Abstracts OTSEM II Skálholt 2010

Goettingen group

Post-doc papers

Christoph Berner: The Motif of the Egyptian Bondage. Observations on its Literary Origins and its Redactional Development in the Exodus Narrative (Exod 1-15)

The paper is dedicated to one aspect treated in my recently finished 'Habilitationsschrift' on the literary development of the Exodus narrative. While it is widely assumed that the motif of the Egyptian bondage constitutes one of the cornerstones of the Exodus tradition, a redaction critical analysis of the relevant passages in Exod 1-3; 5 shows that this assumption is unfounded. In its earliest literary form, the Exodus narrative lacks any explicit reference to the enslavement of the Israelites but rather mentions the 'misery' of a socially marginalized group. The idea that this misery is due to the Israelites' enslavement already reflects a later development which then continued in a variety of redactional additions providing further details. In this gradual process which was mainly driven by innerbiblical exegesis, the picture of the Egyptian bondage slowly took shape.

Anja Klein: Hymn and History in Ex 15

My habilitation project (working title: "Hymn and History. Reception of Biblical History in Old Testament Poetic Texts") deals with the historical accounts in poetic literature and the question why the biblical history came to be reformulated in poetic form. The paper concentrates on an analysis of the Song of the Sea in Ex 15 that is of great importance for the project outlined. It shall be demonstrated that temple theology and narrative tradition are merged for the first time, thus creating a paradigm for the further literary und theological development.

Doctoral short papers

Sonja Ammann: Exploring the Hebrew Bible from a discourse analytical perspective. A case study on the polemics against other gods

Based on the works of Michel Foucault, sociologists, linguists and historians have developed theories and methods of discourse analysis. Discourse theory is an approach to text production that is not focussed on individual authors. It may thus be a useful theoretical framework for Hebrew Bible interpretation. In my PhD-project, I am investigating the development of biblical polemics against other gods. Applying concepts of Siegfried Jäger (Kritische Diskursanalyse) and Rainer Keller (Wissenssoziologische Diskursanalyse), I will discuss in this paper the suitability of discourse analysis for my study. Text examples will be taken mainly of Second Isaiah, Jeremiah 10, Letter of Jeremiah and Wisdom of Solomon 13-15.

René Enzenauer: The Day of the King. Sabbath and Kingship of God in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and in Qumran.

One of the most remarkable features of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice is their strong emphasis on the kingship of God. One aim of my research project is to enlighten the correlation between this topic and the explicit dedication of the Songs to the Sabbath, a connection which in this form is not known from the Old Testament.

Christoph Hilmes: The Portrayal of Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon in Jeremiah 27 MT / 34 LXX

In my paper, I would like to present an analysis of Jeremiah 27 MT (34 LXX).
The paper consists of two parts: The first part deals with the formation of Jeremiah 27 MT and the reconstruction of this literary process. This also includes a comparison with Jeremiah 34 LXX, the Greek translation of Jeremiah 27 MT, which lacks a number of important details of the Masoretic text, e.g. the dating (v. 1), the title db,[, for Nebuchadnezzar (v. 6), and the limitation of the Babylonian reign to three generations (v. 7). In the second part, some theological issues of Jeremiah 27 MT will be discussed, namely the relationship between Yhwh and Nebuchadnezzar, the presentation of the Babylonian reign as well as the debate on the temple vessels. Jeremiah 27 MT is one of the core texts of my doctoral project because this text, as I will argue, considers the historical-theological role of Babylon in order to integrate this empire into a new Judean world view after the fall of Judah and Jerusalem.

Judith Krawelitzki: The Power of God in the Psalter

The wide range of expressions for the power of God and the high frequency of these statements suggests that ‘power’ is both an important aspect of God’s being and an essential topic in the Psalter. Only those ideas which can be described as semantic or conceptual consolidations will be especially considered in my research project. They can be assigned to four categories: manifestations, metaphors, names of God and terms for power. The most concentrated expressions of divine power are found in the last category, where a single word characterizes and focuses the expression of divine power. This category will be the focus of my research.

Harald Samuel: The Levites in Deuteronomy

In Deuteronomy, and especially in the deuteronomic law, numerous verses are concerned with the Levites, their socio-religious status and their provision. Traditionally scholars tend to ascribe a pro-levitical point of view to Deuteronomy or even trace back its origins to Levitical circles. Based on an analysis of Dtn 10:6f.8f. and Dtn 18:1-8 the following paper examines current theses and unfolds them diachronically. Some importance is attached to late deuteronnomistic additions and priestly, potentially anti-levitic glosses. Concluding remarks concern the innerbiblical development, the interpretation of the LXX and the reception of Deuteronomy in Qumran (Temple Scroll).

Ruth Sauerwein: II Kings 2: Scrutinizing a "prophetic succession"

The story about Elijah’s ascension in IIKgs 2 marks the transition between the Elijah- and Elisha-cycle. The aim of this paper is to outline the function of this chapter as a redactional connection between the Elijah- and Elisha-stories. The manifold literary reminiscences within IIKgs 2 refer to different biblical stories from the torah. The paper will discuss these connections and their meaning for the dating of IIKgs 2 and based on that for the Elisha-cycle as such. The prophetic succession we find depicted in this chapter is according to the author rather a literary device than a historically based event. Proof of that will be given by the comparison of different motives for the “prophetic succession” that occur in IIKgs 2 and in IKgs 19. These motives, in turn, will be compared to other OT succession stories.

Due to the observations concerning the redactional surroundings of IIKgs 2, it seems obvious that the passage in IIKgs 2 can be counted amongst the youngest parts of the entire Elijah- and Elisha-complex. The paper aims to show how the story has been editorially prefixed to the Elisha-cycle in order to serve as a redactional joint between the formally independent Elijah-

and the Elisha-cycle. Moreover, a closer look on the narrative structure of the passage will reveal that IIKgs 2 has to be understood as a part of the Elisha-cycle rather than being a part of the Elijah-cycle.