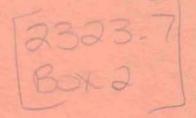
The Bulletin 1999/2000

The Canadian Society of Biblical Studies La société canadienne des études bibliques

> Volume 59 John L. McLaughlin, Editor



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Biblical Studies and Bible Effects

Dan Fraikin Queen's University

Wilfred Cantwell Smith, in a 1971 essay entitled "The Study of Religion and the Study of the Bible," suggested that the task of a course on the Bible in a Religious Studies Department should be to elucidate, not so much the meaning of the texts in the Bible, but how the Bible was formed and functioned as Scripture. "To study the Bible," he writes, "must be to strive to understand it as a channel, which it has observably been, between man (sic!) and transcendence," or to elucidate "how the Bible has served, and for many still serves, spiritually" (139).

Twenty-five years later he published a book called What is Scripture?, 2 in which he developed his understanding of scriptures in world religions. In the conclusion he talks of scriptures as an activity. "Scriptures are not texts," he says (223). "Scripture has been . . . from the start a human activity; it has been also a human propensity, and potentiality" (237). "At issue is not the texts of scripture that are to be understood and about which a theory has to be sought, but the dynamic human involvement with them. Scripture is a bilateral term, naming the relation between two matters: an engagement among humans, the transcendent, and a text (239). He ventured that the word "sacrament" might express it, because "it bespeaks divine initiative, and human involvement, plus the empirical object that mediates" (240). I cannot resist citing the last words of that book. They were obviously culled with care, as a testament, not just because it may have been Smith's last book, but because he contemplated the disappearance of scripture in the role he understood it to have.

Scripture's role in the past poses a challenge for the future: how we may hear the voice of the universe, however finitely, and find ways to think it, and to talk to one another about it, and to be motivated to order our life so that we may live in tune with it, and find the courage and delight to do so ourselves and find encouragement also from one another. (242)

This is a lofty understanding both of religion as a collective exercise in locating humans, both mind and will, within the whole of reality, and the

¹Wilfrid Cantwell Smith, "The Study of Religion and the Study of the Bible," *JAAR* 39 (1971): 131-403.

²Wilfrid Cantwell Smith, What is Scripture? A Comparative Approach. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.

role of scriptures in the process, namely as a garden of language within which and by the cultivation of which human beings hold themselves together. I would think that this is also what he would call a spirituality. I don't know if Smith's agenda for a study of the Bible as scripture in a Religion Department has ever been implemented. I have not been able to replace the traditional Introduction to the New Testament, the popularity of which is evidenced by the two meter wide collection of New Testament Introductions I have received from editors in the last 25 years. But Smith's work on scripture provides the context of my reflections today: Biblical Studies and Bible effects. My question is whether and how biblical scholars, we who have acquired our official competence in universities, write articles and books, and teach Bible, and meet in exotic places like Sherbrooke to talk business, contribute, as scholars, to the function of the Bible as scripture. Is our study any part of lived religion? Cantwell Smith allows me to consider this question a legitimate academic one. The question arose from the fact of my retirement from the academia, a natural occasion to reflect on what went on over the years, and from voices we keep hearing, that traditional, that is, historically oriented biblical studies, have failed to deliver what was expected of them.

To the first point. Like many other biblical scholars, I came to the study of the Bible because within the Christian tradition, both Protestant and Catholic, the Bible is considered the center of theology and worship, in other words, because the Bible is Scripture. It seemed that if you had the courage and the ability to study Hebrew, Greek, German and French, plus Latin, Aramaic, Syriac, Coptic and for the hardy, Assyrian or Egyptian, plus sociology and literary theory, rhetoric and history of the ancient world, textual criticism and archaeology (surely I missed some), if you became a biblical scholar, you would be right at the heart of Christianity and able to bring a contribution to the faith. If and where the Bible mattered, the scholar who knew the Bible thoroughly also counted. Indeed, when I started, it still mattered. The year Ernst Käsemann taught on Ephesians in Tübingen, the Aula Magna of the University was filled three times a week. "Die Sache," what was at stake, was ecclessiology, and whether you would be a Protestant or a Catholic after struggling with Ephesians. It felt as if Luther himself were there for the battle. Now, it is my impression that biblical scholars are not at the center of Christian thought, except perhaps on the issue of Jesus, and for all sorts of reasons, including the fact that theology is hardly a public matter any more and even within the churches is not at the center.

To the second point, that biblical scholarship is not contributing to the religious effects of the Bible. The declaration of Walter Wink 20 years ago, that traditional biblical scholarship was ineffective,3 is now picked up by the

³Walter Wink, Transforming Bible Study. Nashville: Abingdon, 1980.

recent book of our colleague Schuyler Brown, Text and Psyche.4 Brown, coining the term "empirics" for his study, addresses the issue of how the bible is experienced religiously, i.e., as "revelatory." The book discusses the factors at play in "experiencing" the Bible, psychological factors in particular. Brown comes from the Jungian school, following on Walter Wink. One quickly discovers that what is meant by "experience" in the subtitle Experiencing Scripture Today, is highly determined by emotions and intimacy. Brown cites favourably William James: "If feelings and instinct are at the heart of the religious experience, then we would expect these elements to have an importance in both the production and the reception of religious texts . . . " (27). Privileging emotions in this manner tends to downplay the intellectual effects of studying the Bible and to relegate them to the realm of the non religious. This book belongs to the present popular trend of locating religious experience in emotions and rejecting the domain of the mind. A characteristic of this book is its concentration on the relation of the individual with the text itself. Intimacy is the important word here. The model is that of the post Gutenberg and Reformation ideal of the individual reading and interpreting the Bible. And of course, if you talk about emotions, it has to be about the individual. While, then, I found Brown's book a rich exploration of the intimate experience of the religious reader of the Bible, and am grateful for a focus on this kind of experience, I find it too restrictive in its understanding of religious experience and spirituality and, as I will show in a moment, somewhat unrealistic.

Reading Smith and Brown, I end up with two ways of imagining how the Bible functions as Scripture, i.e., has religious effects, two ways that are not exclusive but do not overlap either. One is that of the reader in the intimacy of an act of reading the Bible as a medium for a relation with the transcendent (I will use God, from now on, since I am dealing with Christianity), the other is that of a community sharing and conversing about a book valued as a voice about the whole mystery of life and its future. It is within these two that I wish to introduce my biblical scholar. But, to avoid discussing this issue in the abstract I will anchor my reflections on the observation of a particular religious praxis, worship in a mainline denomination, Catholic or Protestant. It stands between my two images, in that it involves a collectivity, rather than an individual, but includes some of the factors Schuyler Brown considers important in an experience of Scripture.

In Christian worship the Bible occupies an important place. The Book is visually there in a prominent position and there are always some readings from it. They are preceded or followed by words pressing their religious

⁴Schuyler Brown, Text and Psyche. Experiencing Scripture Today. New York: Continuum, 1998.

The Bible is supposed to be important, but the operations to which it is submitted belie the theory. If you venerate a book, it must be for its content. But the conditions for understanding the text are appalling. The reader is usually reciting rather than telling, i.e., she/he vocalizes a written text rather than perform it with the intonations required for live speech. The reading vocalizes a written text. Daniel Patte says a text is merely a potential discourse.5 And François Récanati says: "réciter n'est pas parler."6 Then, the readings are often fragments rather than whole units (as we in the know would have them), and pulled out of the blue. The context is seldom provided. Does it help the average audience, and even me, to know the text is from Isaiah 65, verses 1 to 9? And the readings are interrupted by other materials like hymns or prayers. Everything, in other words, militates against the readings having any significant effect by themselves. The basic laws of communication are disregarded. Think that very short news items on T.V., small bites of information which are themselves easy to retain, are first announced in a summary, then told, then retold by "our correspondent in the field," then summarized again at the end. How can three different and disconnected readings, dealing with deep concepts, coming from nowhere, out of context, badly read, heard only once by an unprepared audience, ever be absorbed or retained in memory? The readings in worship have no chance of having an effect of meaning.

I should of course qualify this affirmation. First, there are texts read in Christian worship which the audience recognizes because they have heard them before, and because they are famous, like the great prophecies of the Second Isaiah around Christmas, the narratives of the Nativity and the Passion, the parables, events like the Ascension, Pentecost, and Paul's conversion, and a few Pauline slogans. And second, it is not true that the exercise has no meaning, for there are emotional meanings achieved by the liturgical context, the familiarity of the ritual of reading itself, the rhythm of the King James version and the particular Anglican style of reading, all factors mentioned in Schuyler Brown's book. Those contribute to the sacred character of it all. It mattered to read the Bible even when it was in Latin precisely because it was part of the mass and because it was esoteric. I am not saying, then, that the readings have no meaning at all, only that they have little semantic content. The reading of the Bible in worship may have the temporary effect of an encounter with the sacred through its liturgical paratext, but makes only a minimal contribution to the shaping of one's mind.

I have myself suggested in various workshops that a biblical text could be heard, eventually, if it were not recited, but prepared and paraphrased, and read in such a way that it becomes a real communication. Such a performance of the text results from an interpretation of it. It requires that decisions be made on the meaning of the text so that the meaning is embedded in the performance. It works, but it requires more competence on the part of the reader than is commonly found in churches. It also threatens one factor of the sacredness of the Bible, the fixity of the text, sealed by the notion of Authorized! If you translate the text in idiomatic English and in such a way that you understand it today, your translation will be a transgression of the "Word of God" found in the authorized versions. And finally, it brings into the open that every reading that counts is an interpretation.

What I am then arguing is that in the most common encounters Christians have with the Bible, Sunday worship, which for most Christians is the only one they have, the direct, intimate, encounter with the text used as model by Brown occurs only in a minimal way, if at all. The audience has little chance of being influenced by the content of the text. A semantic effect of meaning occurs when the preacher comes into play, should she choose to relate what she has to say to the biblical passages read previously. Whatever transformative impact of meaning the Bible has in those circumstances is obtained through the mediation of the preacher, or the liturgical amplification of the theme perceived in the text. The sacramental triangle imagined by Smith (the transcendent, humans, and the text) is complicated by the element of interpretation. Does the sermon help the text, become part of the text, or replace the text? Does it simply enhance the text? We could imagine that the preacher stands aside and merely guides the audience through the text. One could imagine that the situation is the same as that of the tour guide in a museum, who directs the eyes of the visitors at a painting and calls attention to its features, the colours, the composition, the texture etc., and locates the painting in the artist's life, the artist in currents of art history and history in general. The result is a greater attention to details, a more durable presence of it in the viewer's mental makeup, a contribution to her view of the world. Can we imagine the sermon as such a commentary? But, with the exception of stories, it cannot be. While I, the preacher, have the configuration of the text in my mind for having travelled through it intensively, the people in the pews do not have the text in front of their eyes or on the screen of their minds. It has reached their ears and disappeared. You cannot point out to them details of structure, texture of vocabulary. You can tell them that the text has a structure, and how meaningful it is, but you can't show them.

⁵Daniel Patte, The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 32.

⁶François Récanati, Meaning and Force. The Pragmatics of Performative Utterances (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 3.

So the text which is supposed to have revelatory power, is really not the text of the Bible itself, but whatever the preacher will lift from the text for consideration, in accord to the purposes of his/her own discourse. The text does not speak, the preacher speaks.

Should we be so surprised by this? Smith proposes in his book (205) that the frontier between text and commentary, when it comes to effects of scripture, is flexible and might well be just a Western distinction. The commentary becomes the scripture. The Bible becomes scripture through the discourse we make about it. Our theories distinguish between text and commentary, but the text is not scripture. The Bible works as scripture through the preaching. In effect, David Buttrick, a respected theoretician of homiletics, argues quite rightly that the preacher does not preach from the text but from his or her assimilation of the text, whatever that happens to be.7 The preacher is an advanced reader, in lieu of the audience in the act of worship. Buttrick, of course, assumes that the preacher is a theological reader, including assumptions about the role of Scripture, the nature of the congregation. He reads for the people, with the people, with the codes of a Christian audience and of this particular Christian audience. The preacher is supposed to articulate the response of the audience to the biblical input. It requires a connivance with the audience.

I am proposing, then, that in the context of worship, the intimacy with the text which is the situation assumed by Schuyler Brown is seldom realized and while some impression may be left by the initial reading of the text itself content for the mind will at best be inchoative. I have used the context of worship to start with, but an attentive look at other praxis of the bible would lead to the same results. The text comes to fruition through commentary, beginning with divisions in chapters and verses, subtitles etc. . . . This is where the biblical scholar is caught in a dilemma. There is no reason why a scholar, nourished by all the knowledge she has, cannot read the Bible in a religious manner, the way Wilfred Cantwell Smith understood it, as a garden of language for the articulation of deep meaning about the universe and what to do with one's life, in conversation with others. The problem is that the deep involvement of a scholar with the formative period of Christianity, the historical perspective, changes him/her irrevocably. The scholar who reads the Bible, even in a religious manner, cannot join with most Christian readers in the pews because they do not share the same knowledge. He comes from another culture.

The second difficulty of the rhetorical situation is that the whole worship event is intended to bring the worshipers into some relation with God,

both receiving and giving, being talked to and talking to. The Bible text is in principle the instrument of being addressed by God. The sermon is at the service of this communication. The text of the Bible is burdened not only with a divine ethos (good, honest, and competent, to use Aristotle's elements of ethos) but with elements, at least, of the deliberative genre. It is supposed to achieve something, a transformation of the mind and the will. The sermon is supposed to make the text speak "to us today." The text is read with a parasitic moral code, to use the expression of Mike Bal.8 And since most texts were never meant to be used that way, the surplus of meaning required for them to achieve their assigned goal is provided from traditional ethical and theological stocks. They easily fall prey to the fashions of the time. Every text will teach that God loves you unconditionally, that all human beings are equal, and that you should love your neighbour.

Now you invite a biblical scholar from the nearest theological school. At first glance, he/she should be a prime contributor to an act of worship in which the Bible represents God's contribution to the encounter. If the Bible is important, a person who knows the Bible, probably better than the preacher, should be received with open arms and be able to contribute to the occasion. It is seldom the case, however, and I will identify the reasons.

- 1. Biblical scholars, like theologians, in this day and age, are held under suspicion. The scholar preacher does not enjoy a favorable ethos from his official reputation as a scholar. Scholars are accepted as competent but are not perceived as friends of the church. I will not go into the reasons for this demise of our reputation, though, because it seems accidental to our question of whether a scholar who has overcome such bad reputation can still do better than an ordinary preacher.
- 2. The problem we mentioned earlier, namely, that the audience cannot perceive the text, remains. There is no advantage in having more light to project on the text for the audience, if the text is not there to be shown and therefore not present on the screen of the mind to be examined.
- 3. Because scholar preachers cannot really show in any significant way that what they see in the text is in fact there, all they can do is tell the audience what they, with their specialized knowledge, have found inspiring in the text. All it takes is a few references to the text to adorn what they say with the oil of biblical authority.
- 4. Now, however, the message, as it is called, the call to the audience to be converted in mind or engaged in action, in order to be persuasive, must be generally congruent with what the audience accepts as Christianity. And if

⁷David Buttrick, Homiletic: Moves and Structures (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 281.

⁸Mieke Bal, Murder and Difference (Bloominghart and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), 8.

that happens, the real genre of the sermon is epideictic, rather than deliberative. It's function is to enhance the values of the community, which include of course, being chastised for one's sins and encouraged to do good works. The alternative for the biblical scholar turned preacher is to speak what she thinks, and be rejected or ignored as eccentric.

I have started with the notion of biblical studies understood as historical study. It is still probably the dominant mode of operation on the Bible. Rhetorical, socio-rhetorical, sociological, literary studies of the bible are concentrating on the original sociological and rhetorical situations. If we imagine that our biblical scholar preacher is a person whose outlook is mostly historical, does she have anything to offer? Where is the contribution of the scholar in this process?

It is true that people can have religious experiences, revelations or insights, from contact with the Bible in whatever form they find it. Not only they are exercising their freedom as readers to take the bible and run, but any text will do. Those of us who occasionally tumble into Bible Study groups or house churches where the Bible text is freely discussed, know that participants are not fussy and don't usually even think that the text they are looking at is a particular translation and a particular interpretation. Schuyler Brown writes frankly about reading literature what he thinks is also happening in the reading of biblical literature: "What the experience of reading literature does show us is that the meaningfulness of texts does not depend on their being read historically or referentially." (81).

Yes the text of the Bible can be read not referentially or historically, but that does not mean that reading it referentially or historically cannot be a religious experience. It is true that the study of the Bible in that mode is not by itself a religious activity, but the knowledge acquired in this scholarly activity informs the person who also asks questions about the universe and listens, who looks for meaning. The reader of the Bible constituting meaning within the context of a religious perspective is one shaped by the vision acquired in the process of studying it historically, if that is the case. This perspective can produce effects of reading the bible of a deep nature which it would be quite arbitrary to consider not an "experience" of scripture, and an experience "tout court." At this time of postmodern history we can all agree to the multiplicity of interpretations. There will be the naive one and the scholarly one. But can the scholar versed in historical studies of the Bible converse on the Bible and produce shared meaning with the one who is not? Not, I think, within the habitual Christian collective praxis like worship or devotional exercises. The common ground is too thin.

The Biblical scholar who wishes to participate in the quest for meaning among those who share the Bible as a family house, is a special

reader. She is a reader who brings into the common Christian search, because of her technical habits and expertise, a particular piece of reality into the construction of meaning. She can see things others cannot. The biblical scholar, however, is always a foreigner in the house, because of the status of the Bible. It is because we have placed the Bible as the source of revelation, and declared that it is accessible to all, that the majority of Christians, through the preachers who serve them, hold the Bible down to what is accessible to them as plain readers. The consequences of the ideology of Sola Scriptura, as it is popularly understood, has been to make the Bible an idol. One Lord, one baptism, one Bible! The Bible we have in our hands. The Bible is our refuge and our salvation. Religiously minded Biblical scholars have an understanding of Christianity of their own resulting from their studies, but they cannot make it the common understanding of a church because it is not "evident" to a naive reader. We cannot normally show ordinary people, how our vision comes from studying the Bible. "What you see is what you get" is the norm.

In other words, wherever the Bible is held as a book within which the truth is contained and is in principle available to all, a very post-reformation idea, by the way, the surface meaning of the text will prevail over any meaning resulting from intense, scholarly exploration. When interpretation is held to what can be seen in the text as it is, there is little chance of historical scholarship making much of a dent in tradition. Paradoxically, I think, it is where the Bible is treated least as the written truth that it has the best chance of flourishing into an experience of Scripture of the kind Cantwell Smith suggested, an activity of the mind in search of truth, but a whole mind informed by the present state of knowledge.

I suggest that the place where this particular experience of the Bible as scripture can take place is the university classroom, pace Don Wiebe. First, it is within an academic course of instruction, where people can actually remain with a text, read it and reread it with care, and in context etc., that the referential and the historical can reshape the mind and relate the Bible to the pursuit of understanding life which Smith, I think, would call a spirituality. And there are few of us, I think, who have not seen students light up in the discovery of the Bible's world, its humanity, and its pointing to basic issues of life and death. I think the study of religious literature, any religious literature, is apt to produce a religious experience, provided it is treated as religious literature, as part of humanity's conversation in its search for meaning. That search may include the most technically demanding historical pursuit. This religious experience happens in a course of instruction, as well as in individual work, when it is located within a search for humanity. And that is the result of a concerted effort, within the university, to refuse to be transformed into a business or a factory.

When the university, or at least the Humanities part of it, adopts those ancient goals, when teachers and students allow themselves to be colleagues in the search for what matters in life, the sacramental role of scripture takes place in its courts with a freedom unheard of in the official religious communities, and religious studies departments contribute not only to the objective knowledge of religion, but to the religious development of humanity. All these years, it was a privilege to be part of it.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Université Bishop's / Bishop's University Lennoxville, Québec June 2, 1999, 14h45-16h15

Present: John Van Seters, Zeba Crook, Leif Vaage, Alicia Batten, Colleen Shantz, Donna Runnalls, Jane Webster, Edith Humphrey, Tony Cummins, Sylvia Keesmaat, John Marshall, Peter Richardson, Robert Culley, Allison Trites, Adrian Leske, John Horman, Harold Remus, Margaret Macdonald, Joyce Rilett Wood, Tony Chartrand-Burke, Keir Hammer, David Jobling, John McLaughlin, Lissa Wray, Pat Taylor, Terry Donaldson, Mary Ann Beavis, William Klassen, Steven Muir, Ritva Williams, Wayne McCready, Adele Reinhartz, Stephen Westerholm, Francis Landy, Philippa Carter, William Alexander, Alex Damm, Neil Parker, Laurence Broadhurst, Willi Braun, James Kugel, Gary Phillips, Dilys Paterson, Daniel Fraikin, Michel Desjardins, William Morrow

1. Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada

The meeting began with a brief visit by HSSFC representatives (Louise Robert, Jacqueline Wright, Michael Owen). Louise Robert reminded members of the initiatives taken by the Federation on behalf of the CSBS. These include: ongoing negotiations with the Federal Government (partly responsible for a \$19.5 million increase to SSHRCC, with a HSSFC goal to double that figure over the next three years), and the "Challenge/Défi" programme aiming to gather then disseminate to the media and politicians short descriptions of current research by Humanists and Social Scientists. In answer to a question she added that the HSSFC was working hard to ensure that SSHRCC travel grants continue at least at the present rate (raised in 1999) and that some long-term stability be built into this programme.

Approval of the Agenda The agenda was approved as circulated (Morrow/Humphrey).

3. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (May 28, 1998) were approved as circulated (Runnalls/Donaldson).

4. President's Report

Dan Fraikin began by thanking those present for having come, and Executive members for their work.

He reminded members of the untimely death of Elizabeth Bellefontaine in 1998, noting that her obituary can be found in the recent Bulletin, as well as

those of other CSBS members who recently passed away: John Neeb, George Johnston, Carol Schlueter and Michael Stanley. This was followed by a moment of silence.

5. Executive Secretary's Report

Michel Desjardins noted the change in name, and slight change in functions, of the new "Communications" officer, to replace the "Publications Officer." He/she will continue to: participate in regular, ongoing decisions made by the Executive, including the two Executive meetings (one at the Congress, the other by teleconference in February); prepare and distribute the Bulletin; manage the website; coordinate the Beare book award; and [the change] act as a liaison to outside bodies such as the media, other societies, the CCSR, and the HSSFC. Reworking/refreshing the website is a priority in 1999-2000.

The next Congress will take place at the University of Alberta, May 24-31 (shorter overall period, also earlier in the year), with subsequent meetings at Laval (2001) and University of Toronto/Ryerson (2002). CSBS dates set for next year's Congress have been set for Wednesday, May 24 to Friday, May 26, but will likely be shifted to accommodate a Saturday night over for members.

Next year's CSBS meeting, inter alia, will throw the spotlight on members who are retiring and have just retired, partly to allow younger members to gain some appreciation of these careers. The Programme Coordinator will deal with the logistics.

Concerning the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion (CCSR):

A major CCSR initiative has been to plan the introduction of a five-society Combined Religion Programme for the 2000 Congress. The CSBS Executive has agreed to participate in this initiative, which means that next year's CSBS programme will continue to be formed by our Programme Coordinator, but will appear in print as part of a combined programme book, at no cost to the Society. Our own programme will be made available to members on our website.

Concerning the Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada (HSSFC):

The HSSFC "Défi/Challenge" programme initiated last year, aiming to gather then disseminate to the media and politicians short descriptions of current research by Humanists and Social Scientists, led to three CSBS submissions (by Adele Reinhartz, Peter Richardson, Terry Donaldson) which are now on the HSSFC website. More are welcomed.

Philippa Carter continues to be our representative on the Women's Issues Network of the Federation.

MD noted that the Executive had enthusiastically accepted a proposal submitted by Fiona Black and Erin Runions to start a new ongoing seminar: "Feminisms, Culture and the Bible." This seminar is expected to have its début next year.

6. Student Member-at-Large's Report

Jane Webster reported that roughly 30% of the CSBS membership (80) are students, and that this constituency remains vitally important to the Society. This year she set up a student e-mail list.

Last year's special student session ("How to Get a Job?") was successful, and the follow-up session she planned for this year ("How to Design a Course in Biblical Studies?") is also expected to serve the student constituency.

The Executive, she added, supported her recommendation that henceforth, the CSBS student Member-at-Large will continue to be appointed to a 1-year position, but may be asked to serve a second year when deemed in the best interest of the Society.

7. Nominations

On behalf of the rest of the Executive, John Van Seters put forward the following slate for Executive positions: David Bergen, as student Member-at-Large; John McLaughlin, as Communications Officer (replacing the Publications Officer); and John Kloppenborg Verbin, as Vice-President. With no other nominations coming from the floor, and following a motion (Richardson/McCready; approved) that nominations close, the three were acclaimed.

8. Programme Coordinator's Report

Edith Humphrey thanked members for their help and for the high quality of the paper proposals that reached her this year. Next year she will encourage members to submit proposals in both electronic and hard copy to ensure accuracy. And she highlighted the upcoming Special Student Session and the four joint sessions (with CTS, on Jubilee; with CSSR, CSPS, CSPS, the Craigie Lecture; with the medievalists and renaissance studies folk, a "Space and Place Colloquium"; with CSSR, CTS, CSCH and CSPS, a discussion of CCSR recommendations for reform).

She thanked Willi Braun for his help and grace in serving as local coordinator of the meeting.

9. Publications Officer's Report

In Steve Mason's absence, Dan Fraikin touched on two features of his written report:

The success of next year's "Beare Book Award" depends on the active participation of members in recommending books.

He will work with the next Communications Officer to ensure a seamless transition period.

DF noted the important work done by SM over the last three years.

Peter Richardson added that he continues to be in search of good manuscripts for the ESCJ (Études/Studies in Christianity and Judaism) series; he also moved (Richardson/Remus; approved) the following: "The CSBS expresses its deep gratitude to Sandra Woolfrey, the Director of Wilfrid Laurier University Press, for the support she has shown to religionists in general and biblicists in particular over the years, and offers her its best wishes as she gets ready to retire in the Fall."

10. Treasurer's Report

William Morrow, acting first as Membership Secretary then as Treasurer, reviewed his written report/budget, noting, inter alia: (i) a trend toward fewer paid memberships; (ii) ongoing problems (time and money) with handling the Sheffield Academic Press subscriptions; (iii) travel money (20% of this year's SSHRCC grant, i.e. \$950) set aside for next year's Congress; and (iv) an anticipated slight excess of receipts over expenses this coming year (due in part to investment funds set up last year generating funds as expected).

He read this year's list of Nominees for Membership (William Alexander, David Cloutier, Charles Cotton, Zeba Crook, Jonathan Dyck, Bernon Lee, Priscilla Geisterfer Nyvlt, Iain Provan, Ian Scott, Mary E. Smith, Patricia Taylor, Dina Teitelbaum, Lissa M. Wray and George W. Young), and moved (Morrow/Jobling; approved) that they be accepted as members of the Society.

He recommended that every effort be made to increase the membership base, and that every effort also be made to be fiscally prudent. The latter will include electronic, rather than hard copy, "Second" and "Third" mailings this year to members with email access. A suggestion from the floor to consider the possibility of having the Presidential Address printed in Studies in Religion in order to cut back on Bulletin costs will be discussed at the next Executive meeting.

Last year's long-term investment strategy is already beginning to reap rewards, with some income available to keep the Society debt-free. Wayne McCready, speaking on behalf of the Endowment Committee (including Peter Richardson, Harold Remus and William Klassen), echoed the good news, and added that plans are ongoing to raise additional money to set up a book award in the Hebrew Bible area to complement the Beare Award. WM thanked the Committee for their work, and members for their ongoing generous donations to the range of Society funds.

WM also noted that, while Sheffield Academic Press subscriptions have now been streamlined, the paperwork needed to manage ongoing journal subscriptions continues to be heavy, and last year the Society lost money due to delays in processing and fluctuations of the Canadian dollar. SAP will be asked to administer this group of subscriptions directly. It is expected that the press will continue to offer discounts to CSBS members (the present discount is 50%), but that remains to be negotiated.

WM moved (Morrow/Culley; approved) that the firm of Secker, Ross and Ross be reappointed as the Society's auditors; then moved (Morrow/ Richardson; approved) that his report be received and approved.

11. Adjournment

Dan Fraikin thanked everyone for their participation, then moved (Fraikin/Humphrey) that the meeting adjourn.

Minutes prepared by Michel Desjardins

Financial Statements

Fiscal year 1 Sept. 98-31 Aug. 99

The following amounts have been audited. The full audited report is available to any member of the CSBS/SCÉB upon request to the treasurer.

Bank Balances and Income Reconciliation:

Operations:

Cash on Hand 1 Sept. 98	1,423.54
Income	9,732.69
Expenses	(7,168.44)
Cash on Hand 31 Aug. 99	3,987.79*

*Includes \$956.00 SSHRC Travel monies reserved for the next fiscal year.

Restricted Funds:	Capital	Interest
Balance 1 Sept. 98 To Merrill Lynch Canada	57,000.00 (57,000.00)	738.43
Income Expenses	8,691.75 (609.00)	3,477.05 (3,932.82)
Balance 31 Aug. 99	8,082.75	282.66

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Operating Income:

	Received:	11,197.67
Congre	ess Income:	
	SSHRC Travel Grant	4,755.00
	CSBS Dinner	1,795.00
	1998 Registration	794.00
	1998 Speaker Travel	600.00
Subscr	iptions:	
	Sheffield Academic Press	107.00
	Bulletin	45.00
Interes	t from Restricted Funds:	
	General Fund	206.95
	For CSBS Dinner	105.00
Bank I	nterest:	127.07
TOTA		19,732.69
TOTA		19,752.09
Oner	ating Expenses:	
Oper	ating Expenses.	
Canan		
Congre		00.00
	Equip. rental	80.00
	Booth worker	100.00
	CSBS Dinner	2,134.25
	Member Travel	3,799.00
Subscr	iptions:	
	SR	5,256.00
	SAP	43.13
	Bulletin	931.12
Dues:		
	HSSFC	1,581.00
	CSSR	36.00
	Refunds to members	79.44
Admin	istration:	
	Auditor	856.00
	Executive	1,359.64
	Secretarial	120.00
Office:		
	Charitable receipts	143.75
	Supplies	112.67
	Software	132.15
	Postage and printing	385.00
	Banking	19.49
TOTA	-	
TOIN		17,168.44

Restricted Funds:

	Capital	Interest
Craigie Fund:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	14,646.59	382.12
Donations	100.00	746.49
Interest		709.95
Disbursement		(2,370.87)
TOTALS	14,746.59	(532.31)
Founders Prize:	5,767.60	
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	200.00	
Donations Interest	200.00	273.05
TOTALS	5,976.60	273.05
Jeremias Prize:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	6,530.68	
Donations	100.00	200.26
Interest		300.36
Disbursement		(250.00)
TOTALS	6,630.68	50.36
Endowment Funds:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	30.055.13	356.31
Donations	8,291.75	1
Interest	0,271.10	1,447.20
Disbursements	(609.00)	(1,311.95)
TOTALS	37,737.88	491.56
	2777	

Endowment Funds:

	Capital	Interest
General Fund:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	4,276,44	
Donations	1,651.75	
Interest		206.95
To Current Account		(206.95)
Student Research:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	1,183.17	
Donations	100.00	
Interest		56.44
RBY Scott Award:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	973.46	
Interest		46.31
Norman Wagner Award:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	10,243.98	150.00
Interest	7	493.50
Prize Disbursement		(500.00)
To CSBS Dinner		(70.00)
Beare Award:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	11,972.17	206.31
Interest		575.99
Prize Disbursement		(500.00)
To CSBS Dinner		(35.00)
Publication Fund:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	1,405.91	
Donations	6,540.00	
Interest		68.01
To ESCJ	(225.00)	00.01
Expenses	(384.00)	
TOTALS	37,737.88	491.56

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Membership News

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Gosnell L.O.R. Yorke, "I Corinthians 13:1 revisited: Some Afroliturgical and Missiological Implications," Missionalia: The Southern African Missiological Society 26/3 (1998), 378-391.
Appointments, Promotions, Awards, Honors:
William E. Arnal, Governor General's Gold Academic Medal (for University of Toronto), 1998.
Willi Braun, Promotion to Associate Professor (with tenure), Bishop's University.
Appointed Associate Professor of Religion (with tenure), University of Alberta, July 1, 1999.
, Appointed Director, University of Alberta Centre for The Study of Christianity.
, Awarded Harriet Winspear-Sheila Watson Fellowship, University of Alberta.
Dr. Wendy Cotter, C.S.J., appointment to teach at Loyola University's Rome Center, Rome, Italy (Fall 1999—Spring 2000).
Paul Dion, will be emeritized July 2000.
Lorenzo DiTommaso, Book Review Editor, H-JUDAIC (Jewish Studies Network).

Terence Donaldson, Lord and Lady Coggan Professor of New Testament

"Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montréal" (February 1999 to February

2000) by the Archdiocese of Montreal. The Christian-Jewish Dialogue

Studies, Wycliffe College, Toronto. (August 1, 1999) Jean Duhaime, appointed as one of the Roman Catholic representatives on the

of Montréal promotes a dialogue based on mutual understa between Christians and Jews.	nding
Carl S. Ehrlich, promotion to Associate Professor (as of July 1, 1999).	
Edith Humphrey, appointed to a two year theological commission service of the New Westminster Diocese, ACC, by Bishop M Ingham.	
Brian P. Irwin, Adjunct Lecturer in Old Testament, Tyndale Semi Toronto.	inary,
Bernard M. Levinson, Editorial Board, Journal of Biblical Literature.	
, Editorial Board, Zeitschrift für Altorientalische and Bib Rechtsgeschichte.	lische
, Salo W. Baron Award for Best First Book in Literature and The American Academy for Jewish Research (1999).	ought,
, McNight Arts and Humanities Summer Fellow (1999).	
, Member, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton (1997).	
, Center for Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania, Ass	ociate
Fellow (1997).	
Margaret Y. MacDonald, Vice-President, Canadian Corporation for Stud Religion (May 1999-May 2000).	lies in
John L. McLaughlin, Scholar-in-Residence (Fall, 1999), Wheeling University	Jesuit
, Editor, Cardinal Perspectives.	
, West Virginia Humanities Council Fellowship.	
, Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Rel Studies Grant.	igious
, Wheeling Jesuit University Research Grant	
William Richards, Associate Professor of New Testament Languag Literature, (pro tem), College of Emmanuel and St. Chad, Univ of Saskatchewan.	e and ersity
Gosnell L.O.R. Yorke, successful completion of an accelerated progralinguistics, University of South Africa (January 1999).	am in
, Moderator, UBS Panel on Translating the New Testament in Afr	rica at
the Annual SNTS Meeting, University of Pretoria, South A. (August 1999).	Africa
, "Bible Translation and Language Use in Lusophone Africa: The	Case
of Mozambique." Read at the annual meetings of the Southern A Linguistic Association, University of South Africa (July 1999).	frican

Dissertation Completed:

Brian P. Irwin, "Baal and Yahweh in the Old Testament: A Fresh Examination of the Biblical and Extra-Biblical Data," Wycliffe College, Toronto.

Research in Progress:

William E. Arnal, pre-synoptic transmission of the parable of the tenants.
, Oral transmission of the narrative traditions (about Jesus).
, Religion and ideology; Marxian interpretations of religion.
Richard Ascough, "Greco-Roman Philosophic, Religious, and Voluntary Associations." Paper to be presented at the H.H. Bingham Colloquium at McMaster Divinity College, June 26-27, 2000. "The Formation and Propagation of Greco-Roman Associations," "Local and Extra-local Links Among Voluntary Associations," and
"Select Associations: Macedonia." Three chapters being prepared for a work provisionally entitled Associations in Antiquity, ed. John S. Kloppenborg Verbin. I am continuing to collect, translate, and annotate inscriptions for the same project.
Willi Braun and William E. Arnal, Making Christians in the Roman World: An Introduction to Early Christianity (London: Cassell, monograph under
contract). Dr. Wendy Cotter, C.S.J., The Christ of the Miracles, an Exegesis of a
Selection of Major Jesus Miracles (Hendrickson Press, forthcoming). Paul Dion, The Linguistic Map of Syria, ca. 800 BCE.
Lorenzo DiTommaso, "The Qumran New Jerusalem Text: Contents and
Contexts," Dissertation: McMaster University.
, Bibliography of Pseudepigraphia, 1850-2000. Journal for the Study
of the Pseudepigraphia Supplement Series.
Terence Donaldson, "Introduction to the Pauline Corpus," Oxford Bible Commentary (forthcoming).
, ed., Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Caesarea Maritima (ESCJ; Waterloo: WLU Press, forthcoming).
Jean Duhaime, "The Ways of the Two Spirits," (1QS iv 2-8), article.
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, The War Texts in the series "Companion to the Qumran Scrolls." , co-director, A Handbook of Social Sciences and Early Christianity. , French translation of L.H. Schiffman, Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls.
Malcolm Horsnell, First Dynasty of Babylon
, Hebrew Grammar.
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, "A Tale of Two Cities and (at least) Three Women," in David Barr, ed., Apocalypse Reader, forthcoming collection of essays by SBL Apocalypse Seminar.
, "Ambivalent Apocalypse: Rhetoric, Revelation and Reflection in 2

Corinthians," Society of Biblical Studies Annual Meeting, 1999. This paper to be published in a volume on rhetoric and apocalyptic edited by Duane F. Watson. "Open Heaven and Closure in Argument: Rhetoric and Vision-Reports in the New Testament," provisional title, monograph. This analysis will bring together my previous studies of rhetoric and vision-reports in the New Testament and related literature. "Intimacy and Ecstasy," considering on several levels the themes of mystical quest and epiphany, inter-relationships, friendship, and family ties. Rebecca G. S. Idestrom, Commentary on Zephaniah. Brian P. Irwin, Entries, "Cubit," "Hamon-Gog," "Libnah," Mount Gilboa," "Tophet," and "Travellers, Valley of the," in David Noel Freedman, ed., The Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, forthcoming). John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, "The Dating of CIJ II 1404." "Vineyard Lease Agreements and the Parable of the Tenants." , "Associations in Antiquity." Gerald N. Knoppers, I Chronicles, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday) (work in progress). and Gordon McConville, eds., "Reconsidering Ancient Israel and Judah: The Deuteronomistic History in Recent Thought," Sources for Biblical and Theological Study, vol.8 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns). , M.P. Graham, and S.L. McKenzie, eds., The Chronicler as Theologian (JSOTSup, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press). Introduction to and Notes on 1 and 2 Chronicles for The New Oxford Annotated Bible (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). , 1 and 2 Chronicles in The Oxford Hebrew Bible (New York: Oxford University Press). Adrian Leske, "Context and Meaning of Zechariah 9:9," CBQ (forthcoming). , Prophetic Influence in Matthew's Gospel. Bernard M. Levinson, "Text-criticism, Assyriology, and the History of Interpretation: The Problematics of Deuteronomy 13:7a," (article in progress). , "The Redaction of Revelation: Exodus 34:10-26 and the Composition of the Pentateuch," (article). "The Collapsing Wall: A Lost Chapter in Cuneiform Legal History," (article in progress). Margaret Y. MacDonald, "The Role of Women in the Christianization of the Roman Empire," SSHRC grant. "Commentary on Colossians and Ephesians," Sacra Pagina, The Liturgical Press, (in press). Sharon Lea Mattila, "Ben Sira and the Stoics? A Clear Case of

- 'Parallelomania'" in Journal of Biblical Literature (forthcoming).
- John L. McLaughlin, The Questions of Jesus (book under contract for Novalis Press)
- ______, The Marzeah in the Prophets (manuscript under publisher's review)
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- Anne Moore, Kingdom of God Trajectory from Formative Judaic Texts to the Gospel of Thomas.
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