

○ EDITORIAL

Julie Kelso, Editor, The Bible and Critical Theory

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SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING

In just under a week, the SBL International Meeting, this year in Auckland, shall commence. At this time of year in Australia we usually have a meeting of the Bible and Critical Theory Seminar, run by Roland Boer since 1999. However, this year, the seminar will take place as part of the SBL meeting. For those going along, be sure to catch the following sessions, all of which showcase the remarkable diversity of contemporary biblical studies:

10-4 BIBLE AND CRITICAL THEORY SEMINAR

10 July 2008

8:30 AM to 11:15 AM

Room: 403-403 – Engineering

- David Jobling, St. Andrew's College-Saskatoon
'Dramatising the Bible with Brecht' (45 min)
- Michael Carden, University of Queensland
'Atonement Patterns in Biblical Narrative' (45 min)
- Break (30 min)
- Philip Culbertson, Auckland University
'Bobbitizing God: On the Importance of the Divine Genitals Remaining Un-Manageable' (45 min)

10-21 BIBLE AND CRITICAL THEORY SEMINAR

10 July 2008

1:30 PM to 4:15 PM

Room: 403-403 – Engineering

- George Aichele, Adrian College
'Jesus Simulacrum, or the Gospels vs. "The Gospel"' (45 min)
- Deane Galbraith, University of Otago
'"Would you condemn me that you may be justified?": Job as Differend' (45 min)
- Break (30 min)

- Eric Repphun, University of Otago
‘Anything in Exchange for the World: Jean Baudrillard’s Symbolic Exchange and the Bible’ (45 min)

11-3 BIBLE AND CRITICAL THEORY SEMINAR

11 July 2008

8:30 AM to 11:15 AM

Room: 403-403 – Engineering

- Christina Petterson, Macquarie University-Sydney
‘Romans 1-2 and Natural Law’ (45 min)
- Gillian Townsley, University of Otago
‘Kefale: Body Politic (or, Political Bodies) in 1 Corinthians 11:3’ (45 min)
- Break (30 min)
- Alan H. Cadwallader, Flinders University
‘Name Punning and Social Stereotyping: Reinscribing Slavery in the Letter to Philemon’ (45 min)

IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue, we have a typically diverse range of essays. Jeremy Punt (‘Intersections in queer theory and postcolonial theory, and hermeneutical spin-offs’) brings Postcolonial and Queer theory into conversation with each other, arguing that while both of these theoretical positions have their own (sometimes conflicting) agendas, together they offer a focus that can be ‘directed towards their sustained interaction with the contemporary politics of identity, including reflection upon the categories and institutions, and the knowledge(s) and the power plays by means of which social dynamics and people are structured and regulated, and how such dimensions impacted upon biblical interpretation’. He emphasises a number of important connections in Queer and Postcolonial theory, including epistemological and hermeneutical considerations; difference; marginality; agency; mimicry; and the quest for a new world order.

In her essay “‘My business is Circumference’: A meditation on scission, locution, confession”, Hilary Emmett (a Romance literature scholar, among other things) offers a speculative account of the metaphor of circumcision in Jacques Derrida’s autobiographical writing. Drawing upon Elaine Scarry’s work on the body in pain and Nancy Jay’s reading of Genesis, along with psychoanalytic readers of the Hebrew Bible (Julia Reinhard Lupton, Julia Kristeva, Jacques Lacan), she first explores the meaning of circumcision in its Biblical context before bringing this significance to bear on Derrida’s work.

David Reis challenges Foucault’s interpretation of the technology of Bentham’s panopticon as a distinctly modern form of discipline and punishment. Instead, in ‘Surveillant discipline: Panoptic vision in early Christian self-definition’, Reis argues that Bentham’s discussion of the panoptic gaze and its effects on those surveyed can be found in the literature of antiquity, especially in the writings of the early Christians. He states that ‘early Christian writers used panoptic

rhetoric both to establish the authority of God, Jesus, and early Christian leaders and to encourage their audiences to watch over themselves and others. They thus sought to establish a “technology of the self” and circumscribe communal boundaries based upon a system marked by surveillant discipline’.

Yung Suk Kim’s article, ‘The Story of Hannah (1 Sam 1:1–2:11) from a perspective of *Han*: The three-phase transformative process’, is an exploration of Hannah’s story from the Korean perspective of *han*. He argues that such a perspective enables us to witness the transformation of Hannah beyond the logic of ‘us’ or ‘them’ hermeneutics. This transformative process involves three stages or ‘phases of attitude or moments of life: “I am nothing”, “I am something”, and “I am anything”’. The story of Hannah thus understood is one of public transformation that involves self, community and society.

Finally, Rohun Park’s ‘Revelation for sale: An intercultural reading of Revelation 18 from an East Asian perspective’, provides a reading of Revelation 18 from an East Asian, global perspective. He argues that John the Seer’s oracle ‘emerges not from a “new heaven and earth”, but from the midst of colonial space and time, infested with scarcity and hunger. For an East Asian postcolonial, the vision as such has renewed poignancy in light of the cross-cultural and trans-historical constraints of imperialism and colonialism’.

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