

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF ABSTRACTS:

Solomon Olusola Ademiluka (Kogi State)

A Study of the Sociological Functions of Funeral Mourning in the Old Testament in the Light of African Practices

In the Old Testament, as in Africa, death is accorded the most important significance among other rites of passage. Hence it is mourned with varied activities. In both societies, mourning, as one of the aspects of burial, involves various elements, such as the number of days involved, abstention from certain engagements, sacrifices, the dirge, etc.

The aim of this article is to compare and contrast elements of funeral mourning and their sociological significance in Ancient Israel and Africa, with particular reference to the practices of the Yoruba people of Nigeria. The comparison is done with a view to providing an African Background for the understanding of the Old Testament texts involved. In this way the texts are made more comprehensive to the African Christian as he is made aware of their resemblance with elements of this own culture.

Ephraim Baloyi (NWU)

Death as a rite of passage among the Christian Shangaans

Birth, circumcision/initiation into adult life, marriage and death are important occasions in a person's life in most societies on the earth. The Jews of the Ancient Near East had certain rites performed on these occasions. These rites underwent some changes on the emergence of Christianity and continue to change. These changes are also evident among cultures and religions of all societies.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to highlight the undocumented changes evident in the rites starting from the deathbed till a year after burial among the Christian Shangaans. The information in the two-volume book of Henri Junod on the Shangaans is weighed against the practices one sees among Christian Shangaans in this 21st century. This information is discussed with reference to the information in the Bible.

Angelika Berlejung (Leipzig) Van Selms Memorial lecture

Between Tradition and Innovation: Cultic Reforms in Mesopotamia and Jerusalem

The comparison of the religious reforms which took place in the Persian Period in Babylonian Uruk and in Jerusalem makes clear, that there are some significant

correspondences: It seems as if both reforms were backed by similar religious and social discourses which dominated this period. Small „charter groups” used a „window of opportunity” (the interruption of the traditional cult of the main temples in Uruk and in Jerusalem and their re-installation) to start the reconfiguration of traditional religious structures on the base of new standards by e.g. „making of tradition”. The intention of the reforms, which both focused on a male main god with the theological profile as a lord-of-heaven, was to „update” the traditional local/regional religion in order to create a „modernized” theological system which would fit into the international and universal Persian Empire.

Willem Boshoff (Unisa)

What's new? The last decade in the archaeology of the Holy Land. Thoughts on NEAHL Vol. 5

A supplementary volume to the four volume ***The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*** (1993) edited by Ephraim Stern, was published earlier this year. The scope of the new volume is new and ongoing excavations in the Holy Land, covering excavations conducted between 1994 and 2005. In this paper I will try to answer the question: “What’s new?” This question is often asked by people who think Biblical Archaeology was conducted by W.F. Albright and documented by Werner Keller.

The new supplementary volume to NEAEHL eloquently informs its readers that very much has happened in the field of archaeology during the last decade in the “Holy Land”. The amount of “new” sites are stunning, often found as a result of building and construction activities, in accordance with heritage legislation. However, probably the most informative articles deal with “old” sites such as Dor, Bet Shean, Caesarea, Hazor, and of course Jerusalem.

Johann Cook (US)

Hellenistic and/or (pre-)Rabbinic traditions in the Septuagint

The persons responsible for the ancient versions of the Hebrew Bible made use of a diverse corpus of literature, including oral traditions, in order to make their parent texts clear to their readers. The composition of these versions differs dramatically depending on, inter alia, the provenance of the individual versions. The Peshitta exhibits evidence of Jewish (including the Targumim), Christian (Septuagint?) and other external influence. The Targumim also include characteristic external data. In these cases the provenance of the individual Tgg is also significant. This applies to the Septuagint as well. The jury is in fact still out as far as the nature of the application of external data is concerned in the LXX. To Veltri it is evident that the LXX should contain elements of Jewish exegesis it is, after all, a product of Jewish exegesis. However, there is a major difference of opinion on this issue. As far as LXX Proverbs is concerned, there

are two groups of views. One group argues that this translator is actually influenced by Jewish legalism, whereas another grouping finds evidence of direct Platonic, Stoic influence in this unit. This article addresses the issue of the extent to which the Septuagint (Genesis and Proverbs) was in fact influenced by external exegetical traditions. One issue that seemingly plays a role in the deliberate application of external exegetical material is whether there is a specific exegetical, textual or theological problem in the parent text.

Sakkie Cornelius (US)

Mural Paintings in the ancient Near East

Mural painting is an important artistic medium going back to the earliest phases of human history (more than 10,000 years ago) and occurs widely in the ancient Near East. After some preliminary remarks on the techniques of painting (*tempera* and *fresco*), an overview of material from Israel/Palestine (i.e. Tuleilat el-Ghassul, Lachish, Tel Kabri, Deir Alla, Kuntillet Ajrud and Marisa) will be given. This is followed by a very cursory discussion of some examples from other sites in Anatolia, Syria, and Mesopotamia like Catal Höyük; Mari, Alalakh, Qatna, Til Barsip and Dura Europos. The well-known Egyptian paintings are not included in this discussion, but because of the link with Asia, the Avaris material could not be excluded. Attention will be given to technique, central motifs (iconography) and possible influences. As expected, the paper will be lavishly illustrated.

Lesley Deysel (UP)

A Pagan King's Confession of Faith (Daniel 3:33 and 4:31-32)

There are eight poetic passages to be found in the Aramaic part of the book of Daniel, embedded in the prose narrative. This study will show that two of these passages, 3:33 and 4:31-32, are linked: like a pair of bookends they frame the greater part of Chapter 4 and in fact form a single, coherent poetic unit. This poetic unit cannot be understood without taking into account its function in the narrative, and the broader context of the court-tale genre. Several points are of interest: the demarcation of the poem and its unusual structure, which is due to its being used as a frame for the story of Nebuchadnezzar's madness and recovery; the unusual figure of speech that have been used to bind it together; and the subject-matter – a foreign king's confession of faith in the Jewish God. This echoes aspects of other court-tales, but in no other example of the genre is the foreign monarch's acceptance of God as complete as it is here. In this study, the composite poem will be examined, with emphasis on the three points given above.

Annette Evans (UFS)

Explaining death to young children in a biblical context

The literature for use with young children in this challenging and vital field seems to be minimal. To understand what young children are actually capable of absorbing, and what their emotional needs are, I have drawn on material supplied by Hospice, including an article from Great St Ormond Street Hospital for Children in London, detailing a research method and questionnaire for examining how young children envisage heaven. I tentatively (subject to more exploration of this field) would like to propose adapting this method for research in our own cultural context(s) in a variety of crèches. Three examples of differing approaches to children's books, including illustrations which work well, are briefly discussed.

Annette Evans (UFS)

The origins of Jewish Beliefs in Angels

This article suggests that Jewish beliefs about the functioning of angels originated in two threads: the unique ancient Egyptian institution of the king as the divine son of God (which includes solar worship), and the concept of the Divine Council, in which the supreme God is the king of the gods. The method of investigation involved a close reading, combined with a History of Religions methodology, of texts displaying marked angelological content. Certain motifs, especially "throne" and "sun/fire", which were identified as characteristic of angelic functioning, were compared across a broad spectrum of texts. In this way the diachronic development of major angelological motifs as well as the synchronic connections (in terms of angelological motifs) between the respective cultural contexts became apparent. In a following article, it is suggested that the intellectual abstractions of Hellenism effected the transition to the reception of the concept of Christianity within a monotheistic framework.

Randall Gauthier (US)

The Septuagint as higher order act of communication: Toward a cognitive framework for LXX hermeneutics

Assuming the Septuagint translators were attempting to communicate their Semitic source to a new audience, this article considers relevance theory for its hermeneutical import. Interacting with the insights of Ernst-August Gutt, it is suggested that the LXX achieves its relevance as an act of communication (target) about another act of communication (source); i.e., as a higher order act of communication. Such relevance may be achieved by (a) replicating the stimulus of the original ("what was said"), or (b) by producing an interpretation of the original ("what was meant"). In any case, exegesis of the LXX must account

for the originally envisaged context in order to understand what the translator may have intended.

Jaco Gericke (NWU)

Fuzzy intensions – generic godhood in the Hebrew Bible as polythetic concept

What, according to the Hebrew Bible, is a god? You can talk to me about Biblical Theology but that wouldn't tell me a thing. And while the meaning of life may be found in a Hebrew Lexicon, the Hebraic concept of generic godhood is somewhat more elusive. Hitherto, Biblical-Hebrew lexical semantics has tended to focus on the extension of the generic concept whilst neglecting the intensional dimension. As a result we still have no idea as to what was assumed to make a god divine. However, any attempt to describe the necessary and sufficient conditions for being a god must face the fact that, from a pan-biblical perspective, the classical theory of concepts is unable to deal with the intensional fuzziness and extensional diversity of the biblical data. Neither can it solve the problem of symbol grounding to explain why anything was called a god in the first place. But do neo-classical, theory, prototype, atomistic or pluralistic theories of concepts fare any better in making sense of the metatheistic assumptions in the conceptual background? In this paper, an analytical-philosophical approach is adopted in a discussion of the various theories of concepts with reference to their utility function in explicating the intensional dimension of generic godhood in the text. In order to avoid the fallacy of essentialism, the quest for a real or intensional definition is abandoned in favour of a polythetic definition of generic godhood that accommodates both the fuzzy intensionality and conceptual polymorphisms in the discourse.

Cedric Ginsberg (Unisa)

Yiddish and Hebrew writing in South Africa

I wish briefly to examine Yiddish and Hebrew writing in South Africa mainly in the second half of the 20th century. The issue of minority literature vs. literature of minorities will be engaged. An attempt will be made to classify Yiddish and Hebrew literature in terms of minority group output.

The question of **why** such literature may have been written at all will be addressed. The phenomenon of the relatively small output in Hebrew as compared with the relatively extensive output in Yiddish, will be examined, and there will be an attempt at an explanation.

Edouard Kitoko-Nsiku (United Bible Societies)

The camouflage of death as a rite of passage in Israel: the case of Priests, Prophets and Kings

The issue of death as a rite of passage is muted in the Scriptures. This silence is reinforced by the prohibition given to Israel by Yahweh concerning necromancy, even though this rite of passage constitutes an essential element of culture and religion in Israel. Traces of this practice can be seen “between the lines” in various places in Scripture.

The present paper will focus on revisiting some pertinent Old Testament texts regarding the issue of death as a rite of passage, taking into account some specific cases of the death of priests, prophets and kings in Israel. Also the paper aims at showing how the new reading done from African religious and cultural perspectives can contribute to the understanding of this subject.

Paul Kruger (US)

Mundus inversus and the cultures of the ancient Near East: a few examples

This paper considers religious, socio-political and literary examples of the universal cultural phenomenon of the *mundus inversus* (a topsy-turvy world), the earliest instances of which can be traced back to the cultures of the ancient Near East. *Mundus inversus* refers to manifestations of expressive behaviour where everything is inverted in relation to the normal state of affairs. These inversions could entail aspects relating to cultural codes of behaviour, values and norms and they could be of a linguistic, literary, artistic, religious or of a social-political nature.

Five spheres in the ancient Near Eastern world where this cultural phenomenon is especially prominent are (1) *mundus inversus* and the conceptions of life after death, (2) *mundus inversus* and the world of mourning, (3) *mundus inversus* and social criticism/utopism, (4) *mundus inversus* and the phenomenon of cursing, and (5) *mundus inversus* and the literary phenomenon of the *adynaton*. Examples from some of these occurrences are presented.

At Lamprecht (UNW)

Understanding dying through spatial metaphors — The semantics of the spatial expression 77’ in II Kings 2:2

While Gilgal is geodesic 449ft lower than Bethel, the traditional and literal interpretation of the spatial expression 77’ in II Kings 2:2 - “from Gilgal ... they went *down* to Bethel” – continually shows exceptional variation in topographic depiction. As a potential solution to this anomaly, this paper proposes that 77’ in II Kings 2:2 is metaphoric in nature, and do not emerge directly out of a physical

topographic experience. Within a cognitive linguistic perspective, this paper argues that the conceptual structure of dying, instead, is embodied in the unique intrinsic frame of reference which the semantics of the spatial expression 77' also represents. The argument is based and motivated by the usage of 77' in the Hebrew Bible. With this in mind, II Kings 2:2 represents a new understanding for similar up-down image schemas applied in the Hebrew Bible.

Gudrun E. Lier (UJ)

*The Soferim: Who were they and what did they do?
A Review of Past Research Studies*

Not much has been written on the subject of the *Soferim* in the twentieth century. Jacob Z. Lauterbach's definition of *Soferim* is 'a class of people who occupied themselves with 'the Book' and taught from that 'Book' alone. Others have studied these people in connection with what is known as the *tiqqune soferim* or 'corrections of scribes'. In addition, Debra Reed Blank looked at the subject of *Soferim* in connection with what she defines as an early, if not the earliest, *rabbinic text* which systematically presents the laws of writing and reading the Torah and other scrolls in the form of a digest of mishnaic and talmudic literature treating those topics. This paper reviews the subject of the *Soferim* in relation to who they were; what they did and information gathered from Blank's research of the rabbinic text called *Soferim*.

John Lübbe (Unisa)

Is Hosea 5:15 – 6:10 a Midrash of Genesis 34?

Midrash is commonly thought to be a form of interpretation that developed after the destruction of the Second Temple, even though scholars have demonstrated that the scholarship of the Tannaim and Amoraim stretches far back into their nation's past. Is it possible that the later principles of interpretation were already applied in the pronouncements of the Book of Hosea? Of what significance could evidence of midrashic interpretation be to the modern scholar who focuses simply upon the sense of the message?

Mustafa B. Mheta (UJ)

The use of Scripture in the Islamic Feminist Debate

A unique feature of the Islamic Feminist debate is the use of Scripture (Qur'an and Hadith) as locus of authority by contending sides. Various aspects will be highlighted in the paper. They are, for example,

- the ranking of the Qur'an and Hadith as sources of reference
- Scripture[s] a whole versus statements in individual verses
- the choice of key texts

- contextualizing of passages within preconceived frameworks
- the role of experience related subjectivism in the hermeneutics
- the use of Scripture in effecting “affirmative action”.

Attention will be given to the views (and criticism) of prominent Islamic feminists. Parallels will also be drawn between Islamic and Biblical interpretation of Scripture.

Marlene Mondriaan (UP)

Influence of marginalised groups on the establishment of Judean monotheism

According to the Kenite hypothesis, the Kenites/Midianites worshipped Yahweh before the Israelites. A Moses-type figure, who acquired knowledge about Yahweh through the Midianites and Kenites, introduced Yahweh to a group migrating from Egypt into Palestine, and equated him with their ancestral divine traditions. This group, in its turn, introduced Yahweh to the tribes of Judah. The Kenites and other marginalised groups – such as the Rechabites, Kenizzites, Calebites and Jerahmeelites – were, to a great extent, nomad metalworkers emanating from the South, living in a kind of symbiosis with the Judeans. Their strong Yahweh-tradition advanced Yahweh-worship in Judah. It furthermore seems that these peripheral tribes were, in some way or another, related to each other. A powerful exodus tradition authenticated Yahweh as the national God of a later Israelite monarchy. Despite adopting Yahweh as a major God, the Israelites continued with a syncretistic-type religion previously practised in Canaan. During the exile, some of these marginalised groups seemingly came forth as a steadfast religious group propagating Yahweh as the only God. It could, therefore be surmised that they played a significant role in the establishment of a post-exilic Judaic monotheistic Yahweh-alone movement.

Jackie Naudé (UFS)

The role of metatexts in the translations of sacred texts

Throughout centuries the translations of sacred texts have been accompanied by metatexts narrating the origin and nature of the specific translation (for example the Aristeas Book and the Septuagint; *Dolmetschen* and the Luther Bible Translation; the metatexts in the Dutch Authorative Bible Translation (*Statevertaling*) etc). However, in the twentieth century, Bible translations accompanied by metatexts are very rare. The twenty first century Bible translations again make use of metatexts (for example the successful *Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling*, *Das Neue Testament*, *The Schocken Bible*, *Die Bybel vir Doves*, etc). Metatexts will also play a major role in the next Afrikaans Bible translation, a project which is currently underway. The interpretations of the Aristeas Book as metatext of the Septuagint focus on a historiographical viewpoint. Some scholars (for example Honigman) take the historical situation implied by the authors seriously. Others view it as fiction or legend containing apologetic overtones. A

new avenue to be investigated is suggested from the research on the dimensions of religious translation (Robinson 2000:103-107). The hypothesis to be investigated in the proposed paper is that the metatext of a sacred text regulates the reader's mental preparation for free translation to ensure that free interpretations will be as orthodox as possible.

Gert Prinsloo (UP)

From watchtower to holy temple: reading the Book of Habakkuk as a spatial journey

In this paper the Book of Habakkuk is analysed according to a combination of two theories on space and spatiality, namely narratology and critical spatiality. It is argued that by reading the little book of Habakkuk as a spatial journey, many of the interpretational *cruces* in the book can be addressed from a new perspective. In terms of spatiality, the spatial journey of the prophet in Habakkuk 2 provides the key for the interpretation of the 'vision' that the prophet 'saw' according to 1:1.

Nicolene Rautenbach (UP)

Those who dwell on the Holy Mountain and those who do not – A spatial critical study of Psalm 87

This paper approaches Psalm 87 from a 'spatial' point of view. By applying the theory of 'critical spatiality' to this psalm, it considers what Psalm 87 says from a new perspective. The 'critical spatiality' theory is then elaborated upon by taking the Ancient Near Eastern world view/view of the cosmos into account as it appears in the psalm. Hints at concepts such as 'order versus chaos' and 'the godly mountain' is examined together with, amongst others, the placement of Zion versus the placement of the other mentioned peoples in the psalm. All of these concepts are then evaluated in their respective relationships to YHWH. These are the aspects, then, from which this Korahite psalm is evaluated, determining that they do indeed help shed light on the interpretation of this notorious psalm.

Fanie Riekert (UFS)

Besinning oor en sistematiesing van beslissings in die vertaling van Hooglied in Afrikaans.

Die vertaling van Hooglied as 'n Liefdeslied of liefdesliedere vra reeds 'n literêre genre beslissing asook 'n vraag na die retoriek van die liefdespoësie en die erotiese aard van die inhoud, as voorafbeslissinge. Die prosesbeslissinge behels taalkundige aspekte en die wyse waarop ons dit vir 'n Afrikaanse leser kan weergee.

Fanie Riekert (UFS)

Do the ancient Egyptian Temples provide information on a royal rite de passage at death?

Rite de passage reflects the idea found in many religions that people should be ritually helped to move onwards to another stage of life. George Hart claims:

The fertile imagination of the ancient Egyptian speculators evolved numerous images and symbols, the sum total of which would emphasize the security of the sun god on his underworld journey and his transformation from the god who descended into the dark regions of the netherworld each night into a regenerated deity emerging each dawn, full of energy and life.

There is also a link between the creation myth, especially of Heliopolis and the idea of kingship, viz. the one between the cosmic deities and the gods/goddesses figuring in the narration of the transmission of kingship.

How would the death of a divine king fit into an idea of a rite de passage? From iconographic material and architectural details the paper would like to claim that in ancient Egyptian religion there was a royal rite de passage at the death of the monarch, or rather the beginning of his divine afterlife.

Jo-Mari Schäder (UP)

Enlightening Psalm 47: Critical Spatiality and Concatenation of Psalms 46-48

In this paper the various spaces, their function and meaning within Psalms 46-48 will be analysed and compared in an attempt to enlighten the meaning of Psalm 47 through concatenation or the 'holistic approach.' In Psalm 47 the reference to God's accent in verse 6 is generally interpreted as referring to an accent either to Jerusalem, Mount Zion or the Temple. This traditional interpretation's merit is evaluated along the lines of the theories on sacred space of Critical Spatiality.

Rudolph Scharneck (UP)

The demarcation of the first pericope of Joel in primary and secondary sources

The first pericope division of the book of Joel is problematic. There is a great deal of disagreement among scholars and Bible translations about where the text should be demarcated. Looking at different points of view it seems that there are two main trends: i) to divide the text at 1:12 and ii) to divide the text at 1:14. What is the most acceptable division and what are the implications of the different divisions on the understanding of the text?

In this paper it will be attempted to answer questions such as these by using the divisions of various ancient manuscripts. This will be done in attempt to establish how the ancients interpreted the text and then comparing their understanding to

the understanding of modern scholars. It might lead to some new insights regarding the interpretation of the first chapter of the book of Joel.

Nic Schmidt (UFS)

Death and the Divine in Biblical Hebrew Wisdom

The processes, reasons and experiences of the conception and termination of life are often related in the mind of biblical authors to the person, character and actions of the Divine. This is especially true in the wisdom books of Proverbs, Job and Qoheleth. When people are confronted with death, they still question the Divine on its fairness and justification. The issues of retribution and theodicy are two examples of these existential crises. This paper aims to shed more light on the ways in which the Hebrew sages related death to the Divine, in their distinctive Ancient Near Eastern contexts and world view.

Nic Schmidt (UFS)

Naḥălāh: Inheritance in the Writings of the Hebrew Bible

Naḥălāh has been analysed in the Hebrew Bible, as illustration of the various ideologies on the idea of land in terms of heritage/inheritance. Distinctive conceptual patterns of *naḥălāh* can be discerned in the literary corpora of the Tetrateuch, the Deuteronomistic History and the Prophets. This paper focuses on the different ways in which the concept of *naḥălāh* is portrayed in the texts of the Writings. A preliminary conclusion is that, although some books of the Writings exhibit a similar conceptualization of inheritance as found in the Torah and Prophets, others reinterpret it according to their own unique and exilic experiences and perspectives.

Jasper van der Westhuizen (Unisa)

The morphology and morphosyntax of the personal pronouns in the Egypt Amarna letters

The objective of this paper is to scrutinize the morphology and morphosyntax of the personal pronouns, independent and suffixed, as they appear and function in the Egypt-Amarna letters. The difference as well as the correspondence in form, compared to the standard Akkadian pronouns, as also WS and other influences, are pointed out. This is illustrated through the fact that though the Akkadian pronouns, both independent and suffixed, can be divided into three morphological groups, viz. 1) nominative; 2) oblique (accusative and genitive); 3) dative, not all of these pronouns function in the Egypt-Amarna letters. Following is an investigation of the different syntagmas in which the pronouns function and the cases where the independent pronouns are used in conjunction with prepositions. Cases of the nominative in the function of either the subject (topic)

or predicate (comment) as also cases of extraposition are also discussed. Each section namely, independent pronouns and suffixed pronouns, will be round off with a paragraph of observations pertaining to each section that will assist in the conclusions.

Fanie Vermaak (Unisa)

Guabba the Meluhhan village in Mesopotamia

Although a *Meluhhan* village (**é-duru₅ me-luh-ha**) integrated under the jurisdiction of Girsu/Lagash in southern Mesopotamia has been known since the Sargonic times, it has never been identified previously with a specific place name. In this presentation the *Meluhhan* village has now here for the first time been connected in a Ur III text with the well-known village / town of **Guabba (Gú-ab-ba^{ki})** based on the twice published text MVN 7 420 = ITT 4 8024 from Ur III Girsu.