminology in Old Greek Isaiah

Rebecca Wolfs (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)

13–304/2

The Old Greek translation of Isaiah is significantly influenced by its cultural and social context, which scholars generally agree to be Ptolemaic Egypt around 140 BCE. It has long been recognised, particularly due to the contributions of Joseph Ziegler, that OG Isaiah employs technical vocabulary that is also present in the Greek papyri of Ptolemaic Egypt. This terminology is derived from various thematic fields, including cult, geography, administration and economy. The present paper is dedicated to a specific case study: the integration of technical vocabulary from the Ptolemaic taxation system into OG Isaiah. This phenomenon is evident in at least three passages: Isaiah 3:12–15, 9:4–5(3–4), 14:4b–5. The commonality of these passages lies in their depiction of a political reversal of fortune. The passages commonly feature anonymous, oppressive rulers and hostile forces whose dominion comes to a violent end. Notably, OG Isaiah substitutes the Hebrew titles and descriptions of these rulers with terms for officials and institutions from the Ptolemaic fiscal system. The prophecies of Isaiah are thus newly contextualised in the social reality of the translator and his audience. The analysis of the text passages will be conducted in two stages: The first stage involves a philological analysis comparing the Hebrew and Greek versions. Secondly, the economic terminology employed in the Greek translations will be elucidated on the basis of Greek papyri and socio-historical data from the tax system of Ptolemaic Egypt.

Textual Stratigraphy of the Old Latin Versions of Hosea

Alfio Giuseppe Catalano (Pontifical Biblical Institute)

13–304/3

In this paper, I aim to present the findings of my doctoral thesis on the direct witnesses of the *Vetus Latina* (VL) of Hosea in relation to the critical-textual study of the Lucianic and Hexaplaric recensions. In particular, the following stratification of the textual evidence observed will be proposed, with illustrative examples. 1. The oldest textual stratum of the VL versions is pre-recessional in nature. 2. The majority of the VL witnesses concur with the readings that are common to the Hexaplaric and Lucianic recensions, but these readings are pre-recessional. 3. In the VL texts, some approximations to the Hebrew are present to varying degrees in the absence of the systematic features of a recension, as evidenced by α or σ readings in particular. This category of approximations is antecedent to the pre-Hexaplaric recensions and is non-Hexaplaric in nature. 4. In the VL witnesses, there is evidence of at least partial influence from the recensions of the Three. It is not possible to rule out the possibility that the agreement between the VL texts and the Three is attributable to a common substratum. 5. α or σ readings in the Lucianic text may be OG or represent revisions according to the Hebrew that generate conflated readings in the VL witnesses. There is no definitive evidence of readings from the pre-Hexaplaric recensions among the Lucianic doublets. Consequently, the revisions according to the Hebrew that result in conflated readings appear to belong to the Proto-Lucianic layer, rather than the Lucian recessional layer.

Psalms and Job

CHAIR: KRISTIN DE TROYER (PARIS LODRON UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG)

Room: UL6 2095B

14:30–16:00

13–305

Die Psalterkatenenhandschrift Codex Hierosolymitanus S. Crucis 96 (Rahlfs-Hs. 1070) als Epitome hexaplarischer Lesarten.

Zugleich eine Untersuchung zur sog. Theodoret-Katene

Felix Albrecht (Niedersächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen)

13–305/1

Die Psalterkatene Codex Hierosolymitanus, Ἀγίου Σταυροῦ 96 (Rahlfs-Hs. 1070) ist eine Majuskelhandschrift aus dem Sabaskloster (Mar Saba) im Kidrontal, die (lückenhaft) Ps 20:10–148:6 mit Randscholien überliefert. Zusammen mit Rahlfs-Hs. 1208 zählt sie zu den ältesten erhaltenen Psalterkatenenhandschriften. Beide Handschriften sind Rahmenkatenen, deren Bibeltext in rechtsgeneigter Spitzbogenmajuskel und Kommentartext in aufrechter Spitzbogenmajuskel gehalten ist. Obwohl Rahlfs-Hs. 1070 als ältester bekannter Zeuge der sogenannten „Konstantinopolitanischen Psalmenkatene“ und als reichhaltige Quelle hexaplarischer Lesarten gilt, hat sie bislang keine hinlängliche Würdigung erfahren. So scheint es geboten, diese Handschrift eingehender zu betrachten. Dabei soll erörtert werden, welchen Stellenwert sie im Gesamtkontext der hexaplarischen Psalterüberlieferung und im Hinblick auf den Psalmenkommentar des Theodoret von Kyros einnimmt. Schon Rendel Harris hatte 1889 darauf hingewiesen, dass sich in dieser Handschrift vor allem Symmachus-Lesarten finden. Der Beitrag gliedert sich in zwei Teile: Zunächst werden die Handschrift und der aktuelle Forschungsstand kurz vorgestellt. Im zweiten Teil werden – ausgehend von einer vollständigen Erhebung sämtlicher hexaplarischer Lesarten dieser Handschrift – ausgewählte Beispiele analysiert und diskutiert. Damit soll ein Beitrag zur besseren Erschließung der Rahlfs-Hs. 1070 geleistet und zugleich ihre Bedeutung für die Text- und Auslegungsgeschichte der Psalmen vertieft werden.

Psalm-Headings in Book IV of the Greek Psalter:

With Special Emphasis on LXX Ps 92(1)

Gert J. Steyn (Theologische Hochschule Ewersbach)

13–305/2

This paper investigates the headings of the Greek Psalms in Book IV (LXX Ps 89–105) and intends to identify and classify the headings, as well as to interpret their rhetorical role and hermeneutical function. The heading of LXX Ps 92 receives special emphasis. Some of the most striking differences between the Greek and Hebrew Psalter of Book IV are the occurrences of headings in the Greek Psalms (pluses), differences in their formulation (substitutions), and the prominence of David's name. The latter surfaces in eleven of these Greek Psalms but is absent in the Hebrew collection – except MT

Ps 103. The headings are present in all of the Greek Psalms, in contrast to the Hebrew, where headings occur in only six of the seventeen cases. The Greek headings refer to different genres and include five Odes, six Psalms, three Laudations, two Prayers, and two Hallelujahs. The headings in Book IV are controversial. Their presence and function divide scholarship based on their text-critical, historical, and liturgical evidence. So, for instance in LXX Ps 92, the Rahlfs – LXXGött – LXX.D trajectory retained the full heading, based on Codices \aleph , A and B, and corresponding with the Vulgate and Ethiopic editions. The Pietersma – NETS trajectory, on the other hand, considered it to be a later Christian plus and omits it, based on the minus by some Lukian witnesses (Lpau), a part of Theodoret (Thtp) and the Psalter Commentary of Hesychius of Jerusalem. References to the use of Ps 93(92) in Jewish liturgical practice, such as those of the Mishna (Tamid 7,4) and the Babylonian Talmud (Rosh Hashanah 31a), might assist in furthering the debate.

The Earliest Greek Reception of LXX Job

Stephen M. Bay (Brigham Young University)

13–305/3

Due to his blunt skepticism and near-irreverent impatience, the Masoretic Text's portrayal of Job stands as one of the Old Testament's most philosophically and theologically challenging figures. The original Septuagint translator offered a surprisingly loose rendering, taking the initial step toward softening the text's impact. Yet the leap in reception from this Septuagint Job to the exemplary figure of late-antique and early medieval Christianity is striking. This paper examines the earliest reception of Septuagint Job among Jewish and Christian Greek authors, revealing distinct, chronologically consistent stages in its interpretation – stages which suggest possible horizontal contamination from other Jobian sources, most notably the Testament of Job, a text with a complex relationship to Christianity. Ultimately, the study shows that the patristic reception of Septuagint Job, much like that of the Testament of Job, had already advanced significantly toward a typological reading. By this stage, Septuagint Job was increasingly viewed as a holy man, a saint, and even a prefiguration (or type) of Christ. This evolution underscores how the text's initial looseness paved the way for a major shift in the theological and devotional understanding of Job within early Christian traditions.

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

Lexical and Linguistic Studies

CHAIR: REINHART CEULEMANS (KU LEUVEN)

Room: UL6 3071

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–306**The Septuagint Use of θλίβω and θλίψις – Preliminary Observations***Eberhard Bons (University of Strasbourg)***21–306/1**

One of the typical words of biblical Greek referring to affliction, distress and oppression is the verb θλίβω, very often used in the middle form θλίβομαι, and the cognate noun θλίψις. This paper addresses the following issues: 1o in the history of Greek language, the verb θλίβω undergoes a semantic shift, i.e., from “to squeeze” to “to oppress”. 2o Obviously, such a semantic shift is evident from the papyri of the Hellenistic period, e.g., in the so-called enteuxeis from Egypt. 3o Concerning the Septuagint, a twofold question arises: What are the Hebrew equivalents of the two terms? On closer inspection, can we observe some patterns in the specific Septuagint use of the verb θλίβω and the noun θλίψις?

ὅσιος and Cognates in the Septuagint*Dries De Crom (Tilburg University)***21–306/2**

A lot of work has been done on the vocabulary of piety, holiness and sanctification in Greek, particularly with respect to Classical Greek and the New Testament. However, the distribution and use of these word fields in the Septuagint has been relatively understudied (one exception being Vahrenhorst 2020). This paper attempts to redress this gap in scholarship by focusing on one specific word field related to piety and holiness, viz. ὅσιος and its cognate words. Taking its cue from recent work on Classical Greek (Peels 2016), this paper will analyze the use of ὅσιος and cognates in LXX and other ancient Jewish versions. Specifically, the paper will test the validity of some of the hypotheses that have been formulated about the word ὅσιος in the past, viz. its increasing semantic specialization vis-à-vis both εὐσεβής and δίκαιος; its presumed reference to outward expressions of piety rather than to internal dispositions; and its relationship to ἄγιος and cognates, which rose to prominence in the Hellenistic age.

Septuagintal Sycophants: συκοφαντ- in the Septuagint and in Post-Classical Greek*Maximilian Häberlein (Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg)***21–306/3**

This paper tracks the usage of συκοφαντ- in the Septuagint corpus against the backdrop of post-classical Greek language development. συκοφαντεῖν and its related nouns

occur some 15 times in the LXX and some 40 times in the recensores. In a miscellany in ZNW 1903 (p. 271), Nestle remarks: “Im biblischen Griechisch heißt συκοφαντεῖν einfach bedrücken (acc. der Person), erpressen (acc. der Sache).” Indeed, the verb συκοφαντεῖν is most commonly translated with “extort” in its two NT occurrences (Luke 3:14; 19:8). In the LXX corpus, along with the nouns συκοφάντης and συκοφαντία, it most commonly renders the root פשע. This equivalence is particularly prevalent in LXX Psalms, Proverbs, and Qohelet, and it is standardized in the later translations of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. In Classical Greek, however, συκοφαντ- most commonly refers to vexatious prosecution or wrongful accusations. This use is not only attested in Attic orators such as Lysias or Isocrates, but also in Ptolemaic papyri (cf. i.a. p.Tebt. 1.43, ll. 26, 36 [117 BCE]; p.Mich. 1.47 r l.2 [248 BCE]). In fact, it could shed light on several other LXX instances of συκοφαντ-, especially Gen 43:18; Lev 19:11; Amos 2:8. The goal of this paper is therefore to trace the shifts in meaning of συκοφαντ- in the LXX corpus compared against its use in documentary evidence as well as classical and post-classical Greek literature, thus contributing to both lexicography and the sociolinguistic setting of the translations.

Session 2

22–306

The ‘Imagined Readers’ of the Septuagint: Lexical Choices and Cultural Negotiation

Camilla Recalcati (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

22–306/1

This study introduces an innovative approach by merging literary theories on the “imagined reader” (e.g., Tyson 2006) with biblical translation studies, providing new perspectives on the Septuagint as a cultural and linguistic artifact. It examines how the translators envisioned their audience, reflecting on the linguistic and cultural expectations that informed their translation choices. By exploring how the Septuagint translators navigated the interplay between the Hebrew source material and the linguistic milieu of Hellenistic Egypt, this analysis seeks to shift the paradigm by employing the concept of the “imagined reader” to illuminate their lexical decisions. Within selected passages, lexical items are analyzed according to their register. High-register terms reveal literary Greek influences (Honigman 2003; Usener 2016; Aitken 2011, 2019), contrasted with low-register vocabulary (Pfeiffer 2016; Recalcati 2024) shaped by Egyptian vernacular. Additionally, the study critically examines “Hebraisms” and “Semitisms” (Tov 1976; Soisalon-Soininen 2020) from a sociolinguistic perspective, offering insights into how particular terms were retained and adapted. These categories will be evaluated together to provide a comprehensive understanding of the imagined reader or audience the translators had in mind when crafting the text. By synthesizing these linguistic layers, the study seeks to reconstruct the translators’ conceptualization of their audience and the socio-cultural priorities that guided their translation strategies. Finally, drawing on recent research on Jewish communities outside Alexandria (Kugler 2022; Hacham-Ilan 2020), this work contextualizes these linguistic phenomena within

the broader sociocultural framework of the Fayum region – a hub of Jewish settlement and cultural.

The Lexical Choice of ἀφή for נגף in OG Leviticus: A Greek-Priority Perspective

Alberto Paredes (University of Cambridge)

22–306/2

The Old Greek translation of Leviticus exhibits unique lexical choices that reveal the translator's nuanced approach to rendering the Hebrew text into Greek. One such choice is the use of ἀφή to translate the Hebrew נגף—a term frequently employed in the context of skin diseases and ritual impurity. While traditional scholarship has often emphasized Hebrew Vorlage influence, interpreting ἀφή as a neologism meaning 'infection' or 'plague,' this paper explores the possibility that the translator's selection of ἀφή reflects internal Greek linguistic considerations, rather than, or in addition to, strict adherence to the source text. Adopting a Greek-priority perspective, this study examines ἀφή within the broader context of contemporary Greek terminology. By situating the term within its Hellenistic milieu, it seeks to uncover potential semantic resonances that would have been meaningful to a Greek-speaking audience. Through a comparative analysis of key Levitical passages, this paper argues that the translator's use of ἀφή reflects a deliberate strategy to render נגף in a way that harmonizes with Greek conceptual frameworks while maintaining the functional equivalence of the Hebrew term. This approach challenges assumptions of unidirectional influence and highlights the translator's active role in shaping the Greek text as a coherent and contextually relevant work of Second Temple literature.

Knowledge From the Greek Bible: Lexical Investigations on ἐπιστήμη and Cognates

Laura Bigoni (University of Bologna)

22–306/3

The concept of episteme has had a phenomenal impact on the intellectual lexicon of Europe and the Western world (and so had sophia and synesis). The Greek root behind such an impactful concept is prima facie a straightforward way of speaking about knowledge, yet the nuances of what knowledge means are manifold, and the root naturally crosses genres and eras within Greek literature and available documentary sources. This paper explores the role of the root within the Greek Bible, in conversation with other roots expressing a similar meaning with its extra-biblical usages, to underline the specific nuances and translation strategies of the translators when they approached the idea in different contexts. It also shows some of the results of the lexical research in preparation of the corresponding HTLS article.

Textual Criticism and Revisions

CHAIR: JOSHUA ALFARO (PARIS LODRON UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG)

Room: UL6 3075

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–307

Creating a Hebrew – Greek – Hebrew Index of Theodotion in 1–2 Samuel with the Help of AI

Timo Tekoniemi (University of Helsinki)

21–307/1

In this paper, I will tell of my experiences of making an index of all the θ' -marked readings in the books of Samuel by using AI tools (different versions of ChatGPT). The index gives the entries in their basic forms and features both Hebrew – Greek and a Greek – Hebrew alignments. I will discuss the practices that worked best (and which ones did not) and show the overall working process of AI-powered index-making that can be used to enhance and speed up research. I will also discuss some of the results of my work on the θ' -marked readings of 2 Samuel. Since Dominique Barthélemy (*Devanciers d'Aquila*, 1963), some of the θ' -readings of 2 Samuel have been suspected to comprise material other than genuine Theodotion text – namely, some of the readings may actually witness the Lucianic text via misattributed quotations of Theodoret of Cyrrhus. I will present examples of this phenomenon, especially from the viewpoint of index making: how should one proceed with erroneously attributed θ' -readings when aspiring to make an index of genuine Theodotion text?

Diversity and Development Within the Septuagint's Kaige-Aquila Tradition

Ryan Comins (University of Cambridge)

21–307/2

The Septuagint's internal diversity has long been acknowledged in Septuagint scholarship. Influential classifications of Septuagint books, such as Henry Thackeray's, aim to describe and illustrate the real heterogeneity that exists across the corpus. Ironically, however, these very classifications risk distortion by exaggerating the degree of homogeneity within a particular grouping of books. This risk is specifically observable with respect to the group of texts classified by Thackeray as 'literal or unintelligent.' Dominique Barthélemy, in his seminal *Les Devanciers d'Aquila*, further bound these 'literal' translations together by positing a unified Hebraizing kaige revision of the Septuagint, the 'inconsistency' of which was later 'driven to perfection' by Aquila. This straightforward linear model, in which Aquila's approach is simply a perfected version of the earlier kaige method, prevents us from asking more fruitful questions about how the nature and aims of this translation tradition might have been developing during the early Roman period. As such, this paper highlights and attempts to account for the diversity within the isomorphic kaige-Aquila translation tradition. I analyse three linguistic

features which show variation across different members of this group: positioning of $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ relative to the article; usage of the word $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$; and usage of the future indicative. I consider what factors can best explain this variation, and what this might suggest about the evolution of Jewish Greek translation practices in the early Roman period, helping us to situate the kaige-Aquila tradition more appropriately within the history of ancient Judaism and the wider Greek-speaking world.

Otto Thenius and Zacharias Frankel on the Text of the Books of Samuel

Theo van der Louw (SIL International)

21–307/3

Thenius' commentary *Die Bücher Samuels* (1842) systematically emended the Masoretic Text on the basis of the Septuagint. It was considered groundbreaking but his numerous text-critical proposals have left very few traces (as witness the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project). Frankel's critical review (1844) can be appreciated as an academic rebuttal. But to the background of his life and times, as illustrated from his other contemporary writings, it becomes clear that to Frankel an equally important goal was to exemplify how to defend the Jewish heritage and to stand up against assimilation in a hostile environment. In a similar fashion, Thenius' other writings shed light on his text-critical endeavours. His quest for the original text paralleled his quest for the "true Calvary" (1843). With his zeal to find the "original words" and the "original places," independent from tradition, he struck a nerve in the Protestant mind. That is why the echo of his claims, rather than what he actually proposed, is still with us today.

Session 2

22–307

The Books of Hosea and Joel in Theodoret of Cyr's Commentary on the Twelve Prophets

Tiphaine Lorieux (KU Leuven)

22–307/1

In Ziegler's 1943 edition of the *Dodekapropheton*, the variants attributed to Theodoret of Cyrus, a witness of the Lucianic recension, are taken from his *Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, as published in the *Patrologie grecque* (PG 81, 1545–1988). The *Patrologie* reproduces the 1642 edition by Jacques Sirmond, slightly modified by later editors. During my PhD, I identified the two manuscripts used by Sirmond. Examining and comparing them to the other witnesses of the *Commentary* show that the variants presented as Theodoret's own in Ziegler are not always trustworthy. Indeed, Sirmond's biblical quotations can sometimes be erroneous, either because the text of the manuscripts used is faulty at this point, or because Sirmond willingly modified the biblical quotation he read in his models. In addition to these elements, Theodoret tends to rephrase verses instead of quoting them, which can have misled the editors of the biblical text. Some reformulations were sometimes mistaken for genuine quotations, leading Ziegler to believe that they represented Theodoret's own variants of the biblical text. Conversely, identifying reformulations

in Theodoret's commentary can sometimes clarify which biblical text Theodoret used, even if he did not quote it verbatim. My PhD thesis resulted in 25 corrections to be made to Ziegler's text of Hosea attributed to Theodoret, and 11 corrections for Joel. In my presentation, I will focus on a few of the most emblematic cases, tracing the source of each error to better characterize the text of Hosea and Joel as originally read by Theodoret.

**Synoptic Edition of the Old Georgian Versions
of the Book of Esther (GeII and GeI): Aims and Challenges**

Natia Mirotadze (Tbilisi State University)

22–307/2

The GeII, one of the Old Georgian translations of Esther, combines all the known textual forms of Esther. It also includes sections, large and small, that are not attested anywhere else. GeI, the other Old Georgian version of the book, is the only known complete translation of the AT. In order to show the relationship of the two Old Georgian translations to the two Greek textual forms of Esther and the Old Latin and Armenian translations, the synopsis was chosen as the most transparent and flexible form of edition. In the synopsis, the texts are aligned word for word in parallel columns in the following order OG-AT-La-GeII-GeI-Arm. The aims of the synoptic edition are: 1. To demonstrate the transmission history of the Greek Esther attested not only by the Greek sources but also by the ancient versions. These translations together with the snapshots of the Greek texts at the time of translation also preserve later attempts of their approximation to the Greek sources. For the truthful representation of the relationship between the translations and the Greek texts, I have also consulted the critical apparatus of the Göttingen edition, which faithfully documents the Greek sources, i.e. the textual history of the book. 2. To detect and reconstruct the textual data now lost in Greek. This is achieved by identifying parallels between Old Latin, Georgian and Armenian, which currently have no counterparts in Greek. Their occurrence in translations with no connection to each other can be used as an additional argument for their Greek origin. 3. To show that the two different Georgian translations were carried out by different people applying various translation principles. The word-for-word alignment of the GeII and the GeI with the Greek texts makes clear that they treat the same source text differently. This means that the GeII does not incorporate textual data from the GeI. In addition, two translations made almost simultaneously at the same level of development of the Old Georgian literary language reveal the personal preferences and skills of the translators. 4. To establish the character, if not even the sources, of the individual textual materials of the Armenian Esther mentioned by the researchers of the Armenian translation of the book. Achieving these aims involves methodological challenges related to the plurality of the textual forms of Esther and their structural, quantitative and qualitative differences. In the paper, I will discuss several difficult cases and the most relevant ways in which these textual forms can be aligned to demonstrate the relationships between the textual forms and thus to serve the aims of the edition.

**Continuum, Threshold, and Procession: A Framework for Collaborative
Text-Critical Analysis, With Examples From Ezra – Nehemiah**

Steve C. Daley (SIL International)

22–307/3

A number of the best-known English translations of the Hebrew Bible are based primarily on the Masoretic Text (MT). Nevertheless, when facing a textual issue, perhaps due to a perceived difficulty in MT itself, or when presented with the promise of a better, more authoritative wording (one that is closer to the original), Bible translators sometimes turn to other ancient sources and adopt variants into the background text of their translations. To an extent, it is natural for them to turn first to the Hebrew texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls for evidence of an earlier or better text than MT, but in the case of Ezra – Nehemiah, very little direct textual evidence can be drawn from the scrolls. Thus, the text of the Septuagint becomes especially important. In recent work, the author isolated textual cases in which English translations of Ezra – Nehemiah diverge from MT on textual grounds and instead favor a text that is found or suggested in the Septuagint (Esdras A or Esdras B). In this paper, the author will consider the uneven nature of the Septuagint's influence on the various translations and observe that here, too, independent eclecticism leads to inadvertent variety. Finally, using further examples from Ezra – Nehemiah, the continuum, threshold, and procession framework for collaborative text-critical analysis will be introduced as a methodological alternative to independent eclecticism and as a means of avoiding (or eliminating) accidental differences in Bible translations prepared for the public.

IOQS: Abstracts

Monday, 08/11/2025

Manuscripts and Materiality

CHAIR: JUTTA JOKIRANTA (UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI)

Room: UL6 2093

15:30–17:00

13–401

Writing Sectarian Texts on Papyrus

Oren Ableman (Israel Antiquities Authority)

13–401/1

Most manuscripts discovered at Qumran that can be considered sectarian were copied on parchment, and only a handful were copied on papyrus. In this paper I will attempt to explain why the sectarians sometimes deviated from their regular practice and used papyrus instead of parchment to record some of their most important compositions.

I will raise the possibility that some of the sectarian papyrus manuscripts were used during the text's composition or redaction process. These papyrus manuscripts could potentially be described as autographs but are probably better approached as 'early drafts' or 'preliminary versions' of texts. These observations have implications also for understanding particular scribal practices that were used either during a text's composition process, or during the early stages of its circulation. In the paper, I will present the manuscripts 4Q255 (Community Rule) and 4Q496 (War Scroll) as prime examples of this phenomenon. I will then explore to what degree other sectarian papyrus manuscripts display similar scribal practices.

I will also discuss certain irregular scribal practices that are perhaps not unique for the sectarian papyrus manuscripts, yet seem to be used more frequently on papyrus than on parchment. For example, most Qumran opisthographs were written on papyrus. A significant portion of the manuscripts written in the Cryptic A script are also on papyrus. Both of these irregular scribal practices can also perhaps be linked to the composition process of certain sectarian texts.

Materiality and the Provenance of the Nabataean Manuscripts: The Case of 4Q343

Ayhan Aksu (KU Leuven)

13–401/2

The term “Dead Sea Scrolls” typically denotes the extensive collection of Jewish texts, dating from around 250 BCE to 135 CE, that were uncovered in the Judean Desert from 1947 onwards. This collection is often primarily understood to reflect the socio-religious concerns of one or more particular Jewish communities. Far less acknowledged are the small number of Nabataean-Arab texts that have been discovered among the scrolls. These are among the very few manuscripts from this ancient Arab group that have been preserved. Accordingly, these texts could contribute greatly to our understanding of wider Judean relations in antiquity. However, the materiality of the Nabataean manuscripts remains largely unexplored.

In this paper, I will focus on 4Q343: a small leather manuscript containing a documentary composition of unclear origin. I will discuss the materiality and palaeography of 4Q343, together with its content, and address issues related to its provenance and potential setting. Though 4Q343 was originally thought to originate from Qumran, its editors have argued in DJD 27 for Nahal Hever as its most probable findspot. However, their discussion of this manuscript leaves a number of questions open. Furthermore, I aim to address the different implications of a provenance from Nahal Hever against a provenance from Qumran for 4Q343, and reflect on wider practices of collection.

Qumran Tefillin Rehearsed: Regular Recitation as Apotropaic Practice

Arjen Bakker (University of Cambridge)

13–401/3

In this paper I will explore to what extent emerging practices of regular recitation in the Second Temple period intersected with apotropaic rituals. I will demonstrate that the Songs of the Sage (4Q510–511) present the recitation of scriptural verses at fixed times as a means to ward off evil spirits. In light of these magical practices, I will reconsider the materiality of excerpted texts, including Tefillin and Mezuzot from Qumran and the Nash Papyrus from Egypt. I will situate the miniature writing on these tiny scrolls in the performative framework of oral recitation and magic. It is striking that some of the excerpted texts on these scrolls reappear on Jewish amulets from Late Antiquity. Moreover, rabbinic sources attest to the regular recitation of the same scriptural passages to keep demons away. I will argue that already in the Second Temple period interaction of prayer and magic is reflected in practices of recitation and scribal production.

The Two-sided (Opisthograph) Writing Technique in Tefillin from Qumran

Ariel Schwarz (Bar Ilan University) and Esther Eshel (Bar Ilan University)

13–401/4

As part of a comprehensive study analyzing the tefillin and mezuzot from Qumran and the Judean Desert, several insights and observations emerged regarding the two-sided writing technique used on the tefillin slips. The analysis included an investigation of various aspects of the slips, such as writing layouts, slip shapes, folding methods, errors and

corrections, textual profiles, spelling patterns, letter forms and scripts, classification, and the content and order of the passages.

As a fundamental step, this presentation highlights the technical aspects of two-sided writing, distinguishing and defining these tefillin slips as a distinct group among the tefillin slips found in Qumran and the Judean Desert.

Apart from the tefillin slips, it is noteworthy that no two-sided documents containing biblical texts have been discovered in Qumran or the Judean Desert. Traditionally, researchers have attributed this phenomenon to random chance, suggesting it stemmed from a desire to conserve writing materials or miscalculations in determining how much space was available on the slips' front side (recto). However, upon examining the characteristics of both two-sided and one-sided writing in tefillin and mezuzah slips, the distinctive nature of the two-sided writing technique emerged, revealing specific characteristics and rules that set it apart.

The current study indicates that there were distinct groups of scribes who employed different writing methodologies simultaneously throughout history. Understanding and clarifying the technical rules of the two-sided writing technique can enhance our appreciation of these variations and provide a deeper insight into how the writing layout was influenced by these rules.

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

Open Session

CHAIRS: MOLLY ZAHN (YALE UNIVERSITY), DANIEL FALK (PENN STATE UNIVERSITY),
JONATHAN BEN-DOV (TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 2095B

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

21–402

Exhortations, Laws, and Implied Speakers: Understanding the Damascus Document as a Textualized Performance of the Mebaqqr *Jeffrey Cross (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)*

21–402/1

The Admonition of the Damascus Document (=D) is rhetorically framed as an exhortation to the Jewish community to which it is addressed. Yet, scholars have rarely considered the rhetorically constructed speaker of the Admonition and of D as a whole. I argue that consideration of D suggests that its implied speaker is the Overseer (מבקר). This leader, whose duties are outlined in CD A 13:7b–19, undertakes communal instruction in the interpretation of law and recital of God's actions in the history of Israel and the community. Comparison of this text with direct addresses (4Q266 1a–b; CD A 1:1–2a; 2:2–3a, 14–15a) to the audience in the Admonition evinces notable linguistic

similarities. Imperatives direct the audience to “understand” (using the root **בין**) the speaker’s discourse regarding God’s past deeds. The same root (**בין**) describes the Overseer’s activity of instruction in community life (CD A 13:8b). Additional terminological correspondences between these sections will also be noted. Moreover, the Overseer must recount narratives “with their explanations” (**בפתריהם**; CD A 13:8b). I suggest that such explanations refer to the explicit pesharim that characterize the Admonition’s discourse regarding the past. The interpretive character of the Laws of D, many of which provide interpretations following explicitly cited authoritative texts, can be understood vis-à-vis the Overseer’s role as an interpreter of law for the community. By relating the explicit pesharim of the Admonition and the legal interpretations of the Laws to the duties of the Overseer, I demonstrate how D represents a textualized performance of the Overseer’s responsibilities.

Scribal Culture Features of Organisation and Memory in 4QInstruction: The Elusive Structure of a Fragmentary Sapiential Text

Lindsey A. Davidson (University of Bristol)

21–402/2

4QInstruction (4Q416–418), a second-century BCE non-sectarian text of wisdom sayings, has been approached for its conceptual outlooks on revelation and mystery (*raz nihyeh*), poverty, and centrality of torah in comparison to early Jewish literature. While these themes help determine the pre-sectarian context and its transmission by the Qumran community, they may also risk overlooking more subtle organisational principles and themes hiding in the work. Less studied is 4QInstruction’s inner-textual structure, especially in relation to its syntactic features and “clusters” of thematic and miscellaneous sayings. While 4QInstruction is a fragmentary text, some structural principles are still arguable discernible in the extant manuscripts, while other aspects of 4QInstruction’s structuring principles will remain elusive. Detected organisation principles are argued to originate within a background of ancient literacy and orality, including the “miscellaneous” clusters. The paper also compares the micro- and macro-structures of the Book of Proverbs and the Wisdom of Ben Sira, as well as Greek gnomic wisdom collections. Altogether, the structure of 4QInstruction is explored using five distinct areas of a guiding framework or methodology outlining aspects of early Jewish scribal culture: education, composition, classicising impulse, language environment, and transmission. In sum, this paper hopes to explore the subtle organisational principles of the extant fragmentary text of 4QInstruction using known features of early Jewish scribal culture as a guiding framework.

The Adaption of Sapiential Phrases to Create Halakha in 4QMMT

Ananda Geyser-Fouché (University of Pretoria)

21–402/3

The relationship between wisdom and law has long been studied, and it is well known that the Qumran community’s thoughts, as well as their rule books like CD and IQS, were influenced by sapiential traits. It seems as if sapiential traits and phrases also played a role in 4QMMT in the process of rewriting. I will refer to examples in the text, but first

I will give an overview of the development of Torah piety and the transformation that happened during the Second Temple Period. The Pentateuch as Torah eventually came to dominate by the end of the Second Temple Period and in rabbinic literature. Still, during the time of Ben Sira, that was not yet the case. Torah remained a flexible idea, as demonstrated in Ezra, Psalm 119, and Ben Sira; Torah-piety had not yet attained the pervasive and central role in Jewish life that it would enjoy later in the period. Several scholars have noticed and discussed this amalgamation or merging of Torah and Wisdom, especially in how the Torah was incorporated into wisdom literature. The opposite of this also occurred – wisdom traits and phrases were utilized to create halakhic material. In this proposed paper, I would like to highlight these aspects as they occur in 4QMMT.

Anonymity in the Hodayot

Michael B. Johnson (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

21-402/4

From the earliest studies by E. L. Sukenik in 1948 to the present, scholars have debated the authorship and role of the “T” in the poetic compositions that constitute the corpus known as the Hodayot tradition (1QHa – b, 4QHa – f). Before the reconstruction of the most fragmentarily preserved psalms that comprised two-thirds of the Hodayot corpus (1QHa 1–8, 20–28), most scholars identified the anonymous “T” of the better-preserved psalms as the Teacher of Righteousness from CD and the pesharim. Only later was it realized that the majority of the unreconstructed material was attributed to the sectarian office of the Maskil through the use of superscriptions and maskilic self-references within these compositions. These developments in the history of scholarship on the Hodayot tradition raise the question of what role anonymity plays in the Hodayot collections as they have come down to us in the surviving manuscripts from Caves 1 and 4. This presentation surveys various models for understanding anonymity in roughly contemporary Greco-Roman literature to explore why the psalms that lend themselves the most to authorial attribution – the so-called Teacher Hymns – are anonymous in the Hodayot manuscripts from Qumran.

Session 2

22-402

Sovereignty and Dominion in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls

Robert E. Jones (Pennsylvania State University)

22-402/1

This paper will begin with a lexical analysis of the root שלט in the Jewish Aramaic literature preserved at Qumran (shorthand: Aramaic Scrolls). After a broad overview of the data, and some preliminary observations, I will offer a close reading of relevant passages from Daniel, the Genesis Apocryphon, and the Visions of Amram. In each instance, I will note affinities between these passages and other Aramaic texts from Qumran (e.g., Jews in the Persian Court, Four Kingdoms, Tobit, etc.). My discussion will demonstrate that the Aramaic Scrolls share a political theology of sovereignty and dominion. First, there are terminological and conceptual parallels between how the Aramaic Scrolls represent

the sovereignty of God and the sovereignty of foreign kings. Both God and foreign kings are depicted as rulers within their respective dominions whose sovereignty is often expressed not through direct intervention but through the delegation of authority to their representatives. Second, the Aramaic Scrolls frequently present foreign kings as legitimate but contingent sovereigns, whose authority is dependent upon their ongoing recognition of God's ultimate sovereignty over heaven and earth. In the more eschatologically oriented compositions, there is an emphasis on the future eradication of foreign kingship, but these compositions still participate in this theological tradition of God's delegated authority and the contingent sovereignty of foreign kings. These Aramaic compositions from Qumran attest to an apparently widespread strategy for negotiating a commitment to the ultimate sovereignty of God while also acknowledging the legitimacy of foreign kingship.

Enslavement in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Embodied, Metaphorical, and Debt

Carmen Palmer (Stetson University)

22–402/2

Reassessments of ancient concepts of enslavement within early Christian literature have been helpful in the pursuit of understanding cultural influences and recognizing not only the nature of enslaved individuals in any given group, but also that group's worldview (e.g., Glancy, OUP, 2002; Cobb, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019; Moss, Little, Brown, 2024). While there exists some similar scholarship on enslavement in the Scrolls (e.g., Goff, STDJ 50, 2003; Hezser, OUP, 2005), such an assessment is not fully comprehensive. This paper draws on a textual method that assesses enslavement references in a selection of “non-biblical”-designated Scrolls, to broaden our understanding of their influences and frameworks. Contrary to classical views (Josephus, Ant. 18.21), three enslavement frameworks may be teased out: rules or texts discussing potential “actual” or embodied slaves (e.g., CD 11:12; 12:10–11; 4Q421 12 2; 11Q19 63:10–15); metaphorical representations of enslavement (e.g., 1QHa 8:36; 1QS 11:15–17; 4Q387a 2 6; 4Q471 2 5); and debt slavery (e.g., 4Q159 2–4 1–3; Q416 2 ii 17). In terms of influences, tentatively the paper finds that, while not the case for every text detailing enslavement, a majority draw upon scriptural influence, especially Pentateuchal laws generally and Leviticus 25 specifically.

DJD XVII Twenty Years Later

Andrea Ravasco (University of Palermo)

22–402/3

In 2005, the official edition of the scrolls of Samuel found in Qumran (4Q51–4Q52–4Q53) was published in the series Discoveries in the Judean Desert (DJD XVII), edited by Frank M. Cross, Donald W. Parry, Richard Saley, and Eugene Ulrich.

These were among the latest published biblical scrolls of the series, due to the difficult work of reconstruction, in particular that of 4Q51 (4QSam^a).

DJD XXVII was preceded by reconstructions of Edward Herbert (1997), and Andrew Fincke (2001). The DJD volume was eagerly anticipated, and – although it received some scholarly critique – during the past twenty years it has opened up new perspectives and a better understanding of the textual and literary criticism of the books of Samuel.

The purpose of this paper is to ask: Where does study of the Samuel stand now, twenty years after this landmark publication? How useful has DJD XVII proven to be for specialists? Can it be improved in the light of previous or subsequent publications? Did DJD XVII move forward scholarship on the textually difficult books of Samuel?

Wednesday, 08/13/2025

Manuscripts and Materiality

CHAIR: ESTHER CHAZON (HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM)

Room: UL6 2095B

14:30–16:00

31–403

Analysing Conjoined Texts: A Material Study of 4Q414 (4QRitual of Purification A) and 4Q415 (4QInstruction^a)

Charles P. Comerford (University of Agder)

31–403/1

This paper examines the material relationship between two Dead Sea Scroll texts, 4Q414 (4QRitual of Purification A) and 4Q415 (4QInstruction^a), which are inscribed on the verso and recto of a single parchment. Despite their conjoined nature, scholarly attention has primarily focused on the textual content of these writings, leading to their treatment as distinct, disembodied entities. 4Q414 and 4Q415 were published in separate volumes of DJD and classified into different literary categories – Halakhah and Wisdom, respectively – which has further reinforced their independent consideration in subsequent scholarship.

How does our understanding of these writings change when we begin to take seriously their material proximity? By examining 4Q414 and 4Q415 as a single, bifacial manuscript, this paper offers a new perspective that prioritises their material closeness over their textual differences. This approach involves a detailed examination of early photographs from the Palestine Archaeological Museum to understand how the original editors reconstructed these writings, followed by an inquiry into questions significant to a material philological investigation (how were these writings prepared? What meaning arises from their historical and material connection?). This method not only seeks to enhance our understanding of these specific texts but also contributes to broader discussions on the materiality of the Dead Sea Scrolls, challenging the traditional prioritisation of textual over material analysis.

New Joins and Ancient Debates in the Aramaic New Jerusalem

Shlomi Efrati (University of Münster)

31–403/2

The Aramaic composition known as New Jerusalem is only known from multiple, highly fragmentary copies from Qumran. These preserve detailed descriptions of an ideal

Jerusalem, the temple, and its cult. However, the fragmentary nature of the manuscripts makes it extremely difficult to reconstruct the composition, interpret its contents, and evaluate its relation to other descriptions of the Jerusalem temple. In this paper I will present improved readings and new reconstructions of several cultic passages of the Aramaic New Jerusalem, preserved in fragments salvaged from a petrified manuscript from cave 11 (11Q18). The new reconstructions allow for a more complete understanding of the rituals and sacrifices of the Day of Atonement and Passover. I will further examine the relationships between these passages and other descriptions of the temple and its cult in Early Jewish and Christian sources, from the Temple Scroll, through Flavius Josephus, down to the Epistle to the Hebrews and early rabbinic sources. Thus, through the material and textual investigation of the Aramaic New Jerusalem fragments I hope to shed more light on broader processes of transmission, adaptation, and debates around the order of the cult during and after the Second Temple period.

Material observations on 1QIsa^a and IQS/IQSa/IQSB

Torleif Elgvin (NLA University College)

31-403/3

Horizontal and vertical folding lines visible on Trever's 1948 photos show that all eight sheets in the first part of 1QIsa^a (up to col. 27) were folded twice before they were sewn together, often creating a visible cross pattern. This observation supports the bifurcation of the scroll and bolsters the assertion that the two halves of the scroll were penned by two different scribes.

Similar folding lines can be observed in IQS. In the appendices IQSa and IQSb one can observe both traces of folding lines and horizontal wear patterns caused by the imprint of the cord around the roll. This imprint is the likely cause of the wearing and subsequent disappearance of the middle part of the columns of IQSb.

Mineral analysis by Rabin of small pieces kept by Trever shows that the high-quality parchments of 1QIsa^a, IQS and IQSb were processed according to an advanced receipt in the same workshop in Judea. The sheets of these two rolls were likely folded to ease transport between the workshop and the scriptorium where they were sewn together and then inscribed by sectarian scribes. These mineral and material similarities suggest that 1QIsa^a and IQS should be dated to the same time around 100 BCE.

The DJD plate suggests that IQSa was cut from IQSb col. 1 with a sharp tool (likely by Kando), most of this column subsequently disappeared – as did the cover sheet of IQS. Recent microscopic photos suggest that also IQSb frg. 25 was cut vertically in modern times.

The Great Isaiah Scroll: Bisection and Unity

Marcello Fidanzio (Università della Svizzera italiana)

31-403/4

The research project: The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a): A Biography (a collaboration between Università della Svizzera Italiana – Facoltà di Teologia di Lugano and The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, with the participation of cluster of excellence Understanding Written Artifacts, University of Hamburg) aims at studying 1QIsa^a as an archaeological

artifact. The new investigations that have been carried out so far in the project framework, along with a re-evaluation of the previous ones, provide a convincing set of material evidence regarding the bisection and unity of the scroll. The internal evidence for the bisection of 1QIsa^a is supported by external arguments offered by other scrolls found at Qumran and other sources. 1QIsa^a was produced in two parts. The investigation explores the relationship between these two parts and the possible use of each part independently before they were combined. It then moves to the study of the bisection: contrary to what is often read in the literature, the bisection of 1QIsa^a does not occur at the physical midpoint of the scroll, nor at the textual midpoint. Calls for further reflection on the nature of this bisection (mechanical or content-related) and its implications for the study of the book of Isaiah.

Thursday, 08/14/2025

Manuscripts and Materiality

CHAIRS: ARJEN BAKKER (UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE)

AND MICHAEL B. JOHNSON (HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM)

Room: UL6 2095B

14:30–16:00 + 16:30–18:00 (2 sessions)

Session 1

41–404

A New Aramaic Inscription from the Cave of the Swords near Ein Gedi

Asaf Gayer (Ariel University) and Jonathan Ben Dov (Tel Aviv University)

41–404/1

A Hebrew inscription from the Iron Age was discovered in the early 1970s by archaeologist Pesach Bar-Adon in the “Cave of the Hermit” (Me’arat Ha-Mitboded), as it was formerly called, near Ein Gedi. In 2023, a hoard of Roman-era weaponry (2nd century CE) was uncovered in the same cave, leading to its new name as “the Cave of Swords.” We present a first glimpse of a newly discovered four-line Aramaic inscription from that cave, written on the stalactites beneath the Hermit’s inscription. This inscription was revealed through advanced photographic technologies. We offer a preliminary reading and interpretation of the inscription, alongside an approximate dating to the period of the Bar Kokhba Revolt.

Cryptic, Not So Cryptic: Paleographic Considerations on the Term ‘Cryptic’ to Describe Some Qumran Manuscripts

David Hamidovic (University of Lausanne)

41–404/2

Most of the so-called “cryptic” manuscripts have been deciphered (thanks to Milik 1954 for the so-called ‘cryptic A’ script and Perrot-Puech 2023 for the so-called ‘cryptic C’

script), published in DJDs and even republished in the last ten years (Ben-Dov – Stökl Ben Ezra – Gayer, Ratzon – Ben-Dov). Our knowledge of the content of these texts, the diversity of literary genres, the existence of textual parallels with another script, on the one hand, and the discovery of a series of textual, syntactic and graphic modifications and substitutions, on the other, invites us to rethink the question of a cryptography set up to encrypt the text, i.e. to reserve the reading of the text for initiates of cryptic writing. A paleographic examination of the three so-called cryptic scripts reveals a paleographic interplay between the Paleo-Hebrew and Aramaic scripts, without neglecting the Greek and Latin letters on occasion, rather than the construction of another script. The paleographic comparison with the inscription on the limestone cup discovered in the archaeological excavations on Mount Zion in Jerusalem in 2009 also points in this direction. This is why it is proposed that the esoteric function of so-called cryptic writings should be relegated to a demonstration of the power of a few scribes at the peak of their art and their curriculum, mastering several scripts. This scribal phenomenon, which is not unknown in the Eastern Mediterranean, could be seen as a claim to power in mediation with the divine.

**The Material Significance of the 4Q82 Stick
and a Reconstructed Reading of its Fragments**
Joshua M. Matson (Brigham Young University)

41–404/3

One of the more enigmatic material discoveries at Qumran was reported by Patrick Skehan in 1956 as “the lower edges of a series of columns” that are “curled around a part of the stick on which the scroll was rolled, and practically turned to glue.” This rolled scroll, and the stick roller to which it is connected, is accessible in two photographs (PAM 41.964 and a 2014 image by Orit Kuslanski Rosengarten) and at the IAA preservation laboratory in Jerusalem. Notwithstanding the enigmatic character of this discovery, the artifact has received only passive reference in Qumran scholarship. This paper aims to directly address the material and manuscript contribution of this discovery on Qumran studies in two ways. First, I will present an analysis of the stick and its corresponding scroll as a material object that serves as an important historical reference for the adoption of a Roman scribal practice that becomes standard in later Jewish writings and explore possible explanations for its adoption at Qumran. Second, employing the methodologies outlined by Jonathan Ben-Dov, Asaf Gayer, Eshbal Ratzon, and the Scripta Qumranica Electronica project, I will present a digital reconstruction of the visible and previously unidentified text on four fragments preserved in PAM 41.964 and discuss their placement within the entirety of the 4Q82 manuscript.

The Different Hands of 4Q266: Ancient Scribes and Modern Scholars
Eibert Tigchelaar (KU Leuven)

41–404/4

This paper is part of an ongoing project on the handwriting of scribes, and what it tells about the material production of scrolls. As observed by Milik and Yardeni (the latter in DJD 18, p. 26), but ignored or overlooked by subsequent scholars, two (or more)

scribes wrote 4Q266 (4QDamascus Document-a). The presentation discusses first the characteristics of the two scribes – the main one writing the largest part of the scroll with an experienced and clearly distinct semi-cursive hand, the other one writing at several places a few lines in a clumsy hand – and discusses possible reasons for the alternation of the two hands. Second, it evaluates the correspondences between 4Q266 and 4Q221 (4QJubilees-f), briefly mentioned by Milik (*Revue Biblique* 1966), considers the likelihood that the main scribe of 4Q266 also copied 4Q221, and engages Milik's broader proposals.

Session 2

42–404

**Philology in a Material World: Constructions,
Reconstructions, and Deconstructions of the Dead Sea Scrolls**

Matthew P. Monger (MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion, and Society)

42–404/1

Over the past decade, many scholars of the Dead Sea Scrolls have joined the broader movement of defining their work as Material Philology. This is evident explicitly in a number of studies, implicitly in a wide range of small movements in the field, and iconically as the topic of this IOQS makes clear. As the history, development, and aims of material philology, in general, have been widely discussed over the past few years, I won't rehash all the details but rather take a step back and think about what it means to do philology in the material world of the Dead Sea Scrolls. This will be accomplished by looking at the way in which the embodiment of texts in material artefacts has – and has not – influenced the methodological orientation of the scholarship on and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls and, thus, the results of our work. I want to look at this phenomenon from two perspectives. First, I want to trace the broad lines of the history of material methods as they are applied to the scrolls, from the first discoveries of the scrolls up until today. Second, I discuss the (re-)constructions of manuscripts as a phenomenon by looking at a few examples in detail. The discussion of these examples will show how doing philology in a material world is much more than just reconstructions of words and fragments, but is entwined with personal preferences, social structures, and technology.

The New Materiality and the Dead Sea Scrolls: IQS-IQSa-IQSB as a Case Study

*Dermot Nestor (Mary Immaculate College)
and Gareth Wearne (Australian Catholic University)*

42–404/2

The material character and quality of objects has long constituted a defining feature of archaeological research. Emphasising variously the material deposits left behind by past societies, along with those remains unearthed by archaeologists, it was the physical quality of material that mattered, not the work performed by it, the various engagements with it, or the multiple interpretations which constitute it as an aspect of the archaeological record. This status was challenged by the emergence of

post-processualist and post-structuralist frameworks which emphasised the agency of artefacts, along with notions of material culture as text and, text as material culture. Within these frameworks, materiality emphasises the social constitution of self and society by means of the object world. Consequently, engagement with materiality demands that we transcend Cartesian dualisms of mind/matter and consider the myriad ways in which material culture mediates rather than simply reflects social being. Materiality demands we shift our focus away from material culture and toward the entire range of material engagements with the world. To date, the impacts of these approaches on the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls have been modest. Using the recombined manuscript IQS-IQSa-IQSB as a case study, this paper adopts a perspective that is further down the road and offers an assessment on what a more theoretically informed approach can offer. Emphasising the performative dimensions of IQS+, it explores how the reading acts it describes intersect with the authorial voices it ventriloquizes to position the manuscript as an integral participant within the reading community.

The Scrolls of Cave 6 as a Literary Collection

Anna Shirav Hamernik (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)

42–404/3

Thirty-one manuscripts are attributed to the finds from Cave 6, most fragmentary. They are written primarily in Hebrew, with some in Aramaic, and are often viewed as originating from a distinct source than those from Caves 1, 4, and 11. Notably, more than half of these manuscripts are on papyrus, although papyrus comprises only about 14% of the entire Qumran corpus. Even more unusual is the presence of several scriptural scrolls; for comparison, only one other Cave 4 manuscript is associated with a scriptural text on papyrus written in square script. This, however, consists of only two very small fragments.

Scholars have offered various explanations for the use of papyrus for literary compositions at Qumran. These range from suggesting that they represent the products of “less professional” scribes or that they were liturgical or sectarian copies owned privately (Tov, 2004), to the idea that their use reflects a cultural distinctiveness within the Jewish context, possibly even an attempt to emulate Hellenistic practices (Brooke, 2017). However, these proposals do not fully account for the distinctiveness of the Cave 6 finds. This paper explores the relationship between material and literary choices as reflected in the Cave 6 corpus, considering whether these observations can inform speculation about the provenance of the Cave 6 collection in light of the other non-scriptural compositions and documents discovered in this cave.

IQS V, 13: Misplaced or Deliberate?

Kamilla Skarström Hinojosa (University of Gothenburg)

42–404/4

The scroll containing IQS, IQSa and IQSB is one of the few Qumran scrolls employing marginal markings, primarily to indicate paragraph divisions. However, the paragraphos in IQS V, 13 stands out as an exception. In early research, Jean-Pierre Guilbert (*Le plan de*

la règle de la communauté, RevQ, 1959) critiqued it as *mal placé* (misplaced). Daniel Falk (“In the Margins of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Bible as Notepad*, 2018) suggests the spacing might indicate later textual insertions, as it lacks a clear sense break. Charlotte Hempel (*The Community Rules from Qumran: A Commentary*, 2020), however, interprets the paragraphos in V, 13 as marking a significant convergence between IQS and overlapping material in 4Q256 and 4Q258, located between two substantial additions.

Agreeing with Hempel that the paragraphos emphasize content rather than structure, this paper reexamines the paragraphos in V, 13 alongside V, 25, both of which are preceded by small blank spaces and mark sections containing prohibitions. I argue that these markings highlight pivotal sections of IQS, reflecting the central ethos of the implied community. Additionally, the graphical use of key words in V, 10–20, along with the shift between 3ms and 3mp verbal forms, will be analyzed to provide further insights. This paper suggests that these markings and textual features are integral to the intentional design and theological priorities of IQS, shedding light on its compositional strategy and the community’s self-perception.

IOVS: Abstracts

Thursday, 08/14/2025

Perspectives on Jerome's Work

Chair: Michael Fieger (Theologische Hochschule Chur)

Room: UL6 3071

14:30–16:00

41–501

Chanukah in the Vulgate

Matthew Kraus (University of Cincinnati)

41–501/1

Can the Vulgate be used to reconstruct history? The terminology used to describe the festival of Chanukah in the Vulgate suggests that the festival was not widely known in the ancient world. While the earliest attestation of the Hebrew term appears in the Mishnah, the name of the holiday first appears in Greek in the First and Second Books of Maccabees and Josephus. However, these texts provide various names for the festival leaving open whether or not the annual festival even had a fixed name. The Gospel of John 10:22 therefore represents the earliest example of the festival's fixed named, *ta enkainia* (τὰ ἐγκαίνια) 'rededication' or 'renewal'. The Vulgate text of John, probably the work of Jerome, transliterates the term as *encaenia*. The term makes sense in the Greek when compared to the First Book of Maccabees 4:52–59, which utilizes variations of *καίν-* and *εγκαίν-* when describing the institution of the festival. First and Second Maccabees are represented by the *Vetus Latina*, and nothing in their versions of the festival's institution explain the term *Encaenia*. Thus, the Latin John disconnects *Encaenia* from the festival described in the Books of Maccabees later known as Chanukah. Therefore, the Latin translation of John presents the festival as unique to Jerusalem prior to the destruction of the Second Temple. This only makes sense if Chanukah was not a well-known holiday. Such a view is confirmed by rabbinic tradition. Although Chanukah is mentioned several times in the Mishnah, in the Babylonian Talmud the famous question is posed: "What is Chanukah?" (bShabbat 21b).

Jerome's Text-Critical Practice: What can the biblical commentaries tell us?

Simone Rickerby (The University of Birmingham)

41-501/2

The text-critical value of Jerome's biblical commentaries is recognised but little discussed. Jerome's commentaries on the Minor Prophets provide us with enormous detail and insight into Jerome's text-critical practice. This paper will suggest that reference to these commentaries is essential for an improved understanding of Jerome's text-critical practice. By undertaking a project to examine one of the earliest examples of this corpus, Jerome's Commentary on the Book of Nahum, I hope to provide insight into several outstanding Hieronymian questions including: (a) Jerome's LXX text, its provenance, and his engagement with the complex LXX Greek milieu; (b) Jerome's understanding and use of Hebrew as evidenced by his use of Hebrew in transliterated characters; (c) Jerome's relationship with the recentiores (both in Greek and Latin translation); (d) Jerome's use of previous exegetical traditions (Greek, Hebrew, Classical); and (e) Jerome's overall grammatical and structural habits.

This paper will explore some of these issues mentioned and provide examples from Jerome's Commentary on Nahum, with reference to any contemporary textual traditions still extant. I will also suggest that a close reading of Jerome's Commentary on Nahum can help us better understand how Jerome arrived at his Vulgate translation of the same book.

What makes an interpretation a good exegesis?

Bernhard Klinger (University of Passau)

41-501/3

It is not easy to answer the question which criteria should be applied in order to characterize the interpretation of a text as good. Jerome was also confronted with this question and dealt with it. However, he did not do so in a specific writing, but rather from time to time within his work. Two letters in particular are worth mentioning here: In ep. 21, Jerome addresses the interpretation of Lk 15:11–32 and in ep. 129 the motif of the 'land of promise'. Based on these two letters, the criteria that constitute the quality of exegesis for Jerome will be presented and discussed.

Jerome and the Psalms

CHAIR: BERNHARD LANG (PADERBORN UNIVERSITY)

Room: UL6 3071

16:30–18:00

42-502

Jerome's Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos: translation technique and Hebrew Vorlage

Martijn Jaspers (KU Leuven)

42-502/1

Recently, a research project was completed at KU Leuven, entitled "Where 'The Translator' Meets Translation Studies: Towards an Innovative Characterization of

Jerome's Translation Technique in His Latin Psalter Translations." The objective of this research was to characterize Jerome's translation technique in his Latin translation of the book of Psalms, employing the concept of 'transformation' or 'translation shift' from Descriptive Translation Studies, and to hypothesize possible motivations underlying these transformations. This presentation will provide an overview of the most significant findings of this project, with particular emphasis on the layout of Jerome's Vorlage, its textual variants in comparison to the Codex Leningradensis as edited in BHS, and their relationship with other extant textual witnesses of the Hebrew Psalms.

cum carbonibus iuniperorum/desolatoriis. Psalm 120:4 (Vg 119:4)

Michael Fieger (Theologische Hochschule Chur)

42–502/2

This study analyzes the expression “cum carbonibus iuniperorum / desolatoriis” and its rendering in both the iuxta hebraeos and iuxta LXX translation traditions, in comparison with the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, the Hexapla, and the Vetus Latina. Special attention is given to the linguistic and interpretative nuances of the Latin terms, particularly the choice of “iuniperorum”, as well as the alternative “desolatoriis”. The study investigates the theological and literary implications of these renderings and explores Jerome's rationale for these divergent translations. This research forms part of a broader project dedicated to a comprehensive commentary on all the Psalms, examining the interaction between the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, and the Vulgate's dual translation traditions.

Psalms 14 (Vg 13) and 53 (Vg 52) in the Vulgate: A Comparative Analysis of the iuxta hebraeos and iuxta LXX Translations in Relation to the Original Texts and Other Ancient Translations

Wilhelm Tauwinkl (University of Bucharest)

42–502/3

This paper examines Psalms 14/13 and 53/52 in the Vulgate, focusing on the two translations – iuxta hebraeos (following the Hebrew text) and iuxta LXX (following the Septuagint) – in comparison to the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, the Hexapla, and the Vetus Latina. Through a detailed analysis of the Latin renderings, it explores the translation choices made by Jerome and the theological, linguistic, and stylistic factors influencing these decisions. Particular attention is given to cases where the Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Septuagint are identical in both Psalms, yet differences emerge in the Latin translations. The research aims to shed light on Jerome's methodology, his fidelity to source texts, and his interpretive preferences, providing insight into the broader dynamics of biblical translation and textual tradition in Late Antiquity. This study is part of a larger project (together with Michael Fieger, Chur) aimed at producing a comprehensive commentary on all the Psalms, examining the interplay between the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, and the Vulgate's dual translation traditions.

Friday, 08/15/2025

Perspectives on Jerome's Work

CHAIR: WILHELM TAUWINKL (UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST)

Room: UL6 3071

14:30–16:00

51–501

Elijah in the Vulgate*Benedikt J. Collinet (University of Passau)*

51–501/1

The prophet Elijah plays an important role in the Bible. Not only does he feature prominently in the books of Kings, but there are also almost 40 other mentions of him in the Bible, most of which are in the New Testament. The aim of this paper is to compare the depiction of Elijah in the Vulgate with other versions. The central question is whether Jerome follows the vocabulary and interpretation of the Hebrew-Greek Bible or – as is more likely to be expected – he sets his own accents. Where appropriate, I will compare the Vulgate Version with other interpretations of Elijah from the tradition of the Church Fathers.

The Book of Joshua in the Vulgate. Examples of Translation Technique*Dionisio Candido (Paris Lodron University of Salzburg)*

51–501/2

Among books of Jerome's Vulgate, his translation of the Book of Joshua dates back to around 405 CE, marking the final phase of his career as a translator. In the Prologus he himself provides valuable information, first and foremost declaring that he undertook the translation of this book after completing the Pentateuch. It can therefore be considered a work of maturity, as his commitment to the *hebraica veritas* was firmly established. Moreover, in the same Prologus, he states that he deliberately distanced himself from both the *Vetus Latina* and the Septuagint (according to the Hexaplaric version of Origen). In this paper, I aim to highlight, first of all, the translation technique adopted by Jerome for this biblical book. I will answer question such as: What is the relationship with the Hebrew text? Can the Vulgate be described here as a "literal" or "free" translation? To this end, I will present selected textual cases that reveal specific characteristics of Jerome's translation technique: syntactical relations with the Hebrew text, omissions, additions, and stylistic modifications in the Latin compared to the Hebrew text. I will then revisit the question of whether the Hebrew text Jerome worked with should be identified with the current Masoretic Text or not. Finally, I will address whether, in other works, Jerome demonstrates a different treatment of the Book of Joshua for theological or apologetic reasons.

Jeromian revisions and versions of Ecclesiastes

Sincero Mantelli (Bologna University)

51–501/3

In the decade from 388 to 398 Jerome translated the text of Ecclesiastes three times. The first is actually a revision (388–389) of the Vetus Latina based on the hexaplar review of the LXX, of which some twenty-six verses remain in Codex Il by St. Gall. A number of contemporary and later authors used this text (Augustine, Cassian, Eucherius, the priest Philip, Cassiodorus, Gregory the Great), but their quotations from Ecclesiastes, through which the portion of the biblical text covered by the first revision by Jerome could be extended, have not been fully investigated.

Furthermore, when examining a synoptic comparison of the three versions, the conclusions reached by Sandro Leanza must undoubtedly be taken into consideration: Leanza regards the text of the Vulgate as the fulfilment of the textual results made explicit in the exegesis of the Jeromian Commentary, while the translation associated with it was still a compromise with the text of the LXX as transposed by the Veteres. In this regard, it is necessary to investigate the significance entailed by the omission of certain verses from the LXX in the Commentary, as they neither agree with the Hebrew nor with the version by Symmachus, which Jerome holds in high regard.

Jerome and the Psalms

CHAIR: MICHAEL FIEGER (THEOLOGISCHE HOCHSCHULE CHUR)

Room: UL6 3071

16:30–18:00

52–502

Zur Wirkungsgeschichte der verschiedenen Textformen von Ps 22 (Vg 21)

Andreas Vonach (University of Innsbruck)

52–502/1

Die Vulgata-Psalmen nach dem „Psalterium Gallicanum“, das ist jene Version, die Hieronymus zwischen 386 und 390 neu aus dem Griechischen, genauer der Hexapla des Origenes, übersetzt hat, haben die Spiritualität, aber auch die akademische Theologie, der lateinischen Kirche von der Spätantike bis in das 20. Jahrhundert in kaum zu überschätzender Weise geprägt. Kurz darauf hat Hieronymus die Psalmen aus dem Hebräischen ins Lateinische übersetzt, um mit den jüdischen Gelehrten seiner Zeit besser ins theologische und spirituelle Gespräch kommen zu können. Dieselben Psalmen in ihrer Hebräischen Fassung haben ihrerseits die jüdische Spiritualität, Liturgie und Theologie nachhaltig geprägt. Anhand von Ps 22 (Vg 21) soll in diesem Beitrag die unterschiedliche spirituelle Dynamik und gesamttheologische Wirkungsgeschichte ein und desselben Psalms in verschiedenen jüdischen und christlichen Kontexten dargestellt werden. Angezielt wird die Sensibilisierung für einen geschärften Blick auf die Bedeutung der Textentwicklung und Texttradierung für theologische Verständnisse und spirituelle Tendenzen. Ps 22 (Vg 21) ist ein lehrreiches Beispiel in dieser Hinsicht, da er in verschiedenen Formen des jüdischen wie christlichen Gottesdienstes eine bis heute ungebrochen große Rolle spielt.

**ablactata or retributio? The meaning of גמל in Ps 131 [Vg 130]:2b
and its influence on the overall interpretation of the Psalm**

Konrad Kremser (University of Vienna)

52–502/2

The word gml occurs twice in this very short psalm that comprises only three verses. In v. 2b, it is unanimously understood as a term for a child who has been weaned, but in v. 2b, it is interpreted differently by the MT and the LXX. The MT takes it (again) to refer to a weaned infant, while the LXX reads a scriptio defectiva of gmwl and translates it as ἀνταπόδοσις. Jerome takes up both interpretations, translating ablactata and retributio, which leads to very different meanings of the psalm as a whole.

ISLP: Abstracts

Tuesday, 08/12/2025

Lexicography and Linguistics

CHAIR: RICHARD A. TAYLOR (DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY)

Room: UL6 2095A

16:30–18:00

22–602

Ghosts, Spirits and Winds – Lexical Gleanings from Mandaic Magic Texts

Matthew Morgenstern (Tel Aviv University)

22–602/1

The misconception – still held by some scholars – that Mandaic magical texts consist primarily of unintelligible mumbo-jumbo has been increasingly dispelled as original artifacts from Late Antiquity have come to light. These artifacts reveal that in the pre-Islamic period, when Aramaic was the predominant language of Babylonia, Mandaic spells against maleficent forces were composed in a lucid literary idiom that described the world in which they were created in comprehensible terms. However, over a thousand years of transmission, the texts were subject to change and corruption and the sense was sometimes lost. This lecture will present examples in which recently discovered or deciphered sources have facilitated a better understanding of these texts and revealed previously misunderstood or forgotten lexemes. It also highlights the intimate connection between textual transmission and lexicography.

A Treatise on Homographs attributed to Elias of Nisibis (Sinai Syr X41N)

Nicolas Atas (KU Leuven)

22–602/2

This study presents an initial analysis of an unedited Syriac treatise on homographs attributed to Elias of Nisibis, preserved uniquely in the manuscript Sinai Syr X41N. This treatise warrants scholarly attention for several reasons: first, as an otherwise unknown work by Elias of Nisibis that remains unedited; second, as evidence of an East Syriac text circulating within a Melkite context; third, due to its potential link with the homographic treatise in Elias of Nisibis' *Book of the Interpreter*. Additionally, it participates in a tradition of homographic glossaries that address both lemma semantics and vocalization. Through a philological approach, this research offers a transcription and translation of a

part of the manuscript, accompanied by a linguistic analysis of the treatise's treatment of homographic pairs.

Framing the Use of the Syriac Particle ܐܢ in the Peshitta Psalms

Godwin Mushayabasa Mhuriyashe (North-West University)

22–602/3

The Syriac particle ܐܢ is an Aramaic feature that scholars have recently characterised as having been grammatically replicated on the Greek conjunction particle δέ. As a result of such grammatical replication, the Syriac particle also came to occur in the second position of clauses rather than the clause-initial positions typical of the conjunction in uncompromised Aramaic dialects. In its 'modified' form, the semantics of ܐܢ have been found to relate to the temporal adverbial, glossed 'then' and the contrastive conjunction, glossed 'but'. It is apparent that these semantic attributions are generalised, so that there remains a need to probe the typical semantic characteristics of the conjunction within specific contexts of Syriac literature that will provide more detailed information of how the conjunction was used, and further, to establish whether such uses betray influences from Greek or not. The current paper seeks to address the first of these questions by tracing literary frames in which the particle was used in the Peshitta psalms. At the conclusion of this study, it is noted that the major function of the particle ܐܢ in the Peshitta Psalms is to introduce a consequential reaction to a preceding narrative, with a few variations involved.

Wednesday, 08/13/2025

Lexicography and Linguistics

CHAIR: RICHARD A. TAYLOR (DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY)

Room: UL6 2095A

14:30–16:00

31–603

Reception of 'Charisma' in the Early Arabic Translations of the New Testament

Srećko Koralija (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

31–603/1

This paper explores the Arabic lexemes translating the Greek lexeme χάρισμα in early Arabic New Testament translations, as attested in manuscripts such as Saint-Petersburg BN Ar. NS 327, Vat. Ar. 13, Sin. Ar. 151, and Paris BNF Arabe 6725, as they represent the early evidence. Special attention is given to the role of Syriac in shaping these translations. The significance of Syriac is important, given its contribution to biblical transmission and its influence on the linguistic and theological dynamics of the time. The first translations of the New Testament in Arabic emerged during the Golden Age of Arabic literature, reflecting a confluence of diverse *Vorlagen*. Some manuscripts, such as Vat. Ar. 13, written in Middle Arabic, demonstrate varying degrees of blending Classical Arabic

with vernacular elements – a feature influenced by both Syriac and Greek traditions (Monferrer-Sala, 2015; Schulthess, 2018; Zaki, 2019, 2020). The dual potential origins highlight the autonomous nature of Arabic New Testament translations, underscoring the importance of considering their intended audience and contextual factors. For instance, Sin. Ar. 151 employs two distinct Arabic lexemes for χάρισμα - موهبة and عطية — a phenomenon absent in the other manuscripts. Neither term appears in the Qur'an, highlighting their theological specificity. Recent scholarship situates these translations within the 9th century, a period characterized by the interplay of Greek (e.g., Melkite Orthodox) and Syriac-speaking communities during the Arabization process. The Peshitta New Testament always translates χάρισμα with the lexeme ܥܬܝܬܐ, a term already attested 48 times in the Syriac Old Testament with the meaning of gift or present. Thus, ܥܬܝܬܐ is a cognate of the Arabic lexeme موهبة. The paper contributes to both Syriac and Arabic lexicography, emphasizing the distinct theological and linguistic choices made by translators. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of Syriac, discussing to what extent its lexicon and theology shaped the Arabic reception of key biblical terms.

Context-Sensitive Parsers for Syriac: Benchmarks

Zhan Chen (Beijing Normal University)

31-603/2

This project proposes a comparative study of four context-sensitive approaches to parse Semitic languages, focusing on Syriac: using GPT's function-calling feature to process non-concatenative morphology and syntax, fine-tuning LLMs on Syriac corpora, leveraging cross-linguistic transfer learning from Hebrew in a minimal transformer model, and developing a custom transformer with a specialized tokenizer. These methods address challenges like context-dependent syntax and limited datasets. By combining insights from Semitic linguistics with state-of-the-art NLP, the parser ensures rigorous output regulation for compatibility with ETCBC's database. The project leverages annotated Syriac texts, transfer learning, and new datasets to improve token accuracy and parsing coherence. Expected outcomes include an advanced parser integrated with ETCBC's platform, facilitating linguistic and theological research. This initiative demonstrates how combining LLMs and custom models can overcome linguistic complexities, advancing computational linguistics and digital humanities.

Evidence for Syriac Bilingualism and Language Contact in the Aramaic Magic Bowls

James Nathan Ford (Bar-Ilan University)

31-603/3

In this lecture I will discuss three types of evidence for Syriac bilingualism and language contact among the practitioners who wrote the Aramaic incantation bowls from late Antique Mesopotamia. First, Syriac incantation bowls with Jewish Babylonian Aramaic versions. Second, the use of the Arabic script and language in Syriac bowls. Third, the use of Syriac script to transcribe Hebrew in a Jewish magic bowl.

Friday, 08/15/2025

Syriac Bible*Chair: Richard A. Taylor (Dallas Theological Seminary)*

Room: UL6 2095A

14:30–16:00

51–604

The Translation of Adverbs in the Peshiṭta of Deuteronomy*Logan Copley (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)*

51–604/1

The translation of Hebrew adverbs in the Peshiṭta Old Testament has not received extensive examination. Earlier studies have noted that the translation of adverbs conformed to Syriac style without giving insight into the linguistic factors that shaped the translation choices. I will use the linguistic encoding of the MT and Peshiṭta versions of Deuteronomy from the ETCBC (Eep Talstra Centre for Bible and Computer) to analyze adverb phrases in Deuteronomy. A preliminary analysis of these adverb phrases reveals that the translation choices are dependent on the lexeme. For example: (1) Some adverbs, such as ܐܝܢܐ, are translated primarily on syntactic considerations; (2) Other adverbs, such as ܕܝܢܐ, are translated mainly on semantic factors; (3) In some cases, the Peshiṭta adds adverbs for discourse-level purposes.

The Syro-Hexaplaric Psalter: A Linguistic and Literary Reassessment*Willem Th. van Peursen (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)*

51–604/2

The Syro-Hexaplaric Psalms are a significant source for reconstructing the textual history of the Greek versions of the Psalter. As a rigid mirror translation, they often provide valuable insights into the Greek versions they reflect. However, due to their extreme utility for Septuagint studies, scholarly attention has largely been confined to text-historical and translational aspects, while the Syro-Hexapla's own linguistic and literary features have received far less consideration. Existing linguistic studies remain limited (see Jenner 2003; Lund 2006). Yet, the Syro-Hexapla is more than a Syriac gateway to the Greek text; it became an independent textual and liturgical source. In certain cases, the Syro-Hexaplaric recension entered biblical manuscripts, supplanting the Peshitta, and it was incorporated into the Syriac liturgy, as evidenced by its presence in lectionaries (Van Peursen and Veldman 2020). Moreover, it serves as a linguistic witness to a developmental phase in the Syriac language, marked notably by a substantial increase in Greek loanwords from the 5th century onward (see Brock 1990; Butts 2016). Through a case study of Psalm 8, our presentation will demonstrate how a combined linguistic and literary analysis of the Syro-Hexapla transcends the limitations of a narrowly instrumental, text-historical approach. By treating the Syro-Hexapla as a document of intrinsic value, we can better appreciate its role within the broader history of Syriac language and literature.

The Function of the Paronomastic Infinitive in Peshitta Jeremiah

Jerome A. Lund (Independent scholar)

51-604/3

Two recent studies have contributed to a better understanding of the function of the infinitive absolute in Biblical Hebrew, the one by Yoo-Ki Kim and the other by Scott N. Callaham. The study by Callaham is more comprehensive in scope, seeking to incorporate all uses of the infinitive absolute into his scheme. That of Kim is more modest in scope, treating only the use of the infinitive absolute that appears with a cognate verb, which he terms 'the tautological infinitive absolute'. They agree in rejecting the nebulous 'emphatic' and 'strengthening' views of the infinitive absolute, as well as rejecting it as an internal object. Both call for further research into the phenomenon in cognate languages. Elsewhere, I have studied the paronomastic use of the infinitive in the Peshitta New Testament. There, I conclude that it functions as a modal adverb expressing the truth-value of a statement from the point of view of the speaker or writer. I argue that it conveys the opinion of the speaker or writer as to the truth of the verbal action, expressing either certainty or actuality depending on the context. Further, I contend that the infinitive used paronomastically functions neither as an adverb of degree nor an adverb of manner. I propose to test my earlier hypothesis on the data found in the Peshitta of Jeremiah.

Hebrew Bible

CHAIR: RICHARD A. TAYLOR (DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY)

Room: UL6 2095A

16:30-18:00

52-605

Grammatical Parallelism in Job – from a Diachronic Perspective

Mats Eskhult (University of Uppsala)

52-605/1

The development towards a tense-based verbal system in Biblical Hebrew seems to have exercised a conspicuous influence even on the otherwise so conservative genre of poetry. In the late psalms there is a strong tendency towards avoiding parallel sequences that oppose location in time as the dominant factor in the verbal system. The question asked in this contribution is to what extent such a development can be traced in the book of Job.

A Variationist Sociolinguistic Approach for the Study of Ancient Hebrew Varieties: Potential and Obstacles

Kengoro Goto (University of Manchester)

52-605/2

Variationist sociolinguistic studies have revolutionised the field of socio-linguistics since William Labov laid their foundation in the 1960s. Initially focused on contemporary English, the Labovian sociolinguistic approach has gradually been applied to other

languages. It has also been extended to historical varieties of English, such as Middle English, since the 1990s, uncovering patterns of variation and change in the past. More recently, it has been applied to Biblical Hebrew (2011, 2014) and Ancient Greek (2024), demonstrating its potential for studying ancient languages in relation to society. For the study of Ancient Hebrew varieties, a variationist sociolinguistic approach has so far been applied by some scholars to data from the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible, primarily focusing on linguistic dating. While such attempts offer valuable insights, a wealth of data from non-MT sources of Ancient Hebrew remains unexplored. Furthermore, previous studies have not yet considered other equally valuable independent factors beyond the time period. This paper broadens the current scope by applying a variationist sociolinguistic approach to data from inscriptions and manuscripts of Ancient Hebrew and other Northwest Semitic languages. It incorporates additional independent factors, focusing on regional variation, especially, Northern Hebrew features. The study outlines how this innovative approach can be applied, the challenges encountered, and initial findings that demonstrate its potential for studying Ancient Hebrew varieties. Finally, the paper proposes directions for further research.

A Semantic Study of **צִי** in Isaiah: A Dialogic Linguistic Approach

Tiantang Ren (University of Zurich)

52–605/3

The semantics of **צִי** has three categories: topological (“depart”), biological (“grow”), as well as theological. Its theological usage always denotes a subject without origin, because the subject itself is the origin: God, the Word, Messiah, etc. Mic 5:1–2 is disputed, in which there are both the verb **צִי** and its derivative **מוֹצֵא**. Different from the popular designated static meaning “origin/*Ursprung*” for **מוֹצֵא** (Jenni, Preuss), Merrill gives a dynamic meaning “goings out” (cf. KJV, “goings forth,” and LXX, ἔξοδοι): “out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (KJV). How should we render it in modern English? If using “emerge,” “emergence,” this passage can be rendered as: “From you to me will emerge (**צִי**) one to be ruling in Israel, and his/its emergences (**מוֹצֵאֵי**) (are) from ancient, from eternity.” The popular translation “origin” for **מוֹצֵא** emphasizes one static source. In contrast, “emergence” emphasizes the action itself; this dynamic phenomenon, rather than a static entity, is from ancient, from eternity. When following the Hebrew syntax, “from you to me” resonates the dialogic “I – You.” That is what James Barr averted from structural linguistics against a Humboldtian philosophy of language. This paper will rehabilitate Humboldtian dialogic linguistics with a semantic study of **צִי** as a sample to investigate various Hebrew lexicons.

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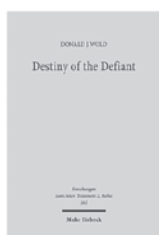
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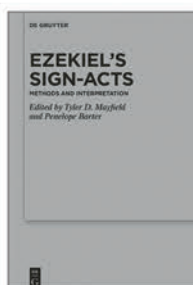
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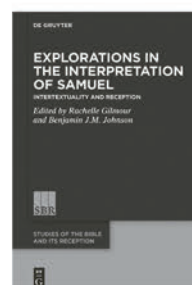
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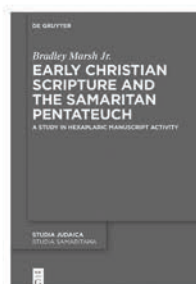
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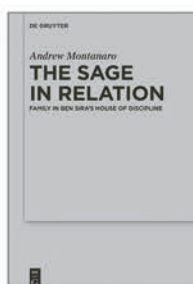
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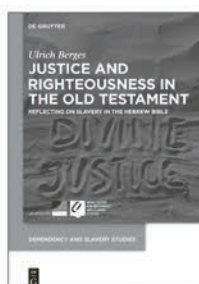
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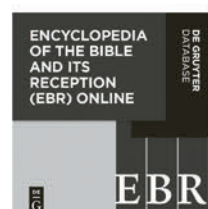
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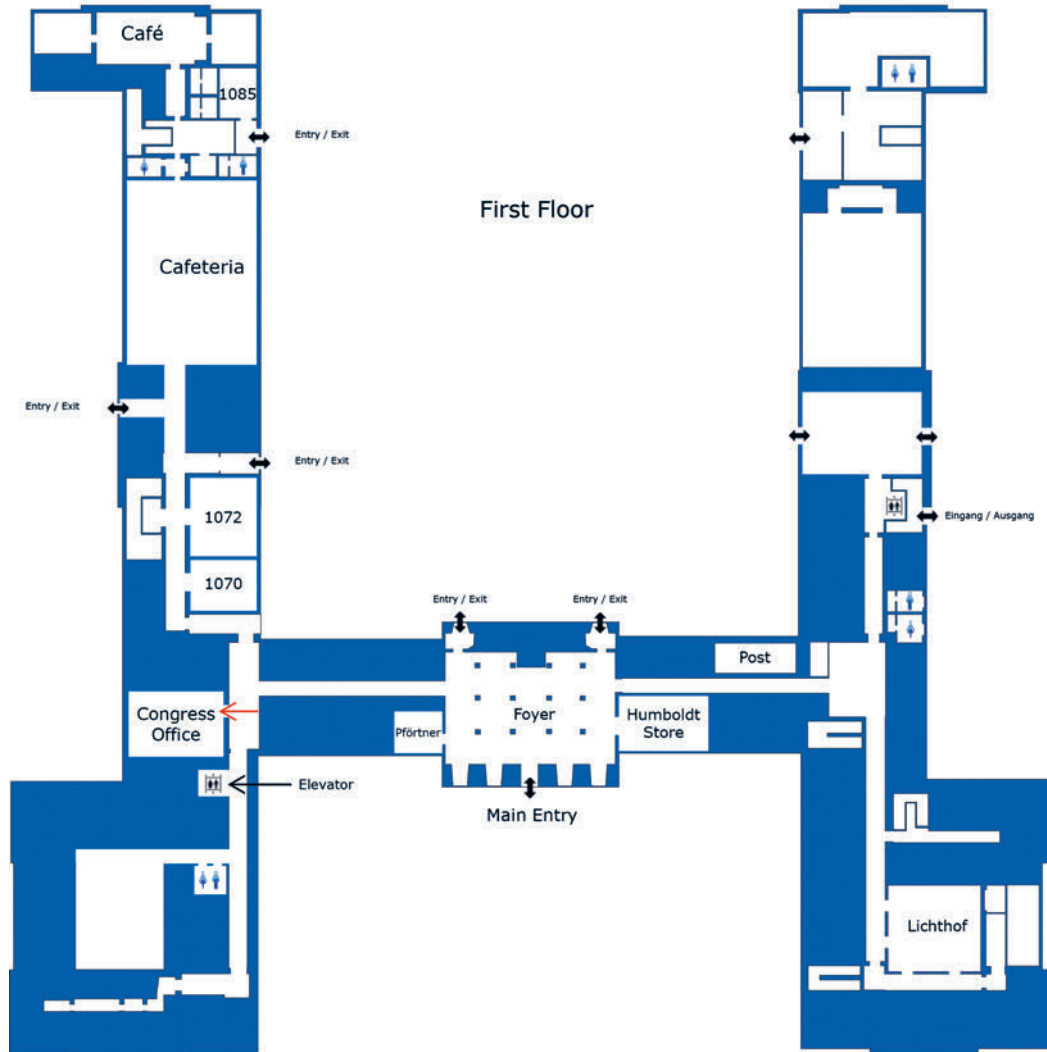


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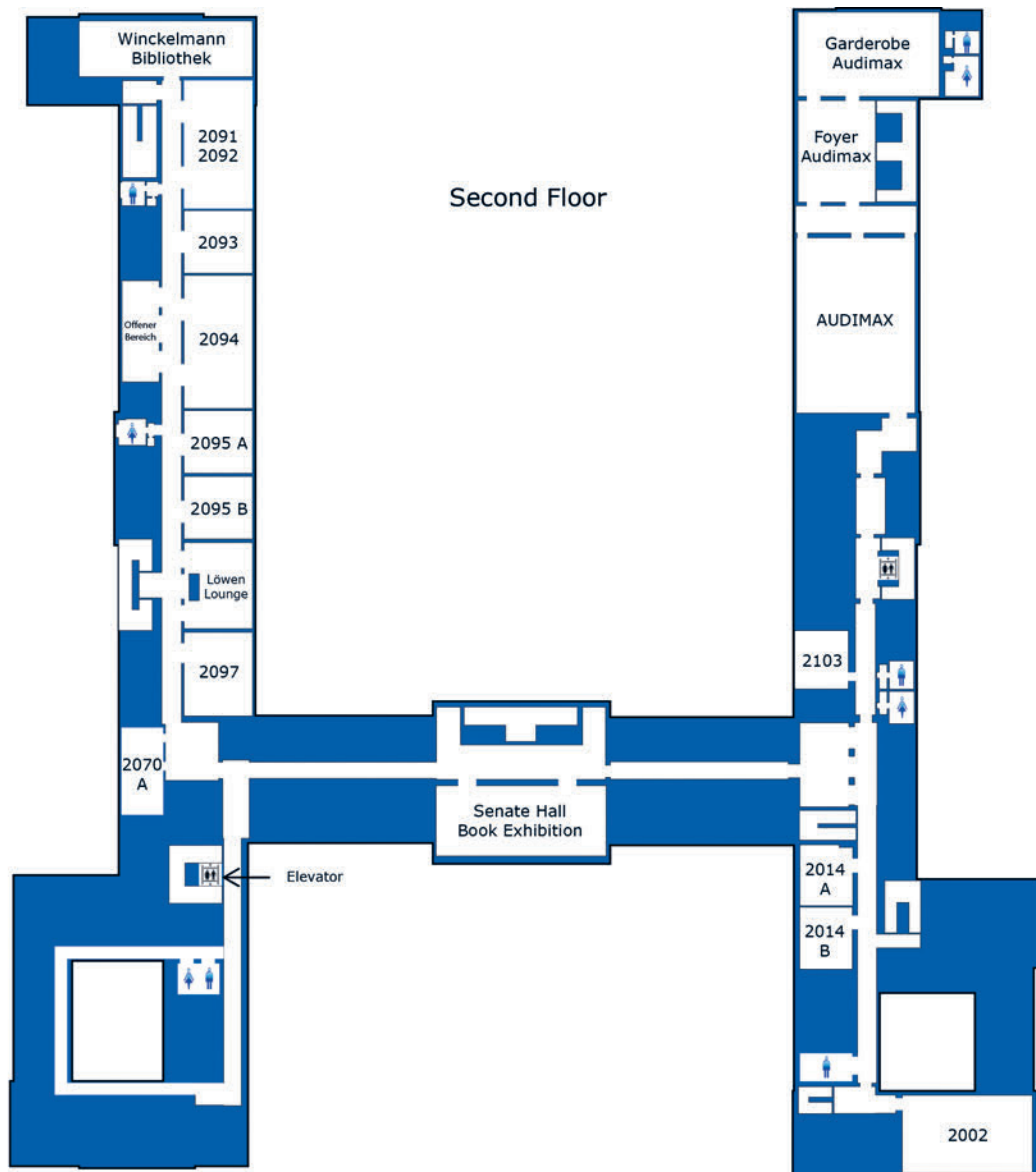
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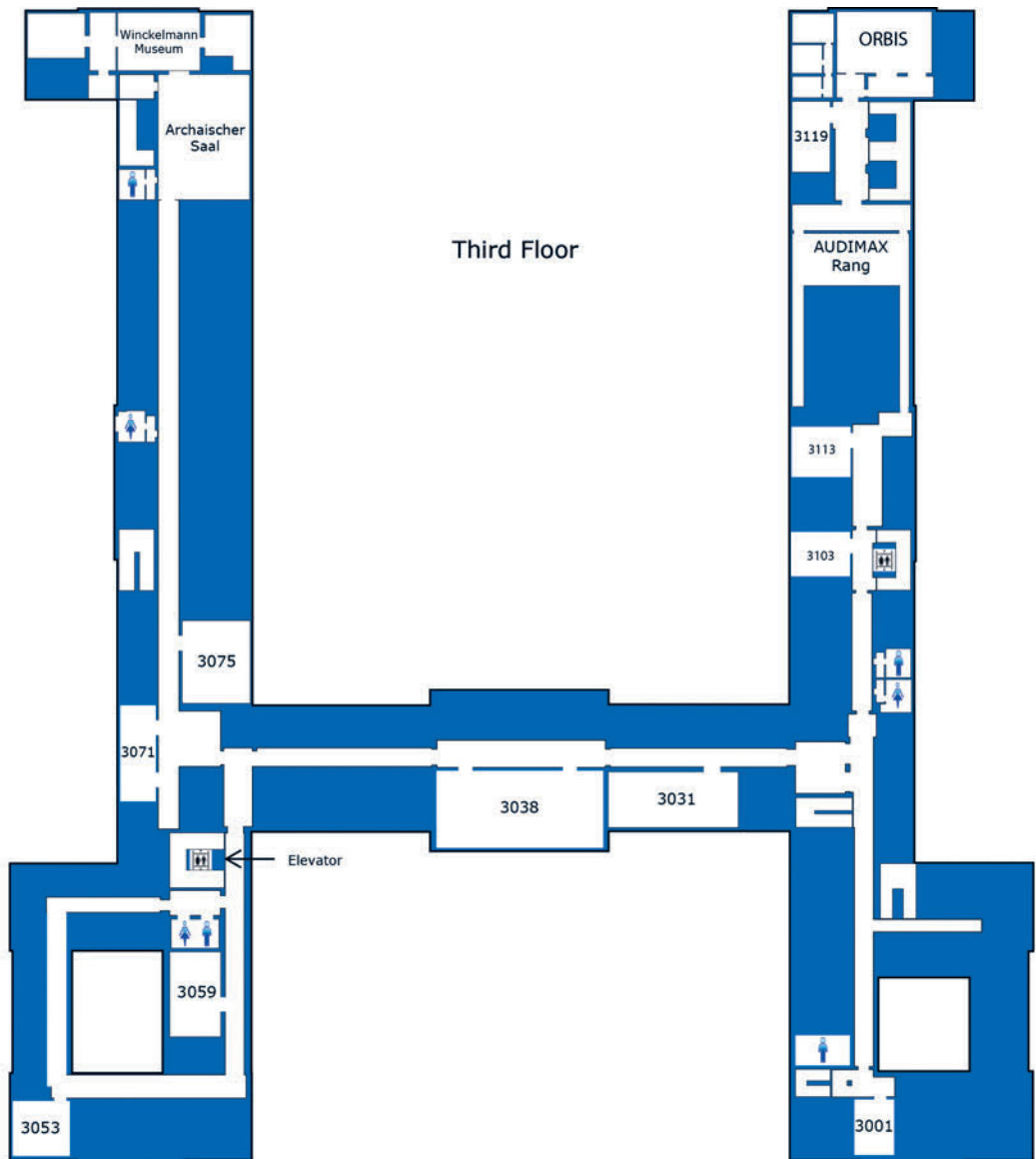
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