

RATIOCINATIONS OF A NEW EDITOR

At a time of editorial transition, it would seem that friends of this journal have a right to know something of the goals and perspectives of a new editor and some indications of the direction intended for the journal in the near future.

First, however, I need to acknowledge a debt that can only be repaid by consistent editorial excellence, but which can at least be recognized here. I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Nancy Vyhmeister, who six years ago invited me to join the editorial staff and then very intentionally involved me in the various aspects of editing *AUSS*, from manuscript evaluation and correspondence with writers and reviewers, to budget preparation, policy discussions, and more. She has been not only an inspiring colleague, but a genuine friend, and I appreciate her willingness to have a continuing connection with the journal as one of the consulting editors.

A few words about the current editorial staff may also be of interest to readers. Roy E. Gane, associate editor and book review editor, holds a Ph.D. in Biblical Hebrew Language and Literature from the University of California, Berkeley, where he wrote his dissertation under Jacob Milgrom. He has also studied at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and participated in archaeological digs in Iraq and Jordan. Thus he stands squarely in the Siegfried Horn-Leona Running-Gerhard Hasel tradition of Hebrew- and Semitic-language scholarship at Andrews, and we feel privileged to have him as associate editor.

Karen Abrahamson, editorial assistant and office manager, is a Ph.D. student in systematic theology, preparing for a dissertation in philosophical hermeneutics. Her background includes business administration and pastoral work. In addition to contract teaching several courses in the undergraduate religion department, she is also a sought-after multi-instrument musician. She has been with *AUSS* since the fall of 1998.

Moise Isaac, book review manager since July, is completing an M.A. in OT studies. He has studied at UCLA and is an avid reader of scholarly literature. His gentle spirit and soft-spoken manner belie deeply held convictions that bring thoughtful wisdom to our editorial staff meetings.

Ross Winkle, circulation manager and also new to our staff, is a Ph.D. student in NT studies. The efficiency, accuracy, and people-care he brings to his work are crucial components of our service to subscribers, and his creative

possibility thinking makes a valued contribution to our editorial staff.

Since my own field is church history with a cognate in systematic theology (Ph.D., Andrews University, 1993), I greatly appreciate the academic diversity of this team, and the insights that all the staff bring from their own areas of speciality.

Another staff member who devotes many hours to every issue of *AUSS*, but seldom receives the limelight, is the legendary Dr. Leona Running, Emerita Professor of Biblical Languages. She earned her Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in William Foxwell Albright's former department in 1964, one year after the inaugural issue of *AUSS*. She was editorial assistant to the founding editor, Siegfried H. Horn, served 23 years as an associate editor (1971-1994), and despite her retirement continues as chief copy editor. This issue marks her 38th year on the editorial staff of *AUSS*.

The list of those on whom we depend in producing this journal also includes John Baldwin, Robert Johnston, George Knight, Jon Paulien, and Randy Younker, consulting editors; Madeline Johnston, associate copy editor; Gregg Patterson and the staff at Patterson Printing; and many more.

Subscribers are not listed on the masthead, but every one makes a contribution to the journal, and we are determined to serve them with excellence. Authors and reviewers are the lifeblood of the journal, without which editors would have nothing to edit. We will make every effort to be prompt in correspondence and in coordinating the peer review process.

Regarding editorial policy, we do not desire change for its own sake. To maintain the standards established by our esteemed editorial predecessors—Horn, Strand, Knight, and Vyhmeister—is challenge enough. Nevertheless, we cannot be content with what they did in 1963 or '73 or '93. So there will be gradual and incremental changes that we hope will be generally recognized as improvements. One that readers have already seen was introduced in the last issue with Roy Gane's "Call for Short Articles." Several have responded already, giving promise that this option will encourage more readers to engage in spirited scholarly dialogue with published articles, or initiate topics of their own choosing within the scope of a short article. Readers will also notice an increase in the number of articles per issue. A minor addition is the provision of page numbers in the table of contents for book reviews.

Plans for the near future include surveying present and former subscribers regarding two major issues—your preferences regarding *AUSS* content, particularly the relative number of pages devoted to articles and book reviews, and your experience of customer service. We have had some severe problems with the computer software that keeps our

subscriber records, and some of you have suffered lapses in service as a result. If you have not been served with excellence, we want to know. We are determined to earn your loyalty by remedying these problems in a way that will be completely satisfactory to every subscriber.

We are also in the process of updating our web site. The new web site (www.andrews.edu/~auss) will include our history and mission statements, links to related web sites, contributors' guidelines, and subscription information, including the option of subscribing online. Karen Abrahamson is preparing a comprehensive index to the back issues, and eventually there will be an archive of selected back issues.

For those of you attending the annual convention of the American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature in Nashville in November, we plan to have the entire editorial staff there to meet authors, reviewers, subscribers, and publishers. We look forward to getting acquainted with you. If we do not see you there, we would still like to hear from you, telling us what you like or dislike about the journal, and suggestions for improving it. Our most convenient means of communication is email, but whatever medium you prefer is welcome. See the inside front cover for addresses.

Reflection on this journal's distinguished past evokes no small sense of responsibility regarding the future. We, your editorial staff, look forward to a stimulating and mutually rewarding partnership with you, our writers and readers, as together we seek to maintain the standard of quality that the scholarly world has a right to expect from *AUSS*. JM

CORRECTION

Albert A. C. Waite, who authored "From Seventh-day Adventism to David Koresh: The British Connection" (*AUSS* 38 [Spring 2000]: 107-126), was identified as writing from Newbold College, England. Dr. Waite is a former principal lecturer of Newbold College. At the time of the article's publication, however, he had already left employment at Newbold College.