OTSEM
OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES:
EPISTEMOLOGIES AND METHODS

A NORDIC-GERMAN NETWORK FOR
OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

Minutes

From the Sixth Steering Committee Meeting, Lund, 2 November 2006

Present: Else K. Holt, Fredrik Lindström, Hanne Løland, Martti Nissinen, Hermann Spieckermann, Terje Stordalen. Not present: Karl William Weyde

1) Brief orientations

The OTSEM open website has been updated. Steering Committee members (and other OTSEM members) are kindly requested to log into the site (www.mf.no/otsem) *before* 15 November and report any needs for corrections or changes to Terje Stordalen.

Terje Stordalen has shifted his position from MF Norwegian School of Theology to Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo. As a consequence, the OTSEM administration will also shift to UiO, effective from 1 January 2007. This will mean i.a. that the OTSEM member website will move, and members will get new logons. That will require that every member signs a contract with the university. Having signed the contract, OTSEM members become associated users of IT services at the University of Oslo and get access not only to the members website, but also for instance to learning resources available on cite. Further information on regulations and procedures will follow later.

2) Application for Prolongation

A number of strategic and policy issues were discussed based on the draft application circulated to SC members in advance. Among these were:

• We are struggling with the NordForsk categroies for members ('studying members' and 'others'). OTSEM is conceived as a network fostering OT education and learing on all levels, including post doctoral. Indeed, supporting post doctoral members in their efforts to stay in the trade and develop even further academically is an important task. We need to construct our application (and network) in a way that makes the educative purpose of the network clear. It is an educative network, and therefore a too large number of members in the NordForsk category 'others' does not give an entirely adequate picture of the network. At the same time, OTSEM recognises the qualifications achieved by members holding a doctoral degree. This, along with Swedish term 'forskarstuderande' in the application form does not allow for post doctoral members to be counted at 'studying'. Our solution shall be to count only members presently in a PhD program as 'studying' members, and all other members as 'others'. At the same time, we will split the category 'others' into sub categories and explain the classification in our application form.

Beyond the issue of application, there is still the issue of how to organise the network so as to maintain its educative purpose and simultaneously recognise the qualifications of post doctoral members. OTSEM will continue to have an emphasis upon PhD students presenting their papers and enjoying exchange in the network. Post doctoral members will still be asked to respond (along with

professors). For the event that post doctoral members too wish to present papers and receive response, we shall keep some open slots in our annual meetings also for this purpose.
• The Steering Committee supports the idea to invite members to form topically focused sub networks and groups within the network. The establishment of such sub groups is facilitated in the OTSEM members web page. The Local Committee for the Helsinki conference will see how best to incorporate a session or some other event dedicated to this purpose.
• After OTSEM now finds its form (including the adjustments to support post doctoral members), we foresee a slow expansion of the OTSEM network. This will strengthen not only our work in the period 2007-08 but also the life of the network after the period of NordForsk funding is ended. In our application a relatively vague formulation will be given, since we have not yet made the proper contacts. However, our own schedule would be: (a) to include Estonian scholars as part of the Helsinki group already in our application (that is from 01.01.2007); (b) to invite prof. Göran Eidevall, Uppsala (presently an OTSEM member through the Lund group) to bring some of his students or colleagues to the Helsinki conference, to let them get acquainted to the network and then to discuss whether Uppsala would like to formally join the network at some time; (c) to invite representatives from Copenhagen to the Lund conference in 2008 in the same manner and with the same purpose as with Uppsala in 2007; (d) to explore whether it might be feasible for other institutions with a doctoral program in OT studies (such as Åbo Academy University and the School of Mission and Theology, Stavanger) to join.

3) The Fourth Annual Meeting in Helsinki

Martti Nissinen gave an orientation of the present state of planning and preparation of the Fourth Annual Conference. Some policy issues were also discussed. The SC is convinced that the Helsinki conference is very well on track. We can only hope that the NordForsk reply will not be too late for our planning….

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