

**Canadian Society For The Study Of Religion/Société canadienne pour l'étude
de la religion**

Procès-verbal de la réunion du conseil / Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes

June 1, 2008 / Le 1 Juin, 2008

University of British Columbia

Present: Peter Beyer, Mark Chapman, David Feltmate, Janet Gunn, Chris Klassen, Francis Landy,
Richard Mann, Rubina Ramji, Donna Seamone

Regrets: Leona Anderson, Alain Bouchard, Kenneth MacKendrick, David Seljak.

1. Welcome / Bienvenue

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. Peter Beyer welcomed all members to the meeting. Richard Mann was welcomed as acting treasurer working with and reporting on behalf of outgoing treasurer MacKendrick.

2. Adoption of the Agenda / Adoption de l'ordre du jour

Since there was no circulated printed Agenda, those in attendance agreed to the suggestion of the president that a special item of "Other business" be added to the agenda to accommodate any items not otherwise discussed.

3. Adoption of the minutes of the May 2007 meetings of the Executive Committee/ Adoption des procès-verbaux des réunions du conseil de mai 2007

MOTION to approve R.Ramji/D. Feltmate (carried).

4. Business Arising From the Minutes / Suivi aux procès-verbaux

The President announced that all outstanding items would be covered under the President's Report.

5. Reports / Rapports

5.1 President / Présidente

a) Legal status of CSSR. P. Beyer presented a summary of investigations into the legal status of the CSSR. As a result of his investigations he reported that:

- No one knows the legal status of the organization.
- Issue of the legal status is only of significance for matters related to finances.
- The association does not have to file a tax return because the CSSR is not a charitable organization.
- The CSSR is classified as a non-profit organization although it is not incorporated.
- Signing authorities are legally responsible.

Discussion of the peculiar status of the CSSR followed. There was a consensus that we should continue to follow the procedures established by K. MacKendrick: filing the necessary tax file as required by the bank. The executive of the society are legally responsible for the actions of the society.

b) CSSR Website P. Beyer found a graduate student to correct the French on the website. To date, everything is corrected.

c) Support of the IAHR in Toronto. Following on the 2007 AGM decision that the CSSR support the meeting of the IAHR in Toronto (in 2010) by sponsoring a plenary session (the cost of a speaker is approximately \$5000). P. Beyer contacted selected members of the CSSR

executive regarding how to raise money for this event. Discussion followed regarding possibilities for sources of funds to support sponsorship of this event. The options are:

1. raise the money by raising the membership fee for a short period of time
2. take the money out of the CSSR's reserve funds

MOTION R.Ramji/C. Klassen (carried): The executive solicit the support of the members at the AGM to authorize the allocation of \$5000.00 from the CSSR's reserve funds (in either 2009 or 2010) to the IAHR to support the previously agreed upon sponsorship of an international speaker at the event in Toronto. There was consensus that the executive make a suggestion to D. Wiebe that Vandana Shiva be suggested as the plenary speaker for this event. D. Seamone agreed to supply information and C. Klassen agreed to make the contact with D. Wiebe.

5.2 Treasurer / Trésorier

Richard Mann reviewed the annual Treasurer's Report prepared by Ken MacKendrick.

The Treasurer's Report highlighted issues such as the following:

- **Membership Dues** (WLUP). The inordinately higher number is accounted for by a deposit (approximately \$10K) made in May 2007. The average is typically about \$9,900.00.
- At first glance it certainly looks like we had a banner year: \$30,124.99 total income!!! This needs to be explained. About 10K is a WLUP deposit that is really from the year before. Another 5K is the "double" SSHRC grant. This essentially means things are running as usual.
- **SSHRC Grants**. Nothing unusual to report. The 2007 and 2008 SSHRC Grants have been received and were deposited this year, thus appearing double.
- WLUP membership appeared to be down last year and appears to be up this year. Mark Chapman has the details and the truth of the matter (see below).
- AGM income (Society Registration Fees) was down. Location location location?
- Membership dues for the CFHSS are down, but this is also likely because of when people renew their memberships.
- The rest is fairly par for the course. This was a "cheap" year since we did not defray any travel costs or invite any special speakers. Next year (i.e., this 2008 Congress), will be a more expensive.

MOTION R. Ramji/D. Feltmate (carried): That Ken MacKendrick maintain signing authority on the accounts until the signing authority to the new treasurer has been fully effected.

MOTION F. Landy/M. Chapman (carried): To accept the treasurer's report.

MOTION F. Landy/M. Chapman (carried): To accept the budget for 2008-09 as prepared by K. MacKendrick.

5.3 Membership Secretary / Secrétaire aux admissions

Mark Chapman highlighted the following issues :

- The membership enrollment procedure in 2007/2008 remained the same as in previous years.
- Produced a revised copy of our brochure and our one page ad (in French and English) which was used to advertise the CSSR/SCÉR.
- This year individuals were not approved for presentation at the annual conference until they had paid their membership dues (made explicit in the call for papers).
- According to the report provided by WLUP, the 2008 membership count as of April 29 totaled 254. This appears to be a membership decline of 15% from April 2007. However, paid memberships from April 2007 to April 2008 increased from 187 to 189. Our average paid membership over the last decade is 172. Membership tends to rise and fall depending on how close the annual meeting is to major population centres. Students now compose 35% of our paid membership as compared to 38% in 2007 and 32% in 2005. Payment of 2008 membership dues is still being received.

5.4 Nominations Committee / Comité pour les nominations

The nominations committee this year was composed of Dr. Leona Anderson, Dr. Peter Beyer, and Dr. Mark Chapman. Dr. Richard Mann stepped into the treasurer position mid-year. In addition, the nominating committee recommended the following nominations for presentation at the AGM:

President: Michel Desjardins (Wilfrid Laurier University), 2 year term

Treasurer: Richard Mann (Carleton University), 3 year term

- Currently serving in the position in a temporary capacity

Member-at-large: Alain Bouchard (Collège de Sainte-Foy), 3 year term

Member-at-large: Rubina Ramji (Cape Breton University), 3 year term

Executive members received the recommendations of the nominating committee with thanks to the committee members for their work.

5.5 2007 Programme Chair / Responsable du programme 2007

R. Ramji submitted a written report. Chris Klassen and Rubina Ramji were responsible for the 2008 CSSR program.

She noted the following highlights:

- This year the CSSR received fifty-five individual paper submissions (three were special paper submissions requiring either double slots or entire sessions), ten panel submissions and one roundtable submission. Unfortunately, between the deadline for proposals and the final program being prepared, there were ten paper submission cancellations. In total, one hundred and four papers will be presented at the upcoming annual meeting in thirty-five sessions.
- Those members who had their papers accepted for presentation were approached to chair sessions.
- The program chairs assembled the annual program, booked the necessary rooms for each session, ordered the requested audio-visual equipment and placed the food orders for a variety of sessions. Thanks to Alain Bouchard for the French translation that was required on the program guide, and his assistance for putting together the program this year.
- The CSSR is responsible for sponsoring the international keynote speaker this year, an interdisciplinary event supported by the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies (CSBS), the Canadian Theological Society (CTS), and the Canadian Society of Patristic Studies (CSPS). The speaker chosen for this year is Dr. Daniel Boyarin, Herman P. and Sophia Taubman Chair, Departments of Near Eastern Studies and Rhetoric at the University of California at Berkeley, who will be giving the keynote address entitled, "Apartheid Comparative Religion: The Ideological Construction of Religious Difference in Antiquity" on June 2nd at 19:30 pm. The CSSR applied for funds from the Congress to support an international keynote speaker and received \$1000 and for aid for an interdisciplinary session, receiving \$250.
- The Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute is celebrating their 40th Anniversary and has scheduled a full day of panel sessions in this year's program.
- With the help of Robert Cousland, the local representative, the annual CSSR dinner has been scheduled to take place at the Westward Ho! Public House and Grill Room at the University Golf Club on June 1st at 19:00.

5.6 Student Essay Awards / Prix pour les essais des étudiant(e)s

5.6.1 Undergraduate Essay Contest / Concours d'essai pour les étudiant(e)s du 1er cycle

David Feltmate reported that the undergraduate essay contest received twenty-five submissions in 2008, two papers were disqualified because of length and one other was disqualified because it was submitted by a high school student. The winner of the contest was

- David Joubert-LeClerc, Bishop's University. "Christianity's Trial: Christian Heresiology from the first to the third century CE."

The runner up was:

- Jennifer Baker, Wilfrid Laurier University. “Incorporating all Conversion Motivations: Exploring the “Crisis Stage” of Religious Conversion.”

5.6.2 Graduate Essay Contest / Concours d'essai pour les étudiant(e)s du 2e cycle

Francis Landy announced that there were 20 entries in the graduate essay competition. There was a tie for the winning essay between:

- Joel Buenting, Department of Philosophy, University of Alberta. Essay: “Can someone choose hell?”
And
- Matthew King, University of Toronto. “Ideological Geography and Narrative Work of a Periphery Buddhist History”

Landy requested special commendation of the following essays:

- Meredith Warren, McGill University. “Honeycomb and Transformation: the Role of Food in *Joseph and Aseneth*”
- Aaron Rick Parks, McGill University. “The Greco-Roman Rhetorical Foreign Tyrant and Mark 10: 42”

Landy made two recommendations regarding the graduate essay competition:

1. The restriction that only students registered at Canadian Universities may apply should be amended to include Canadian students who are registered in Universities outside Canada.
2. The March deadline for the competition should be extended.

MOTION J. Gunn/C. Klassen (carried). The Executive accepts the recommendations of winners of the undergraduate and graduate essay competitions as presented.

MOTION R. Ramji/J. Gunn (carried). That it is the responsibility of the person judging the Graduate Essay Prize to establish the deadlines and conditions for the submission of essays as s/he sees fit and that the eligibility requirements for graduate students be: a) the student is a graduate student registered in an academic program in Canada **or** b) A graduate student registered in a program outside of Canada who is a member in good standing of the CSSR.

5.8 Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion/Corporation canadienne des sciences religieuses (CCSR)

P. Beyer is the representative to the CCSR. He gave a brief report on the status of the CCSR.

5.9 Student Representative / Représentant des étudiants

Janet Gunn reported on her activities:

- Updated list of student liaisons across the country, submitted student reports to the Bulletin and maintained regular communication with liaisons.
- Planned luncheon and strategic planning session for Graduate students at 2008 Congress meeting.
- In cooperation with the Graduate Student Committee of the AAR, a “Canadian corner” will be established in the student lounge at the AAR Annual Meeting in Chicago.
- In response to student request explored ways of putting Canadian Students studying in the U.S. in touch with one another. Will continue to pursue these efforts.

5.9 Société québécoise pour l'étude de la religion (SQÉR)

No report. (A. Bouchard, président de la SQÉR, absent.)

5.10 Canadian Federation for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (CFHSS) / Fédération canadienne des sciences humaines et sociales (FCSH)

No report. D. Seljak absent.

5.11 CSSR Web Site/Site Web de la SCÉR

Discussed under 5.1 above. M. Chapman emphasized that the website needs refurbishing and development. This would entail hiring someone capable of undertaking and maintaining this work. Suggestions of possible persons were offered. All suggestions of names and contact information for such persons are to be sent to M. Chapman.

6. Local arrangements representative Congress 2007

No report, local arrangements committee chair not present.

7. Other business / Varia

C Klassen will serve as program chair for the 2009 meeting with D. Feltmate serving in an assisting capacity. There was tentative agreement, depending on the results of elections at the AGM, that the Program chair for the 2010 meeting of the CSSR be David Feltmate assisted by C. Klassen with R. Ramji serving as back-up.

Landy informed the executive that the Ph.D. Program at the University of Alberta has been approved.

Though there was no motion at the meeting but there was agreement that R. Ramji will be responsible for the graduate student essay competition and David Feltmate will be responsible for the undergraduate essay competition.

8. Adjournment / Ajournement

MOTION M. Chapman/C. Klassen (carried).

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna L. Seamone