

THE SOCIETY FOR OLD TESTAMENT STUDY

Minutes of the Business Meeting held on 4th Jan 2018

at Jubilee Campus, University of Nottingham

under the presidency of Prof Walter Moberly

1. Welcome and Apologies

The President invited new members attending for the first time to introduce themselves and welcomed them and the rest of the membership to the Business Meeting of the Society. The Secretary noted that apologies had been received from the following: Jim Aitken, Graeme Auld, Margaret Barker, Penelope Barter, George Brooke, Seth Cole, Carly Crouch, Juan Cruz, Eryl Davies, Kristin De Troyer, Siobhán Dowling-Long, Cheryl Exum, Olga Fabrikantova, Nathan French, Janet Fyffe, Anthony Gelston, Sue Gillingham, Alec Gilmore, Anselm Hagedorn, Robert Hayward, Jo-Ping (Grace) Hsiao, Hedy Hung, Ann Jeffers, Jessica Keady, Anja Klein, Andy Lie, Alan Millard, Mary Mills, Eva Pinthus, Deborah Rooke, Joachim Schaper, Jonathan Stökl, Casey Strine, Chris Thomson, Jim West, Jenni Williams, 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 Prof Walter Moberly. There were no matters arising which did not appear on the agenda.

3. Notification of Any Other Business

There was no notification of any other business.

4. Reports from Officers

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

It was a privilege and a pleasure to serve as President during the Society's centennial year, and it is pleasing that the year saw the publication of the centennial volume *SOTS at 100*, edited by John Jarick, the launch of the virtual museum exhibition *Jerusalem: Fall of a City, Rise of a Vision*, overseen by Carly Crouch and Jonathan Stökl, and the inauguration of the SOTS Wiki, coordinated by Walter Houston. We are most grateful to these colleagues who invested a great deal of time and energy in these successful markers of our Centenary. A well-attended Summer Meeting took place in London in July. We are grateful to those who sponsored receptions and also for the collaboration afforded by the National Gallery and by those who worked with our Secretary David Shepherd to put on the theatrical production of Bertolt Brecht's *David* fragments. In December I represented the Society at a meeting of TRS-UK, the body formerly known as AUDTRS (the Association of University Departments of Theology and Religious Studies), which has expanded its membership to include learned societies as well as Departments. We have been invited to nominate a member of the Committee of TRS-UK, and our Committee has taken steps to identify suitable candidates. Finally, being President makes one appreciate more than ever the debt of the Society to its Officers for all the work that goes on throughout the year, mostly behind the scenes, to maintain our activities. We are fortunate

indeed to have such capable people willing to devote such 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, Alastair Hunter and James Patrick.

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

BANK & INVESTMENT ACCOUNT BALANCES at 1st January 2018

		(Jan 2017)
Barclays Current A/C	£ 16,715	£ 18,579
Barclays IAS (Business Premium) A/C	£ 81,183	£102,169
TOTAL	£ 97,898	£120,748

The final figure includes as usual income in respect of the Winter Meeting which will be paid out in due course. The significant decrease in the Premium account results from having paid out from the Porter Legacy in respect of Centenary projects – specifically, the Brecht production at the summer meeting, and the virtual Jerusalem website.

1. Administrative support for the wiki project during 2017 was £3600
2. The costs associated with the Brecht production totalling £9508
3. Payments in respect of the Jerusalem project totalling £9555

AUDITED ACCOUNTS

The audited accounts have been available for scrutiny on the notice board. The auditors did not identify any significant issues.

SUMMARY OF MEETINGS 2017

In consultation with the Hospitality Secretary I have prepared a summary of the finances relating to our meetings in Nottingham in January 2017 and in King's College London in July 2017. These have been available for scrutiny on the notice board. The overall surplus of £1772 is in part due to the exceptional number of bursaries and subsidies awarded for the Summer Meeting, but also shows that the hospitality secretary continues to manage these complex events with great skill.

THANKS

My thanks as usual to David Shepherd, James Patrick, and Janet Tollington.

The accounts were accepted by the meeting and continued use of the current auditors was approved.

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

Since our last meeting, our Society has lost four members of which I am aware: Ernest Revell, Ora Lipschitz, Richard Coggins, President of the Society exactly a quarter of a century ago, and finally one of our distinguished honorary members, Otto Kaiser, about which the Secretary for Honorary Members may say more. I can also report that following discussion, our outgoing President, Paul Joyce was agreed by the committee as the Society's nominee for membership of the sub-panel D31 for the next round of the REF. As in previous years, I of course continue to appreciate very much the support and cooperation of the other committee members, and particularly the officers, in maintaining the work of the Society. For those who are able to attend, a thanksgiving service for Richard Coggins will be held on Sat 6th January 11:30 at the Community Centre in Lymington, Hampshire.

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

The following Honorary Members have reported on scholarly or personal activities: Bertil Albrektson regrets that health prevents his attending the meeting, but sends his greetings. He has had an article recently published on A. E. Housman in the magazine *Axess*, in Swedish. In the meantime, he continues with his avocation as an amateur painter. He has sent some examples, if anyone wishes to see them. Sara Japhet has sent her greetings to the meeting and reports the publication of two recent books: 1. Sara Japhet and Barry Dov Walfish, *The Ways of Lovers: The Oxford Anonymous Commentary on the Song of Songs (Bodleian Library MS. Opp 625)*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017 (Series: Commentaria, No. 8) and 2. Sara Japhet, *Collected Studies on the Restoration Period: History, Literature, Language, World View and Religion*, Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2 volumes, 2017 (Series: Asupot, No.13) in Hebrew. Reinhard Kratz has had to convey some sobering news: the Göttingen Academy will no longer fund the Qumran lexicon project after 2019. The future of the database and the lexicon remains uncertain. As he comments, "*Grundlagenforschung* is not appreciated anymore in the German Academies; they look for new, 'innovative', fancy or sexy themes now." It sounds as if they have taken a leaf out of the AHRC *modus operandi* manual. Johannes de Moor is working hard on his Micah commentary, which will appear in the series *Historical Commentary on the Old Testament*. For Micah 1:10-16 it is gratifying to hear that he has found our volume, "*Like a Bird in a Cage*" (2003), quite useful. He also has a paper entitled, "Converted Demons: Fallen Angels Who Repented", about to be published. In it he will argue that many (arch)angels were in fact evil Canaanite deities who became subjected to the God of Israel. He regrets that health prevents his attending the meeting but wishes his colleagues a pleasant and fruitful meeting. Kirsten Nielsen reports that she and her husband have had to downsize their home and have moved to an apartment at Stenvej 4, lejlighed 14, DK 8200 Højbjerg, rather smaller but more manageable. She still gives papers about the Old Testament or modern hymns in various parish halls. In the 2017 Danish celebration of the Reformation, she contributed to a three-volume book on the Reformation in the Danish church and society with an article on Danish hymns

1914-2017. The committee has approved a proposed set of guidelines on the nomination of future Honorary Members

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

The total membership now stands at 519, which is an increase of 1 since the Summer Meeting.

New Ordinary members in 2017: 19 (11M/8F)

Resignations in 2017: 7 and lapsed 14 (10M/4F) for non payment of subscriptions.

Deaths in 2017: 7 (5M & 2F)

Male/female ratio: 366M /153F, being 70.52%M/ 29.48%F. (Not reached 30% and now going down)

Promoted to Life Membership in 2017: 7

Members by country of residence: As was agreed at the 2017 Summer Meeting I am now only showing these figures in terms of the United Kingdom & Ireland (reflecting the Society's origins and historical associations) and the rest of the world grouped together.

UK & Ireland	350 (67.2%)
Rest of the world	169 (32.8%)

Membership by type:

Ordinary members: 345 (66.22%)

Life members: 157

Honorary members: 17

Book list mailing: 462 were sent out in the June mailing, and a further 7 in the Winter mailing, which I hope have been dispatched and received by now (although communications with Sage have been very difficult in this respect).

Postal receivers of mailings: Most members receive by email and now only 94 paper copies are sent out to officers of the Society and those who have requested, as agreed. It is apparent that a desire to have a hard copy of the Membership List underlies most requests to remain on the 'Postal List'.

Walter Houston asked the Membership Secretary how if at all, the new laws regarding Data Protection would be likely to affect her work. She reported that, while it wouldn't affect her

work directly, it may affect what can be posted on the website and that requests for information will need to be handled differently.

(f) The Hospitality Secretary, Dr James Patrick, expressed his hope that the Jubilee campus of the University of Nottingham had served as a good venue for the meeting and an improvement over Cripps' Hall. With regard to booking for meetings in the future, he noted that the introduction of an online booking system will add to the current payment options, which include the increasingly popular electronic bank transfer. He expressed his delight that Sheffield Phoenix Press will be returning to display books at future meetings and he concluded by offering his thanks to past and present Presidents and to the Secretary and other officers for their assistance.

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

The 2018 edition of the *Book List* is now taking shape, and I am grateful to all members who have reviewed books so far, as well as those who have taken up books available here at the Winter Meeting for prompt review.

There have been two recent developments concerning the *Book List* that I would like to note in this report. The first is that there has been a change in personnel, with the 'retirement' from the role of graduate-student Assistant to the Editor on the part of Holly Thompson (who is now in the final stages of her doctoral studies and so since the Summer Meeting has been focusing her efforts on the completion of her thesis) and the passing of that mantle onto the shoulders of Jelle Verburg (who is also a doctoral candidate at Oxford, and who took to the Autumn posting of books to reviewers with aplomb).

The other development to mention is one that certain members of the Society have long desired, namely that Sage Publications should provide for members of the Society free online access to the *Book List* each year. I am pleased to announce that, after lengthy negotiations, this has now been achieved. The link should be showing soon on the SOTS website, with members able to access this service through the password-protected Members' Area of the site. For the time being at least, the link will only give access to very recent issues of the *Book List*, at the present time the 2016 and 2017 editions; I am not sure if in the future it may become possible for access to be facilitated to any past editions earlier than these, but in any event the intention is that each new edition will be made available once it has been published, though members may wish to note that new editions will not necessarily be available online immediately upon publication but are expected to be linked as soon as possible thereafter.

It may be best to wait a little while to see how the system beds down, but potentially this development could mean that members who will be satisfied in future to consult the *Book List* only online and would not wish to receive it in hard copy in addition to this facility, will be able to inform the Membership Secretary that they wish to opt out of the hard-copy distribution from henceforth, though knowing that they can also opt back in at any point in the future (so

long as their membership of the Society remains current) if they decide that they miss the feel of the printed version. Please note, before you all rush to cancel your automatic free subscriptions to the printed editions, that Sage has not been able to specify when the online version will be available to members each year, and so you need to realise that you may have to wait longer for online access than is currently the case for offline access. You also need to be aware that opting back in at a later time would only enable you to be added to the next mailing list (you would not be able to get from the Society a back copy, even of the most recent *Book List*, once the second mailing list had been processed by the Membership Secretary, although you could buy a back copy from the Subscriptions Team at Sage). But in any event, I trust that all members, whether onliners or offliners, will continue to value and enjoy the *Book List* irrespective of the format in which they view it in future years!

In my capacity as Convener of the Publications Sub-Committee I can report that the various ongoing series with which the Society is associated continue to pursue their publishing programmes assiduously. Megan Warner, *Re-Imagining Abraham: A Re-Assessment of the Influence of Deuteronomism in Genesis*, has just appeared as volume 72 of *Oudtestamentische Studiën*, and plans have been announced to publish the papers from the forthcoming Joint Meeting of SOTS, OTW and OTSSA under the title *Violence in the Hebrew Bible: Text and Reception*. No new Study Guides or SOTS Monographs have come off the presses since the Summer Meeting, but the Editors of both series are working with a number of authors at different stages of production, and both Editors have also recently made new commissions for works to be produced in due course.

(h) The Information Officer, Dr Jonathan Stökl, reported as follows (read on his behalf by the Secretary):

The website continues to develop under the hood. The booking / payment facility online seems to be ready to go live very soon. Preparations for the change of website address back to sots.ac.uk are going well. The website continues to be popular, particularly around December-January and June-July on account of the meeting. During normal months we have about 1,000 visitors and around meetings this number is closer to 2,000.

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

5. SOTS Wiki

Dr Walter Houston reported as follows:

I have not got a great deal to inform the Committee about in this my final report. Little progress has been made on the Wiki, partly because I myself have begun to be absorbed in new projects.

I have however sent reminders to members still owing contributions in preparation for handing over to my successor.

I have very much enjoyed seeing the Wiki grow and indeed adding my own personal contributions to it. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking by name all those who have been involved with the Wiki, and the consistent support they have given me. They include Stuart Weeks and Jim Aitken, who originated the idea and have given invaluable technical and general support; Jonathan Stökl, who has been the chief troubleshooter; and my editorial assistants, successively Iona Hine, Jonathan Kruschwitz, and Hedy Hung, who have made a network out of isolated articles, and taken the load of house-style revisions off the editor. I should also like to thank the Committee for supporting the project morally and especially financially. We would not have been able to employ an editorial assistant without this.

I am also pleased that the Committee has accepted my recommendation that George Brooke serve as my successor as Wiki Editor.

The President asked whether the business meeting was happy to agree to George Brooke succeeding Walter Houston as Wiki editor and it was agreed.

6. Proposals for New Members

The Business meeting elected the following into membership: Mr Stephen Campbell, Rev Dr Lyndon Drake, Prof Federico Giuntoli, Dr Bradley Marsh, Jr., Dr Eric Ortlund, Mr Richard Rohlfing, Jr., Mr William Ross, Mr Joseph Scales, Ms Elisabeth Sawerthal, Mr Joseph Triolo, Dr Norman Wilson, Mr Hei Yin (Johnson) Yip.

7. AOB

It was clarified that election of anyone nominated for honorary membership would take place at the Summer meeting.

8. Future Meetings

The next Summer meeting will be held from the 16th to the 19th of July 2018 at St John's College, Durham and the following Winter meeting will be held from 7th to the 9th January 2019, at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.

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

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Signed: Date: