

STUDIORUM NOVI TESTAMENTI SOCIETAS

THE SIXTY-SIXTH GENERAL MEETING

2–5 August 2011

The sixty-sixth General Meeting of the Society was held at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York (USA) from 2–5 August 2011, under the presidency of Professor Armand Puig i Tàrrach (Spain). About 380 members, spouses, and guests were present. On the first evening, the President of Bard College, Leon Botstein, warmly welcomed the Society to Annandale-on-Hudson and Bard College.

The Academic Programme

The President delivered his Presidential Address with the title ‘La gloire sur la montagne. L’épisode de la transfiguration de Jésus’ at the opening plenary session of the Society.

Main Papers in plenary sessions were read by Professor Margaret Mitchell (Chicago, USA): ‘Peter’s Hypocrisy, and Paul’s: Two Hypocrites at the Foundation of Earliest Christianity?’; Professor Christof Landmesser (Tübingen, Germany): ‘Das Konzept des Heils im Ersten Thessalonicherbrief’; Professor Jan van der Watt (Nijmegen, The Netherlands): ‘On Ethics in John’s Gospel and Letters’; Professor Luc Devillers (Fribourg, Switzerland): ‘Le prologue du quatrième évangile, clé de voûte de la littérature’.

Seventeen short papers were given in simultaneous sessions by Andries G. van Aarde, ‘The Empty Tomb in the Jesus Tradition: A Trajectory of Five Links’; Thomas L. Brodie, ‘Q 9:57–62: Tip of a Septuagint-based Iceberg’; Norm H. Young, ‘Syntax and Irony in the Fourth Gospel’; Linda Belleville, ‘The Moses-Mesitēs Tradition in Galatians 3:19–20’; Moisés Mayordomo, ‘Wirkungsgeschichtliche Exegese—Probleme und Perspektiven’; Roger David Aus, ‘Jesus as a Nazirite in Mark 14:25 par., and Joseph’s Reunion Meal in Judaic Tradition’; Dennis R. MacDonald, ‘Imitations of Homer in Mark and Fourth-Century Homeric Readings of the Gospels’; Jan Willem van Henten, ‘“Knowing everything” in John and Josephus’; Jeffrey A. D. Weima, ‘“Peace and security” (1 Thess. 5:3): Prophetic Warning or Political Propaganda?’; Emmanuel Nlenanya Chinwokwu, ‘Localizing the Global: Revisiting New Testament Christology in the African Context’; William Loader, ‘Did Adultery Mandate Divorce? A Reassessment of Jesus’ Divorce Logia’; Clare Rothschild, ‘Galen’s Treatise “On the Avoidance of Grief” and its Relevance for New

Testament Studies'; Urban C. Von Wahlde, 'The Literary Origin of the Johannine Literature: Is it Discoverable? How Would We Know?'; Paul Trebilco, 'When Did the Early Christians First Call Themselves *Christianoi*?'; Christopher Stanley, 'Postcolonial Perspectives on Paul's "Jew-Gentile Problem"'; Edwin Broadhead: 'Jewish Christianity and the Religious Map of Antiquity'.

Seventeen seminars with the following subjects, convenors, and presenters were held on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday:

- (1) Christliche Literatur des späten ersten Jahrhunderts und des zweiten Jahrhunderts/Christian Literature of the Late First Century and the Second Century (F. Prostmeier, H. van de Sandt): a. Karen L. King (Harvard University, USA), "'Apocalypse" and "Apocryphon": Constructing Authority and Ideologies of Unity in the Revelatory Scriptures of John'; b. Angela Standhartinger (Marburg, Germany), 'Ptolemaeus und Justin zur Autorität der Schrift'; c. Ferdinand R. Prostmeier (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany): 'Formen und Funktionen der Rezeption neutestamentlicher und frühchristlicher Literatur bei Theophilus von Antiochia "An Autolykos"';
- (2) The Dead Sea Scrolls in Relation to Early Judaism and Early Christianity (J. J. Collins, J. Frey): a. Robert Doran (Guest; Amherst College, USA), 'Historiography in Second Maccabees'; Respondent: Jan Willem van Henten (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands); b. Oda Wischmeyer (University of Erlangen, Germany), 'Historiographical Elements in the Letter of Aristaeus'; Respondent: Harold Attridge (Yale University, USA); c. John J. Collins (Yale University, USA), 'Historiography in the Dead Sea Scrolls'; Respondent: Loren Stuckenbruck (Princeton Theological Seminary, USA);
- (3) The Jewish World in New Testament Times (S. Freyne, J. W. van Henten, W. Horbury): This seminar met jointly with the seminar on the Dead Sea Scrolls in Relation to Early Judaism and Early Christianity above.
- (4) The Greek of the New Testament (C. C. Caragounis, J. W. Voelz): a. Eberhard Güting (Wallenhorst, Germany), 'Observations on the Language of the *Res Gestae divi Augusti*'; b. Jesús Peláez (Córdoba, Spain; editor of *Filologia Neotestamentaria* and of the *Diccionario Griego-Español del Nuevo Testamento*), 'Prepositions and Preverbs in the Greek-Spanish New Testament Dictionary'; c. Jeffrey Kloha (Guest; Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO), 'The Development of the Greek Language and the Manuscripts of Paul's Letters';
- (5) Inhalte und Probleme einer neutestamentlichen Theologie (C. Landmesser, M. Seifrid): a. Hans-Ulrich Weidemann (Universität Siegen, Germany), 'Der Geisttäufer und der andere Paraklet. Jesus und der Hl. Geist in den johanneischen Schriften'; b. Klaus Haacker (Kirchliche

- Hochschule Wuppertal/Bethel, Germany), 'The Spirit in Luke–Acts: Substitute for or Prelude to the Kingdom?' ('Die lukanische Pneumatologie: Konkurrenz oder Konsequenz der Eschatologie?'); c. William Campbell (University of Wales, UK), 'The Spirit and Pauline Eschatology with Particular Reference to Romans Chapter 8';
- (6) The Johannine Writings (M. M. Thompson, R. Zimmermann): a. Craig Keener (Palmer Theological Seminary, Wynnwood, PA, USA), 'Festivals in John's Gospel and the Book of Acts'; b. Mark Matson (Guest; Milligan College, TN, USA), 'The Death of Jesus in John and Luke: Theological Convergences'; c. Paul Anderson, 'Authentic Worship in John and Luke/Acts—Influence, Interfluence, and Resonance';
- (7) History and Theology of Mission in the New Testament: Global Challenges and Opportunities (J. Ådna, J. Kanagaraj, S. Tofana): a. Eugene Eung-Chun Park (San Francisco, USA), 'From Covenantal Nomism to Universal Mission: Transformation of Conventional Jewish Soteriology in the Gospel of Matthew'; Respondent: Jostein Ådna (Stavanger, Norway); b. Trevor Burke (Guest; Chicago, USA), 'The Holy Spirit as the Controlling Dynamic in Paul's Role as Missionary to the Thessalonians'; Respondent: Stelian Tofana (Cluj-Napoca, Romania); c. Emmanuel Nlenanya Chinwokwu (Nigeria), 'Localizing the Global: Revisiting New Testament Christology in the African Context';
- (8) Pauline Theology in Galatians and Romans (B. R. Gaventa, J. M. G. Barclay, M. C. de Boer): a. Beverly Gaventa (Princeton, USA), 'The Rhetoric of Violence and the God of Peace in Romans and Galatians'; b. Udo Schnelle (Halle, Germany), 'Gibt es eine Entwicklung in der Rechtfertigungslehre vom Galater- zum Römerbrief?'; c. John Barclay (Durham, UK), 'The Christ-gift, Israel and Time: from Galatians to Romans';
- (9) The Acts of the Apostles and Ancient Historiography (K. Backhaus, J. Schröter, G. Sterling): a. Kenneth Sacks (Guest; Brown University, Providence, RI, USA), 'Diodorus and the Hellenistic Mind'; b. Knut Backhuas (München, Germany), 'Acta Politica. Die lukanische Geschichtsschreibung zwischen Subversion und Apologie'; c. Richard Pervo (Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, USA), 'Providence in Acts and in the Acts of Paul';
- (10) Christian Apocryphal Literature (T. Nicklas, C. M. Tuckett, J. Verheyden): a. Tobias Nicklas (Regensburg, Germany), 'Das Petrus-evangelium—Offene Fragen und Entwicklungen'; b. Juan Chapa (Pamplona, Spain), 'A New Fragment from Oxyrhynchus: An Unknown Gospel?'; c. Joseph Verheyden (Leuven, Belgium), 'A Quick Look at Some Short Texts: The Agrapha Cited by Epiphanius of Salamis';

- (11) New Testament Ethics (F. W. Horn, D. Horrell, E. Baasland): a. Jan van der Watt (Nijmegen, Netherlands), 'Ethics in 1 John'; b. Michael Wolter (Bonn, Germany), 'Die paulinische Ethik'; Respondent: Volker Rabens (Guest; Bochum, Germany); c. L. Ann Jervis (Toronto, Canada), 'Virtue Ethics and Paul'; Respondent: Todd Still (Waco, Texas, USA);
- (12) Social History and the New Testament (H. Löhr, M. Öhler, A. Runesson): a. Andreas Bendlin (Toronto), 'Voluntary Associations in the Roman World: Networks, Lobby Groups, Political Conformists?'; Response: Peter Arzt-Grabner (Salzburg, Austria); b. John Kloppenborg (Toronto, Canada), 'Membership in Greek Associations, Pagan and Pauline'; c. Markus Öhler (Vienna, Austria), 'Associations in Galilee: The Gospel of Matthew and the Didache Reconsidered'; John Kloppenborg, Presentation of 'Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations, and Commentary';
- (13) Papyrology, Epigraphy and the New Testament (P. Arzt-Grabner, J. S. Kloppenborg): This seminar met jointly with the seminar on Social History and the New Testament above;
- (14) Early Jewish Theologies and the New Testament (J. Herzer, G. Oegema): a. Gerbern Oegema (McGill University, Montreal, Canada), 'Introduction: Early Jewish Theologies and the New Testament'; Jacob Neusner (Guest) and Bruce Chilton (Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, USA), 'Early Rabbinic Theology and the New Testament'; b. Gregory Sterling (University of Notre Dame, USA), 'From Human to Divine: Moses and Jesus in Transition'; Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr (University of Jena, Germany), 'Anastasis als Thema und Begriff im hellenistischen Frühjudentum'; c. Hermann Lichtenberger (University of Tübingen, Germany), 'Early Jewish Theologies in the Pseudepigrapha and in Qumran and the New Testament';
- (15) Reconsidering *Literaturkritik* of the Pauline Letters and its Impact on their Interpretation (E-M. Becker, R. Bieringer): a. Eve-Marie Becker (Aarhus, Denmark), 'The Motif of "Tears" in Paul and Cicero—New Insights in Literarkritik?'; and Reimund Bieringer (Leuven, Belgium), 'Does it Really Make a Difference? The Concrete Consequences of Literary-Critical Assumptions for the Actual Interpretation of 2 Corinthians'; b. Andreas Lindemann (Bielefeld, Germany), 'Zum historischen Kontext der Entstehung von Teilungshypothesen in der neutestamentlichen Forschung'; c. Jennifer Ebbeler (Guest; University of Texas, Austin, USA), 'Literarkritik and Ancient Epistolography';
- (16) Matthew in Context: an Exploration of Matthew in Relation to the Judaism and Christianity of its Time (M. Konradt, W. Kraus, W. Loader): a. Matthias Konradt (Heidelberg, Germany), 'Matthäus im Kontext: eine Bestandsaufnahme'; Respondent: Ulrich Luz (Bern, Switzerland); b. David Sim (Melbourne, Australia), 'Matthew's Theological Location';

- Respondent: Martin Vahrenhorst (Jerusalem, Israel); c. Paul Foster (Edinburgh, UK), 'Q, Jewish Christianity, and Matthew's Gospel'; Respondent: Wolfgang Kraus;
- (17) Reading Paul's Letters in Context: Theological and Social-Scientific Approaches (W. Campbell, M. Bachmann): a. Kathy Ehrensperger (Lampeter, UK), "All Things Are Lawful but not All Things Are Helpful, All Things Are Lawful but not All Things Build Up" (1 Cor 10.23): Identity Formation in the Space Between'; Respondent: J. Brian Tucker (Guest; Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, USA); b. Michael Bachmann (Siegen, Germany), 'Identität ohne (jüdische) "Boundary Markers": Zu Kennzeichen der Gemeinde beim Paulus'; Respondent: Hans-Ulrich Weidemann (Guest; Siegen, Germany); c. Robert Brawley (Durham, NC, USA), 'Roles for Shaping Identity in Galatians'; Respondent William S. Campbell (Lampeter, UK).

The Business Meeting

At the Business Meeting of the Society, Professor Dr Henk Jan de Jonge (Netherlands) accepted the Society's invitation to become President-Elect (to take office as President at the 2012 General Meeting in Leuven, Belgium), and Professor Christopher M. Tuckett (United Kingdom) was invited to become Deputy-President-Elect (to take office as President at the 2013 General Meeting in Perth, Australia). Professor Beverly Roberts Gaventa (USA), Professor Jean-Claude Loba-Mkola (Kenya), Professor Max Küchler (Switzerland), and Professor Jey Kanagaraj (India) retired from the Committee and Professor John Ekem (Ghana), Adele Reinhartz (Canada), Manabu Tsuji (Japan), and Professor Jos Verheyden (Belgium) were elected to serve in their places for a three-year term.

Professor Bernard C. Lategan (South Africa) was elected to serve for another two years as Assistant Secretary for International Initiatives. He reported on two initiatives: (1) the number of regional liaison committees has increased from two (for Africa and Eastern Europe) to four (for Asia/Pacific and Latin America); (2) the SNTS Electronic Library is now being used by 58 New Testament scholars (20 from Eastern Europe and 38 from Africa). See the Appendix for more information about this initiative.

The Society received the Treasurer's Report and formally accepted the statement of accounts as presented by the Treasurer, Dr Helen Bond.

The Editor of *New Testament Studies*, Professor John M.G. Barclay gave a report on both the journal and the monograph series. Professors C. Gerber, A. Reinhartz, and G. Steyn retired from the Board at the end of 2011. The Editorial Board nominated, and the Society elected, the following members to serve in their place, during the period 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2014: Professors Reimund Bieringer (Leuven), Andreas Dettwiler (Geneva), Ann Jervis

(Toronto), Angela Standhartinger (Marburg), David du Toit (München), Manabu Tsuji (Hiroshima).

The Society received with regret news of the deaths of the following members: Professors Janos Bolyki, Boudewijn Dehandschutter, Douglas Edwards, P.-E. Langevin, Jorge Sánchez Bosch, Alan Segal, Giuseppe Segalla, Margaret Thrall. Members observed a minute's silence in memory of these scholars.

The following New Testament scholars were elected to the Society: Dr Richard Ascough (Associate Professor, Queen's Theological College, Kingston, ON, Canada); Dr A. Andrew Das (Professor of Religious Studies, Elmhurst College, IL, USA); Dr Giuseppe Pio de Virgilio (Associate Professor, Pontificia Università della Santa Croce, Rome, Italy); Dr Simon Gathercole (Senior Lecturer, University of Cambridge, UK); Dr Margareta Gruber (Professor of Biblical and Ecumenical Theology in the German Academic Program of the Theological Faculty of the Pontifical Athenaeum of St. Anselm, Rome, Italy); Dr Dan Gurtner (Associate Professor, Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, MN, USA); Dr Philip Harland (Associate Professor, York University, Toronto, ON, Canada); Dr Albert Hogeterp (Postdoctoral researcher, Tilburg School of Theology, Utrecht, Netherlands); Dr Brigitte Kahl (Professor of New Testament, Union Theological Seminary, New York, USA); Dr Stefan Krauter (Privatdozent für Neues Testament an der Evangelisch-theologischen Fakultät der LMU München, Germany); Dr Christina Kreinecker (Research Scholar, University of Birmingham, UK); Dr Tat-Siong Benny Liew (Professor, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA, USA); Dr Petr Marecek (Docent of Biblical Sciences, Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology St. Cyril and Method, Palacky University in Olomouc, Czech Republic); Dr James McGrath (Professor, Butler University, Indianapolis, IN, USA); Dr Kyoung-Shik Min (Assistant Professor, Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea); Dr Peter Oakes (Senior Lecturer, University of Manchester, UK); Dr Uta Poplutz (Universitätsprofessorin für Katholische Theologie: Biblische Theologie an der Bergischen Universität Wuppertal, Germany); Dr Stefan Schapdick (Privatdozent, Katholisch-Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Bonn, Germany); Dr Karl Matthias Schmidt (Oberassistent am Departement für Biblische Studien der Universität Freiburg, Switzerland); Dr Peter-Ben Smit (Assistant Professor of New Testament, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, The Netherlands); Dr Paul Spilsbury (Professor of New Testament, Ambrose University College, Calgary, AB, Canada); Dr Runar Thorsteinsson (Research Fellow at Copenhagen University, Denmark, and Lund University, Sweden); Dr Markus Tiwald (Professor of Biblische Theologie und ihre Didaktik/Schwerpunkt Neues Testament, Universität Duisburg-Essen, Germany); Dr Tommy Wasserman (Academic Dean of Department of Theology and Assistant Professor of New Testament Exegesis, Örebro Theological Seminary, Sweden; Research Fellow, Lund University, Sweden); Dr Gregor Wurst (Professor of Church History and Patristics, University of Augsburg, Germany).

Social Events

Social events at the conference included a reception held in the Fischer Center, a showing of Richard Strauss's opera, 'Die Liebe der Danae', in the Olin Building Auditorium, and a dinner at Blithewood House. An optional excursion took place on Saturday to the General Theological Seminary in New York City.

Future Meetings

The Society will hold its General Meeting in Leuven (Belgium) in 2012, in Perth (Australia) in 2013, and in Szeged (Hungary) in 2014.

30.11.2011

M. C. de Boer

Appendix

The SNTS Electronic Library

By Bernard C. Lategan

Introduction

Throughout human civilization, ancient and modern, libraries played a pivotal role in the advancement of science, literature and art. Nineveh, Alexandria, Byzantium, Rome, Oxford, Cambridge, Yale and Harvard — to mention just a few — are as famous for their great libraries as for any of their other achievements.

Apart from their function as archives and repositories of knowledge, libraries became living centers of learning, research and innovation. By stimulating a range of intellectual activities, they functioned as hubs around which a community of scholars was formed in the universal quest for new knowledge and under their wings new generations of researchers were nurtured.

The digital revolution of the twentieth century had far-reaching consequences for the traditional role of libraries. It changed forever the flow of information and the nature of human communication. Like all forms of technology, it brought with it both advantages and disadvantages. The Internet increased the speed of data transfer dramatically and made access to information possible on an unprecedented scale. At the same time, established practices to ensure the reliability and quality of information came under pressure. The system of peer review in scholarly publication, the quality control of the print publication process and the selection policies of libraries could all be circumvented by the Internet.

In a wise and forward-looking move traditional publishing houses embraced the possibilities of electronic publishing. They began to combine the advantages

of speed and access with those of quality control measures. The same attitude was displayed by libraries who followed suit and started to expand quite rapidly their traditional collections of manuscripts and printed material with online holdings.

In the process, electronic libraries overcame an important limitation of traditional libraries, namely that of access. Physical libraries require either the physical presence of their users or the physical distribution of printed material. In contrast, electronic libraries were able to increase their scope and reach dramatically. The result is that libraries are able to retain and even enhance their pivotal role in the preservation of existing knowledge and in the generation of new knowledge.

The Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas (the leading international learned society dedicated to the study of the New Testament and related literature) decided five years ago to expand its international footprint. Part of this initiative was the establishment of an electronic library. The main purpose of the library – which has become known as the SNTS EL – was to make full use of the latest technological advances in order to provide promising young scholars, who previously never had adequate access to libraries and the information that they need for their intellectual development, with these resources, and in doing so to support a new generation of scholars and intellectual leaders.

Concept

What is an electronic library (EL)? The term refers to a collection of information sources in digital form – in contrast to collections of written manuscripts or printed material. The term ‘library’ indicates firstly that it is not a random pool of data, but an organized and carefully selected collection of material and secondly, that it is designed to offer the services normally associated with a physical library – that of access to information, support and intellectual stimulation.

An EL can be an independent collection or it can form part of a larger body of information sources in manual, print, audio or visual format. In many cases an EL is the digital extension of an existing physical library. Most contemporary public and university libraries include online sources.

An EL is usually dedicated to a particular discipline or field of study and has the flexibility to be tailor-made to support a specific teaching objective or research project.

Profile of the SNTS Electronic Library

The SNTS EL is one of these specially designed electronic libraries dedicated to support the scholarly study of biblical and related texts. Although the SNTS focuses specifically on the New Testament, the SNTS EL from the start had a

wider scope and includes all material relevant to the study of biblical literature. The aim is to provide resources to promising biblical scholars in areas of the world where regular and easy access to physical libraries is non-existent or severely restricted. The objective is to nurture the next generation of academic leaders and to enable them to develop the discipline further in their respective regions. This cohort includes doctoral and post-doctoral students as well as teaching staff.

The concept was inspired by the success of a pioneering project organized by an international committee of SNTS based in Switzerland. In the wake of 1989 and the urgent need to rebuild intellectual and other resources in Eastern Europe, an initiative was launched to rejuvenate the scholarly study of the Bible and to support and expand biblical libraries at Saint Petersburg and Sofia. Under the inspiring leadership of Prof. Ulrich Luz of the University of Bern, the President of SNTS at that time, the project was extremely successful and inaugurated a new era in biblical scholarship in Eastern Europe. This Swiss-based project became the model that was subsequently used to launch similar initiatives in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The initiative also demonstrated the strategic importance of good libraries in the process of rebuilding the infrastructure needed to support academic development. However, the big difference is that it is very difficult to duplicate this model of physical libraries in other parts of the world on the same scale because of prohibitively high costs, geographical distance and the lack of physical facilities. This is especially true for Africa, but also for Latin America and Asia – and even for areas of Eastern Europe which are not in close proximity to existing libraries.

Reflection on these challenges gave birth to the concept of the SNTS Electronic Library.

The establishment of an Electronic Library offers a practical and cost-effective solution to the needs of developing countries. At a fraction of the cost, it provides access from any point on the globe to sources which are constantly expanded and updated. This initiative is not intended as competition to existing physical libraries, but rather represents their natural extension. As already noted, most established libraries themselves are expanding their electronic collections, as this is clearly a preferred information conduit for the future. At the same time, broadband access is increasing even in the poorest countries and the cost of communication via computers and/or cell phones decreases with every technological advance.

The SNTS EL project was launched in pilot form during 2010 and in the short time of its existence it has already demonstrated that combining the speed and scope of digital communication with the academic discipline and quality control of a library brings remarkable and exiting benefits for the future.

In the sections that follow below, the characteristics of the SNTS EL will be described in more detail.

Scope

In principle, an EL can vary considerably in size – from one document to literally thousands of electronic sources. In the case of the SNTS EL, it was decided to combine forces with an existing library (the library of Stellenbosch University) and to build a dedicated EL in stages while testing the concept and its implementation step by step as the library expands. Linking with an existing university library had several advantages: Users could be given immediate access to existing online sources where the necessary licenses and copyright arrangements were already in place.

In practice this means that SNTS EL users have access to the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (including the whole of the New Testament in electronic format), the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, major dictionaries, encyclopedias and reference works, around 17,000 scholarly journals (of which 65 are dedicated to biblical studies and related fields) and a substantial holding of online books.

The existing collection of electronic sources is just a starting point. The intention is to expand the SNTS EL in a systematic way. The following are the most important priorities:

- Basic texts

Apart from the TLG and TLL, further basic texts need to be added in other biblical languages like Hebrew, Aramaic, Coptic, and Syriac, plus texts like the Septuagint, Midrash, Talmud and related literature.

- Reference works

Dictionaries, encyclopedias, and linguistic tools are increasingly available in electronic form. One example is the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* published by De Gruyter in both a print and an online version.

- Commentaries

For biblical scholars commentaries and commentary series are of special importance as they contain a record both of previous scholarship and of the latest developments in the field.

- Journals

The most developed field in electronic publishing – almost all leading journals are available in an online version. An essential resource for serious researchers, these journals reflect the latest developments in the field and provide exposure to new ideas and the most recent research results. With their book reviews and additional information about their specific fields they are important sources of information. The present collection of online journals in the SNTS EL provides a good foundation but needs to be expanded as a first priority. Usually online subscriptions are available to academic libraries at a slightly higher rate.

- Monographs

In contrast to journals, this is still a problematic area. The Google Book project with the aim to make all existing books available in electronic form has met with fierce opposition from the publishing industry. The matter is still unresolved. There are several hundred monographs available in the existing SNTS EL. Any expansion will require close cooperation with publishers, as will be discussed further in the section on partnerships.

- Specialized electronic collections

There is a large spectrum of other collections housed by universities, teaching and research institutions, public and private enterprises and private individuals that might be of interest to scholars working in the field of biblical studies. These can be linked to the SNTS EL, provided that the necessary permission is obtained and provided that the technical assistance is available to the EL.

The further growth of the SNTS EL depends largely on two factors: organization and resources. As far as the first is concerned, a dedicated website is essential. At the moment Stellenbosch University graciously hosts the EL and this cooperation no doubt will continue in future. However, the EL needs to establish its own identity and one obvious way to do this is the creation of a separate website as the first port of call for the EL. The website can then be linked to various other sites: Firstly to the Stellenbosch library which provides access to its own electronic sources and secondly to any other site that contains electronic information of value to biblical scholars. As indicated above, there is a vast number of potential links with other collections housed by universities, public and private institutions, private individuals and other organizations which – with the necessary negotiations and permission – could be very profitably linked to the EL.

The EL will secondly need the necessary resources to enable this expansion. Both the design and the management of a dedicated website will require professional expertise of at least two kinds:

- Expert knowledge of the field of biblical studies and related disciplines. This knowledge is needed to design an intelligent classification of the electronic sources and to add any new material to the correct category/sub-link.
- IT expertise. This is needed to set up the website according to the guidelines given by the biblical expert referred to above and to ensure the smooth operation of the whole operation.

The funding required for the development and proper management of the EL will be discussed in more detail in the section on Costs.

Legality

The field of digital communication is highly competitive with huge financial interests at stake. The issue of intellectual property (relating to images, music, texts and the like) is one of the most contested areas of our time. As print media (the traditional producers of scholarly material) negotiate this minefield and while new developments constantly threaten vested interests, it is imperative that the SNTS EL protects the legality of its concept and its practices. The choice to link with an existing university library (where the requirements for copyright and intellectual property are strictly observed) was the obvious choice. The SNTS EL sees existing publishing houses as important allies in the promotion of the scholarly study of biblical texts.

Without becoming embroiled in the controversy surrounding intellectual property rights, the SNTS EL has adopted a policy of respecting these rights and of ensuring the legality of its actions at all times. At the same time, it is convinced of the benefits of electronic communication and tries to negotiate constructive ways to gain the maximum from electronic innovation while respecting existing rights. It has therefore adopted a policy of cooperating with publishing houses (who themselves are increasing their online publications), with the argument that the SNTS EL is supporting young scholars who would be the natural authors and users of the texts produced by these publishing houses. Discussions have already been initiated and we look forward to constructive cooperation in the future.

Partnerships

From what has been said so far, it is clear that the SNTS EL can only succeed as a cooperative venture. It will need the support of major stakeholders in the fields of scholarly research, of the promotion of science, art and literature, of academic publishing, of other learned societies, of technological innovation and of the empowerment of previously disadvantaged individuals and communities. The management of the SNTS EL has therefore decided on a strategy of maximum synergy and of ongoing cooperation with these stakeholders. We have already canvassed the support of the members of SNTS, of some publishers, of a number of universities and of several learned societies and of a group of dedicated individuals. But clearly much more needs to be done and in the coming year discussions with interested parties will intensify.

Access

Who should have access to the SNTS EL? In the first place, all bona fide post-graduate scholars in the field of biblical studies who do not have easy and regular

access to existing library facilities. In line with the main objective of the EL the challenge is to ensure ease of access while at the same time safeguarding the academic integrity of the process. The subscription of libraries (in this case the library of Stellenbosch University) to online journals and books is subject to strict regulations in line with copyright restrictions and commercial rights. The most important of these are that access to online publications may only be granted to bona fide students and scholars, that no multiple copies are made of the material and that no further sale of the material takes place.

From the side of Stellenbosch University it is therefore imperative that the bona fide status of users of the EL should be guaranteed by SNTS according to an agreed procedure following a transparent process. For this purpose, the University has agreed to accept members of the Stellenbosch University New Testament Research Association (SUNTRA) as bona fide users of the EL and to grant them access to the resources of the University library. The process of selection and appointment is described in the next section.

Process

The identification and approval of users of the EL go through various stages. The different regional liaison committees of SNTS (Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America) nominate candidates from their respective regions to the SNTS Assistant Secretary for International Initiatives for consideration. Approved names are forwarded to SUNTRA, who recommends them to Stellenbosch University for formal appointment as Research Associates. Such an appointment gives access to electronic sources and other library facilities and also provides Associates with a publication address if required. This procedure complies with copyright requirements and ensures the academic integrity of the process.

The University fully supports the initiative. The first cohort of researchers was appointed in December 2010 and currently 60 scholars are using the EL with more appointments to follow in due course.

Management

The development of the SNTS EL and the processes of access and appointment are managed by a SNTS sub-committee chaired by the Assistant Secretary for International Initiatives. As soon as the necessary funding is available, a project director will be appointed for the day-to-day running of the EL.

Costs

At the moment, the cost of the SNTS EL is minimal. The University covered the costs of setting up a portal and there is a basic Internet fee of € 20 per Research Associate per year.

However, this only pertains to the pilot phase of the project. The full development of the EL will require an annual budget of € 40 000 per year over 5 years. This will provide for the website design, IT programming, hosting costs, webmaster services, travel and Internet costs.

Benefits

The benefits of a vibrant and growing EL are much more than mere access to information. Libraries have always been centers of learning and of intellectual stimulation. They became the home base for communities of scholars and informed individuals committed to the continuing search for knowledge and innovation. They serve as archives of history and as the keepers of the wisdom of the past, but also as the fountainheads of inspiration and new discoveries.

There is no reason why electronic libraries cannot fulfill the same function. In fact, they have additional benefits to offer. In addition to their classic roles they also provide access to linked networks, membership of a scholarly community, mentorship and guidance and additional publishing opportunities. Electronic libraries provide these benefits without the impediment of distance and the human and financial cost required to overcome this impediment. As other forms of virtual networking have demonstrated, young scholars from the outskirts of Minsk, from the shores of Lake Malawi, from densely populated Seoul and from a remote monastery in Argentina can instantly and without barriers form a supportive community who share similar interests and seek answers to the same questions.

The SNTS EL is already planning to expand its services by creating opportunities for members to discuss their work among themselves, to post the results of their research for comment and advice, to find suitable supervisors and mentors for their academic development and to create new publishing opportunities for members *inter alia* by the establishment of an online journal.

Future possibilities

The SNTS EL is still in the early stages of its development. It has nonetheless already demonstrated that the idea of an EL is viable, practical and sustainable. It is also a future-oriented initiative in the sense that it is based on concepts and technology that are constantly evolving and which no doubt will change the way we communicate, learn and discover. Access to electronic communication is expanding exponentially in the most underdeveloped parts of the world and the quality of this communication is improving by leaps and

bounds¹. The potential impact on empowerment and development can hardly be overestimated.

The concept of the SNTS EL is of course applicable to all fields of knowledge and research. Nothing prevents similar ventures to be launched in other disciplines and other areas of learning and knowledge production. The potential impact of such an expansion will be even more significant.

¹ According to Total Telecom, the number of mobile phones users in Africa already surpassed the number of users in North America (USA and Canada) in 2009 (300 and 277 million users respectively). Cf. www.intomobile/2008/05/06/africa.