

THE SOCIETY FOR OLD TESTAMENT STUDY

Minutes of the Business Meeting held on 19th July 2017 at King's College, London under the presidency of Prof Paul Joyce

1. Welcome and Apologies

The President welcomed members to the Business Meeting of the Society and invited new members attending the meeting for the first time to stand and introduce themselves. The Secretary noted that apologies had been received from the following: David Baker, Ron Clements, Eryl Davies, Nathan Eddy, Anthony Gelston, Anselm Hagedorn, William Kelly, Eun Woo Lee, Deborah Rooke, John Sawyer, Chris Thomson, Rebecca Watson, Nicolas Wyatt and Karen Yuan.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the previous Business Meeting, which had been displayed and posted online, were approved by the meeting and signed by the President. Under the head of Matters Arising, the President updated the Business Meeting regarding the movement to the 'ac.uk' web domain and recommended that we proceed to resume use of this domain for pragmatic reasons relating to recognition of the Society within academic circles in the UK, where most of the Society's members are based. This was agreed by the meeting.

The President also reported that the service organized by Margaret Barker to give thanks for the SOTS centenary was held as planned on Monday and expressed his regret that it had not been more clearly communicated in advance. He noted that the Society has worked hard at ensuring that all feel included and would hope that members continue these efforts.

3. Notification of Any Other Business

Prof Joachim Schaper asked if he might make an announcement regarding the IOSOT Congress.

4. Reports from Officers

(a) The President, Prof Paul Joyce reported as follows:

It was a privilege and a pleasure to preside over the Society's Winter meeting in Nottingham in January, at the beginning of the Society's centennial year, and I was touched by the warmth with which I was welcomed into the Presidency. No less than in 1917 we live in a time of troubles and anxiety, but in this context our work of responsible and critical work on our great texts is all the more important. Being President makes one appreciate more than ever the debt of the Society to its Officers for all the work which goes on, often behind the scenes, to maintain our activities. We are indeed fortunate to have such capable people willing to devote time and effort for the Society's, and our subject's, well-being. Among

these I wish to acknowledge not least the key roles played by David Shepherd and James Patrick.

(b) The Treasurer, Dr Alastair Hunter reported on the financial affairs of the Society as follows:

BANK & INVESTMENT ACCOUNT BALANCES (as at 19/7/2017)

Barclays Current A/C	£21,975.62
Barclays IAS (Business Premium) A/C	£95,169.50
TOTAL	£117,145.12

The final figure includes income of about £19,400 in respect of the Summer Meeting against which will be set the balance owed to Kings College. Payments for work on the Wiki project continue. A major investment in the Jerusalem Project has now been agreed – though so far only minor expenses have been met – and we made a significant contribution to the performance of the Brecht David Fragments.

Total income to the Bursary Fund is £1912 to date. Gift aid will add around £750, giving an anticipated total of £2662. The budget anticipated £3000 – the shortfall is largely accounted for by the various defaulters; a proportion of that will be recovered by the end of the financial year; however in view of the likelihood of a shortfall for the second year running, I have adjusted the budget figure accordingly. It should be noted that £1342 of the bursary fund comes from the continued voluntary payments made by life members, for which the Society is most grateful.

BUDGET FOR 2017-18

A copy of the proposed budget for 2017-18 was posted on the notice board, together with comparative figures from previous years.

The meeting approved the budget.

Dr Jonathan Stökl asked whether the financial report/budget might be posted to the website in advance of the Business Meeting so that folks could peruse these in advance. Dr Alastair Hunter noted that this could be facilitated if he could be nudged at the appropriate time.

c) The Secretary, Dr David Shepherd reported as follows:

Like the President, I continue to appreciate the support and cooperation of the officers and other committee members in maintaining the work of the Society. It is my unhappy duty as Secretary to note the passing of a few members of the Society since our last meeting: Helen Kraus, Ed Conrad and David Wulstan, to whose families I have offered condolences on behalf of the Society. I do also however have the pleasure of congratulating, again on behalf of the Society, Dr Carly Crouch, who is this year's recipient of SBL's David Noel Freedman

Award for Excellence and Creativity in Hebrew Bible Scholarship, the second of our members to have received this award since it was established in 2011. Carly has also been awarded the S.A. Cook Research Bye-Fellowship at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. The Society also wishes to congratulate Dr Jessica Keady on her appointment to a post-doctoral post at the University of Helsinki, Dr Penny Barter on her appointment as assistant professor at Tilburg University, Dr Andrew Mein on his appointment at Durham University and Dr Anja Klein on her promotion to Senior Lecturer in Hebrew Bible/Old Testament at the University of Edinburgh. Finally, on behalf of the Society, I wish to congratulate Professor Charlotte Hempel on the successful completion of her presidency of the British Association of Jewish Studies this past year and last but by no means least we congratulate Professor Joachim Schaper for his election as President of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament.

Carly Crouch noted that Laura Quick had been appointed at Princeton University.

The Secretary invited the Business Meeting to join him in offering congratulations to these members.

(d) The Secretary for Honorary Members, Prof Lester Grabbe reported as follows:

Our Honorary Member Bernhard Lang attended the summer meeting and was a member of the panel on the “Jordanian Lead Books”. Other Honorary Members have reported the following information:

Sara Japhet has just published, with Barry Dov Walfish, a commentary by a late twelfth-century anonymous northern French exegete, which interprets the Song of Songs solely according to its plain meaning as a story of two young lovers and their developing relationship: *The Way of Lovers: The Oxford Anonymous Commentary on the Song of Songs (Bodleian Library, MS Opp. 625): An Edition of the Hebrew Text, with English Translation and Introduction* (Commentaria 8; Leiden: Brill, June 2017).

Johannes de Moor regrets that he was unable to attend the Centennial Meeting of SOTS himself this summer because of a commitment in Germany, but he is preparing a commentary on the book of Micah for the Historical Commentary on the Old Testament, published by Peeters. For those interested in his bibliography it is available at

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314095639_Bibliography_JC_de_Moor.

Reinhard Kratz also regrets that he was unable to attend the summer meeting because there was a workshop in Göttingen for a volume in the SAPERE project of the Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen (Scripta Antiquitatis Posterioris ad Ethicam Religionemque pertinentia, Writings in Late Antiquity on Ethical and Religious Issues, published by Mohr Siebeck) on MMT, for which he is the editor.

Michael Fox is currently President of the Society of Biblical Literature. On behalf of SBL, he sent their greetings and congratulations to SOTS on its centenary celebrations. Also sending their greetings and best wishes (in addition to Sara Japhet, Johannes de Moor, and Reinhard Kratz) were Walter Brueggemann and Bertil Albrektson. Professor Albrektson has particularly expressed his regret that he was not able to be present for the centennial celebrations, since he is only 12 years younger than SOTS!

Please note that the Committee is currently inviting nominations for further Honorary Members. The following guidelines should be followed:

1. Please write to the Secretary for Honorary Members (email is fine: L.L.Grabbe@hull.ac.uk) with a formal proposal.
2. The primary criterion for membership is a reputation for international scholarship. You will need to make a good case for this, since the Committee will be considering the nominations, including others alongside your particular nomination. Please do not assume that the person's scholarly status is self-evident. All members of the Committee might not be as cognizant of the nominee's scholarly merits as you are.
3. Please keep in mind two further points that have been mentioned at various Business Meetings:
 - a. Nominees should normally be mature scholars who are not retired or about to retire.
 - b. We are looking for nominees who are not only honoured by the Society but will reciprocate that honour by enhancing the image of the Society and by taking part in its activities from time to time.

The Committee will consider the nominations and then recommend to the Business Meeting the names of two or one or perhaps none of the nominees (the Constitution limits the number of Honorary Members to 20, of which there are currently 18).

(e) The Membership Secretary, Dr Janet Tollington, reported as follows:

The total membership now stands at 518, which is a reduction of 11 since December 2016.

Although we welcomed 13 new **Ordinary members** in January (8M/5F) there have been 3 **deaths** (2M/1F) and a total of 21 have been removed from the roll due to **resignation** (7) or failure to pay the subscriptions due to the Society (10M/4F). This year a more rigorous approach has been adopted with regard to those who do not pay correct subscriptions, so this explains the increase in the number of removals.

Male/female ratio: 363M/155F, being 70.08% M and 29.93% F. The % of women is marginally up again.

Members by country of residence: These figures are expressed in two forms, the 2017 version, and the "1917-style version", i.e. the latter includes the 15 current members in the

Republic of Ireland in the UK total. In future I will only report the figures for UK and Ireland combined (i.e. akin to the '1917' data) as a % of total membership and although I will record the more detailed breakdown in the database I will not announce all the figures.

2017 version: UK: 338 (65.25%) Europe: 69 (13.3%) N America: 66 (12.7%) Rest of world: 45 (8.7%)	1917-style version: UK: 353 (68.1%) Europe: 54 (10.4%) N America: 66 (12.7%) Rest of world: 45 (8.7%)
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These figures only give an indication of where our members are based as some have a SOTS address in one country whilst actually working in another; and some may already have moved to posts elsewhere and not yet notified their change of address. Members who join while graduate students in the UK often move at the end of their studies, some to their home countries, some to posts in other parts of the world. This data only provides a snapshot of a very fluid reality, based on current records.

Membership by type:

Ordinary members: 341

Life members: 159

Honorary members: 18

Book list mailing: 462 were sent out in the June mailing but Ordinary members should note that anyone whose subscription has not been paid at the correct, updated, annual amount will not be receiving the 2017 Book List until arrears have been paid to the Treasurer. Such people will be included in the second Book List mailing towards the end of 2017.

(f) The Hospitality Secretary, Dr James Patrick, reported as follows:

There were between 155-160 in attendance at the centennial meeting which I think is a record in the time that I have been in post. Given that it was held across three campuses of KCL and included an outing to the National Gallery, I am especially thankful for everyone's understanding and cooperation. We are grateful to Paul and the department at King's College for enabling the Society to hold a reasonably priced meeting in central London. I welcome comments and feedback (negative and positive) on any aspect of this Summer's meeting and I am pleased to say that in response to the feedback that Cripps Hall in Nottingham was less than ideal as a venue for our most recent January meeting, we will be moving to the Jubilee campus for this coming January, which should offer a significant upgrade on Cripps Hall. I also hope that for future meetings, it will be possible to book and pay online thanks to the efforts of the Information Officer. Future meeting planning is ongoing and more will be said about this in due course. If anyone has any suggestions as to who might succeed me as

Hospitality Secretary in due course, please do let me know. Special thanks to Paul Joyce, David Shepherd, Alastair Hunter and Jonathan Stökl with whom I work most closely.

Alec Gilmore asked whether there would be parking facilities at the Jubilee campus where we will meet in January. James Patrick clarified that there would be parking available.

Alastair Hunter asked whether it would be possible for future meetings to avoid starting on the 2nd of January. James Patrick noted that we are meeting Tuesdays to avoid bank holidays, but also that we would consider avoiding the 2nd when possible.

(g) The Book List Editor, Dr John Jarick, reported as follows:

The 2017 issue of the *SOTS Book List*, my first edition as Editor, has recently been printed and distributed. It contains 336 reviews across the usual breadth of our field, distilled from the labours of 119 members of the Society. I trust that all is in order within the volume, and also that the distribution of the volume has gone flawlessly. Since an entirely new team is in charge of matters this year, with not only myself newly in this role but also with a new Membership Secretary in the person of Janet Tollington, the two of us hope that a smooth transition has been achieved in the various aspects associated with the production and distribution of the *Book List*, but do let us know if anything has gone awry and we will do our best to finesse our operations.

Action is already underway for the next edition, with the first batch of 141 books having been sent out to reviewers as a result of the Spring 2017 invitation, and 60 books having been available for potential reviewers at this Summer Meeting 2017. There will be further opportunities in the Autumn 2017 invitation and at the Winter Meeting 2018, before the ledger is closed on the 2018 edition. My thanks to all the members who have already committed to reviewing items for that edition, and also to those members who offer to review books that they themselves obtain from more obscure publishers and which otherwise might not come to the notice of the *Book List*. I am also pleased to record my appreciation of the excellent work done over the past year by the graduate-student Assistant to the Editor, Holly Thompson, who has now reached the last phase of her doctoral studies at Oxford and so is being succeeded as of this Summer Meeting by another Oxford doctoral candidate, Jelle Verburg, to whose tenure in office as the new Assistant to the Editor we now look forward.

In my capacity as Convener of the Publications Sub-Committee I have four items to report, the first being that, during this Centenary year of the Society (i.e., until 31st December 2017), the publisher of our commemorative volume, *SOTS at 100: Centennial Essays of the Society for Old Testament Study*, namely Bloomsbury T&T Clark, is offering to members of the Society a 40% discount on the volume. Members received information about this in one of the regular e-mail circulars from the Membership Secretary earlier this year, and information concerning the offer is available on the members section of the Society's website, but you

may wish to be reminded that the discount can be claimed simply by entering the discount code SOTS100 at the checkout on the Bloomsbury website, before the cut-off date.

The second item for report at this time is that the papers from the SOTS/OTW Joint Meeting of 2015 have now been published, under the title *Torah and Tradition: Papers Read at the Sixteenth Joint Meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study and the Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap, Edinburgh, 2015*, edited by Klaas Spronk and Hans Barstad (OTS, 70; Leiden: Brill, 2017). The volume comprises thirteen papers, six of them by members of SOTS and seven by members of OTW. The OTS series was also the subject of a circular from the Membership Secretary earlier this year, in which the SOTS representative on the OTS Editorial Board, Hugh Williamson, encouraged members of the Society to be in contact with him about potentially publishing in the series, and I understand that a number of members have indeed entered into discussions with him.

The third publications item regards the SOTS Monographs series. It is very pleasing that the first volume in the new series, Katherine Southwood's *Marriage by Capture in the Book of Judges*, which we welcomed in pre-publication form at the Winter Meeting, is now in print. I understand that Series Editor Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer employed various social media to increase awareness of the release of that volume, and that she is now working with a number of other authors on the development of further manuscripts to appear in the series in due course. All members of SOTS are of course encouraged also to consider the SOTS Monographs series as a potential venue for their publications.

And finally, I am pleased to report the publication of the latest volume in our series of Study Guides to the Old Testament, under the series editorship of Adrian Curtis. This new volume, written by Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, is the guide to Ezra–Nehemiah, subtitled 'Israel's Quest for Identity'.

(h) The Information Officer, Dr Jonathan Stökl, reported as follows:

The website has continued to develop—mostly 'under the hood', and it will continue to do so. As in previous reporting periods, I have put up material on the website for the meeting, including confidential material only for members on the password protected part of the website. The website is attracting considerable amounts of attention: In 2017 we have had, on average, 36 hits each day, which translates to 5800 hits in the year to date (11 June). The busiest month this year was January with almost 1900 hits, presumably because of the winter meeting. The other two projects which the information officer is involved with are the SOTS wiki and the online exhibition on Jerusalem. Both of these are going well and will provide separate reports.

(i) The Archivist, Professor Eryl Davies reported via the President that he had nothing to report at the present time.

5. Centennial Celebrations

SOTS Wiki – Dr Walter Houston reported as follows:

With the public launch of the Wiki in July 2017 in view, the Wiki team agreed at the Winter Meeting on a number of measures that needed to be taken in advance of it. (As editor, I am not dealing here with the acts of publicity in which the launch itself will consist.) These included: first and foremost the provision of pages on the Hebrew Bible books that still remained without them (Ezekiel and Malachi); the provision of links to Wikipedia wherever a name or term was deemed in need of explanation not so far provided within the SOTS Wiki, on the understanding that the Wikipedia article was of a sufficient standard; a revision of the home page, which had remained as it had been in the first experimental stage of the Wiki (including a photograph of a MS in Judaeo-Greek!); an attempt to provide links to the Wiki in relevant articles in Wikipedia; and an article on SOTS itself in Wikipedia, which did not contain one. I deal with these measures in reverse order. We are grateful to John Jarick for providing the article on SOTS in Wikipedia, which includes a link to the Wiki. However, it proved unacceptable to the Wikipedia editorial team to include links to our articles in the SOTS Wiki, unless they provided more and better information than in the relevant article in Wikipedia, and *at the moment* we are unable to guarantee that in most cases. It needs to be emphasized that the Wiki is an ongoing project. Jim Aitken has revised the home page. Hedy Hung has provided links to Wikipedia wherever necessary. Making sure that the Wiki could offer an introduction to every book of the Hebrew Bible at the very least has been my main concern. Members of the Society were asked and agreed to write the articles on Ezekiel and Malachi, three to three and a half years ago. As they had not done so, I requested them to tell me when they were able to do it, and got no reply. The upshot is that I have had to do it myself. The page on Malachi has been up for two or three weeks at the time of writing, and that on Ezekiel will be in the next week or so. The launch on 17 July marks a significant turning-point in the development of the Wiki, but not a conclusion. Many articles are still rather bare and minimal; some have to be characterized as mere stubs, to use Wikipedia's terminology; and others which have a place prepared for them do not yet exist. I once more encourage all members of the Society to browse the Wiki and make improvements wherever they can see improvements are needed. This is not just the Society's project. It is every member's project. We are planning to provide occasions in SOTS meetings when this may be done co-operatively and en masse. Once more I wish to thank the other members of the SOTS team. Some have been mentioned above, but Jonathan Stökl, as our lead technical adviser and trouble-shooter, also deserves particular mention. I expect to present one more report, at the Winter Meeting of 2018, as I step down from this office, and will say more then.

Jerusalem Exhibition – Dr Carly Crouch displayed the website where the virtual exhibition may be found (<http://jerusalem.nottingham.ac.uk>) and reported as follows:

The Jerusalem exhibition is now live and ready to be used. We are grateful for the assistance of Jessica Keady, Penny Barter, Cat Quine, Josef Briffa, Holly Morse and Natasha O'Hear during the last push to get the website up and running, and hope that the Membership will help to publicise the site.

6. Proposed changes to the Rules of the Society

The meeting agreed the following changes to the Rules of the Society, which had been announced and distributed prior to the meeting:

5. Membership of the Society shall be open to suitably qualified persons. Knowledge of Hebrew shall normally be such a qualification.

Proposed: Replace with: Membership of the Society shall be open to suitably qualified persons, who will normally be expected to have knowledge of Biblical Hebrew.

9. The Membership of anyone whose subscription is more than three years in arrears shall be deemed to have lapsed. No reapplication to join is needed.

Proposed: "The Membership of anyone whose subscription is in arrears at the end of the calendar year shall be deemed to have lapsed. However, membership will automatically be restored when any missing subscriptions are made good."

18. The Committee shall consist of the Officers, the ex-President and the President-elect, together with a number of ordinary Members not less than eight and no more than ten. Any ordinary Committee Member is elected for four years and, if appointed as an Officer or President, may not normally serve more than eight years in total.

Proposed: Delete the second sentence, and add after "ten," "amongst whom shall be an Information Officer and an Archivist"

19. In each year the two senior Members retiring from the Committee shall not be eligible for re-election until the expiry of one year.

Proposed: Replace all with:

19.1 An ordinary Committee Member, having served four years continuously, shall not be eligible for re-election to that position before the expiry of one year.

19.2 Notwithstanding 19.1, any ordinary Committee Member may be elected to an Officer position at any time, subject only to 19.3.

19.3 No-one, having served continuously in any capacity for twelve years, shall be eligible for election to any position (save that of President) before the expiry of one year.

7. Nominations

The following were proposed and elected: Prof Sue Gillingham as President for 2019, Dr Holly Morse, Dr Chris Meredith, Dr Alison Gray and Dr Siobhán Dowling-Long as Ordinary Members of the committee and Prof George Brooke as a member of the Publications sub-committee.

8. Proposals for New Members

The following were proposed and elected into membership: Dr Rachelle Gilmour, Mrs Sarah Holt, Prof Brian Irwin, Ms Marian Kelsey, Dr Ekaterina Kozlova, Dr Ivan Milanov and Mr Ka Yu Wong.

9. AOB

Prof Joachim Schaper encouraged SOTS members to attend the 23rd Congress of IOSOT in Aberdeen in 2019, which will run from the 4th to the 9th of August. He assured members that there would be a fine outing and that he would be making every effort to put together an attractive programme.

10. Future Meetings

The Winter Meeting will be held from the 2nd to the 4th January 2018, at the Jubilee Campus, University of Nottingham and the Summer Meeting from the 16th to the 19th July 2018 at St John's College, Durham.

There being no further business, the President declared the Business Meeting closed.

Signed: Date: