

SEVENTH OXFORD INSTITUTE OF METHODIST THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

Wesley Studies Working Group Summary of Sessions

A. Personnel of the Working Group

Albert C. Outler, U.S.A., Convener
John M. Turner, U.K., Co-Convener

Arthur Attwell, South Africa	Thomas A. Langford, U.S.A.
Frank Baker, U.S.A.	John Leith, U.S.A.
Peder Borgen, Norway	Isaac Lim, Singapore
Ted Campbell, U.S.A.	Thomas W. Madron, U.S.A.
Roberta C. Chesnut, U.S.A.	Rudiger Minor, D.D.R.
Donald W. Dayton, U.S.A.	James H. Pain, U.S.A.
E. Dale Dunlap, U.S.A.	Edmund W. Robb, U.S.A.
John C. English, U.S.A.	Ian Suttie, U.K.
Joe Hale, U.S.A.	Timothy Smith, U.S.A.
Bengt Haglund, Sweden	Barrie Tabraham, U.K.
Richard P. Heitzenrater, U.S.A.	Harold Vanderpool, U.S.A.
Manfred Hoffman, U.S.A.	Procoro Velasquez, Brazil
D. Alan Keighley, U.K.	John Walsh, U.K.

B. Summaries of Daily Sessions

1. Tuesday 27 July 1982, 9:00 a.m.

Members of the working group introduced themselves to one another.

A question was raised about the immediate status of the Wesley Works project. Frank Baker explained that the Oxford University Press will publish only the volume containing the Hymnal, presently under preparation. The project's board of directors is currently seeking another publisher for it. (See Baker's comments on this project in the next session.)

Plenary Session, Tuesday 27 July 1982, 11:00 a.m. Albert Outler's plenary address summarized the previous progress in Wesley studies in two phases: 1) "Wesley Studies, Phase I" characterized the nineteenth century, and tended to glorify Wesley as a Methodist "cult hero"; 2) "Wesley Studies, Phase II" characterized the earlier years of the present century, and resulted in numerous monographical studies, usually considering Wesley in the light of some particular aspect of the Christian tradition. Although "Phase II" marked a considerable progress over "Phase I," Outler went on to enunciate his hope for 3) "Wesley Studies, Phase III," which would attempt to understand Wesley in the light of the whole Christian tradition. Outler expressed a hope that the present Institute might contribute toward the initiation of this third phase of Wesley studies.

2. Tuesday 27 July 1982, 4:30 p.m.

Discussion of Procedure of Working Group. Albert Outler suggested that short, informal reports be given to the group from individual members, on the basis of which a formal report could be developed to be delivered to the plenary of the Institute. Harold Vanderpool suggested that the group should divide its attention between methodologies of Wesley studies, sources of Wesley studies, and exegesis of Wesley with regard to specific modern issues. Thomas Langford suggested that the group should address the issues raised by Outler's plenary address. The consensus of the group was that it should discuss, first the present state of Wesley studies (beginning with Frank Baker's talk, below), then continue tomorrow with a discussion of Outler's address.

Frank Baker discussed the background of the Wesley Works project. Baker had suggested a new edition of the Wesley works as early as 1943 in an article in the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*. His own inspiration for this project had come from Fr. Maximin Piette. Baker stressed the critical scholarly apparatus to be made available by the new edition. This is made particularly crucial in the case of Wesley's works, since Wesley's evangelistic enterprises prohibited him from being meticulous as a scholar, documenting his sources, etc. Although Baker had prepared an "Agenda for Wesley Studies," he decided to present these later in the context of discussions of the plenary report of the working group.

Discussion following Baker's presentation centered on Wesley's "plagiarism," i.e., his casual use of sources, quotations, and even large blocks of material from other authors without giving them credit.

Richard P. Heitzenrater discussed his work in transcribing and interpreting Wesley's (manuscript) diaries. The purpose of Wesley's diaries was to keep a "chart" of his spiritual progress. The diaries were written in both cipher and shorthand in order to save space, and to keep the diary secret. Diaries were also utilized by the Oxford Methodists as a means of preparation for confession. The study of Wesley's diaries reveals a) factual details about Wesley not previously known, b) the background of Methodist theology and institutions, and c) a new perspective on Wesley's character in his Oxford period.

Outler concluded the meeting by stressing that the sort of detailed study of the Wesley sources that Baker and Heitzenrater discussed is essential to other approaches to Wesley studies. Outler and Turner agreed to confer concerning the agenda for the remaining sessions of the working group.

3. Wednesday 28 July 1982, 9:00 a.m.

Outler announced a tentative agenda for the week.

John Walsh addressed the group, and stressed the importance of seeing Wesley not only as Wesley presented himself, but also as he was seen by his followers. He also emphasized the need to study the popular culture out of which Methodism arose. Wesley provides a unique instance of a bridge between what French social historians have described as "low" and "high" culture. This can be seen especially in material included in the *Arminian Magazine*.

Discussion. Turner elaborated on Walsh's concern that both Wesley and the popular culture of his age be studied. Outler pointed out Wesley's uniqueness among those who ministered to popular culture in his attempts to bring learning and "high" culture to them.

4. Wednesday 28 July 1982, 4:30 p.m.

Timothy Smith addressed the group, and raised three particular concerns for Wesley studies. 1) Smith urged the study of the authority of Scripture in Wesley and the Wesleyan traditions. This would be particularly important, in the light of the resurgence of Biblical theology in this century. The other three items of the "Wesley Quadrilateral" (tradition, reason, and experience) should be seen as subordinate to Scripture in Wesley's outlook. 2) Smith urged a more careful study of Wesley's conception of holiness, especially in the light of the centrality of ethical issues in modern culture. 3) Smith urged the study of the ecumenical aspects of the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century, an example of which would be the parallels between the movements of Whitefield and Wesley.

Discussion. Some questioned whether Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection is itself clear. Borgen pointed out that the unique presence of an exegetical work among the Wesleyan doctrinal standards makes Smith's first point especially crucial.

John Turner addressed the group on the subject, "John Wesley: People's Theologian: Some Second Thoughts." Turner suggested that Wesley stands in a tradition of Christian conservatism which nevertheless exhibited a concern for the poor. Turner posed the following agenda for Wesley studies: 1) We ought to ask whether Wesley's theology "stands up" in the light of contemporary concerns. 2) We ought to ask whether it has in fact ecumenical relevance. We need to probe the questions, 3) who were Wesley's "plain people"? and 4) who were Wesley's opponents? 5) We ought to ask about the particular tradition of Christian conservatism in which Wesley stood. Turner stressed that we should avoid "Whig" or "Marxist" or other forms of historical interpretation and attempt to understand events in their own contexts. He suggests that a possible answer to 3) may be the artisan class (or, "elite poor"), not the lowest levels of the poor of Wesley's day. Turner further suggested with reference to point 5) that Wesley's conservatism does not appear to be that of Adam Smith; instead, he should be seen as a "radical" or "reforming" conservative.

Discussion. Velasquez stressed that, however much we must strive for historical objectivity, we never in fact approach historical texts or events with a "blank" mind.

5. Thursday 29 July 1982, 9:00 a.m.

John Leith addressed the group concerning the present status of Calvin studies, and important parallels with Wesley studies. Calvin's work, according to Leith, was soon eclipsed by scholastic theologies. Calvin's writings themselves were written for church people, not theologians. Reformed scholasticism found its task in putting together Calvin's statements in a systematic fashion, and interpreting them in the light of polemical issues. This approach dominated Calvin studies until the second World War. Some significant stages in the development of Calvin studies were: a) the publication of the *Opera Calvini* in the *Corpus Reformatorum* in the 1860s, and the scholarly activities surrounding the four-hundredth anniversary of Calvin's birth in 1909; b) a new stage of studies stimulated by the Neo-Orthodox theology of the earlier decades of this century, which issued in the publication of a

critical edition of the *Opera Selecta*, and Ford-Battles's translation of the *Institutes* in the Library of Christian Classics series; and finally c) a new phase that began with the foundation in 1974 of the European (later, International) Congress on Calvin Research, the development of the Institute for Calvin Studies at Calvin College, and the American Society for Calvin Studies. Some agenda for Calvin studies are: a) a movement to secure a critical text for the whole Calvin corpus; b) computerization of this text; c) studies of Calvin's theology; d) monographic studies; and e) attempts to interpret Calvin in the light of his usefulness for contemporary Christianity.

Discussion. The relevance of studies of Wesley and Calvin together was suggested, especially in the light of present ecumenical prospects in Great Britain.

6. Thursday 29 July 1982, 4:30 p.m.

Discussion of Leith's presentation continued. Attwell pointed out that the issues between Wesley and the Calvinists were still alive in South Africa, since the doctrine of apartheid was developed out of Reformed theology. Leith responded that this doctrine represented a false attempt to identify the kingdom of God with a particular historical movement. Outler pointed out that Presbyterians face a similar problem as Methodists, in their lack of critical studies of Calvin.

Thomas Langford addressed the group. Langford has studied Wesley from the perspective of the subsequent tradition of Methodist theological reflection. He explained his understanding of tradition as a dynamic force, as opposed to a static or binding institution, which provides norms for present reflection and action. Tradition represents the development of a theme, which, in the case of the Methodist theological tradition, might be seen as the development of the doctrine of grace.

Discussion. Further questions were raised concerning the nature of tradition.

Alan Keighley addressed the group and gave a synopsis of his research on "Some High Anglican and Nonjuring Influences on the Young John Wesley." Keighley's research shows (a) that Wesley's *Collection of Forms of Prayer* (1733) relies upon previous High-Anglican devotional works, especially those of Robert Nelson, who was a friend of the Wesley family, and (b) that Wesley's connection with the Manchester non-jurors was made not only through John Clayton (as is conventionally known), but also through Joseph Hoole (ca. 1682–1745), who was for a time curate of Haxey, the next parish to Epworth.

7. Friday 30 July 1982, 9:00 a.m.

This session heard reports from three persons who are working on Wesley in relation to the Church Fathers:

Roberta Chesnut addressed the group by considering "How do We Discover the Patristic Sources in the Theology of John Wesley?" She suggested a) that "theology" must be construed in a sense broad enough to comprehend the devotional and ascetic works that characterized the patristic sources of Wesley's thought, b) that one must consider also the concerns inherent in the renaissance of patristic studies that preceded Wesley, and c) that only then can one properly ask how particular patristic sources may have influenced Wesley

himself. Chesnut discussed Wesley's relation to the Macarian literature as an example of the manner in which one might pursue this enquiry.

Ted Campbell addressed the group by discussing his studies of "Wesley and Christian Antiquity." After pointing out his concerns that Wesley be studied with reference to social and cultural history, and with reference to religious values, Campbell commented on his research, which shows not only how Wesley conformed to Anglican patterns in the use of patristic sources, but also offered a challenge to Anglican culture by the use of those same sorts of sources.

Bengt Haglund addressed the group briefly, affirming his interest in the methodology enunciated by Chesnut, and explaining his proposed studies of Wesley and the Church Fathers.

8. Friday 30 July 1982, 4:30 p.m.

Harold Vanderpool addressed the group concerning his research into Wesley's medical practices. Vanderpool pointed out a) that Wesley's activities with healing were more extensive than has been realized; b) that although his practices may appear ignorant, they do reflect the medical knowledge of his age, and may have been better, so far as that Wesley criticized the medical profession; c) that Wesley was motivated in his medical practices by a concern for the poor, and the lack of this concern was the basis of his criticism of the medical profession of his day; d) that Wesley was concerned with health maintenance as well as healing; and e) that these concerns of Wesley's are relevant to modern issues, such as medical ethics, and personal health maintenance.

Procoro Velasquez addressed the group. He began by questioning why Wesley studies should be limited to a group of scholars, and pointed out the following means by which Wesley studies could bear significance for the current situation of the Church in Brazil: a) We should seek to discover the true Wesley by means of social-historical studies in order to find the meaning of Wesley's movement in its own historical context; b) we should then attempt to rediscover what is meaningful in Wesley's movement for specific areas of conflict today (such as the African context, the Brazilian context, etc.), not only with respect to Wesley's thought, but also c) with respect to Wesley's actions; d) we ought then to apply these things concretely in today's society, and e) retain them so far as they can be used in the service of today's church. Velasquez enunciated the hope that Wesley can be rediscovered not only as an emotionalist, or a dogmatist, but as a pastor of needy peoples. Various projects to this effect are already under way. Velasquez suggested that Methodist theology may be the only one that can be utilized in movements for human liberation.

Discussion. Minor pointed out that there is also a need for a center for Methodist Church history in the D.D.R., and the need for translations of Wesley's prominent works and theologies into other languages than English.

The group elected Campbell to serve as its representative to the planning committee for the next Institute.

9. Saturday 31 July 1982, 9:00 a.m.

Discussion of Report to Plenary: Outler suggested that the plenary report should attempt to set in motion an *élan* for a new approach to Wesley studies, as well as review works in progress. Discussion ensuing affirmed this general aim. It was pointed out that Wesley studies need to be freed from conventional stereotypes in order to relate Wesley to the secular world and to varied Methodist contexts. Lim stated that Methodists in Singapore are unfamiliar with Wesley. He has come to the Institute in order to learn how the Wesleyan heritage may be reappropriated. Dayton wished to make it explicit that concerns in Wesley studies may be relevant to persons in widely different ecclesiastical or social backgrounds. Keighley suggested that taking Wesley off his “pedestal” may help us to a better exegesis, as opposed to conventional eisegesis, of Wesley. Tabraham suggested that Wesley studies, as opposed to studies of Methodism subsequent to Wesley, are more needed in the contemporary British Methodist context. Heitzenrater suggested that new approaches to Wesley should not only be ecumenical and intercultural, but also interdisciplinary (i.e., in dialogue with sociological, anthropological, psychological, and other studies).

Outler suggested that the plenary report include a) an appeal for continuation of the Works project, b) the strengthening of skills and resources necessary for this project, c) a consideration of Wesleyan theological authorities, d) a consideration of the method of theology as a practical science, e) a consideration of Wesley’s hermeneutic, and the hermeneutic of reading Wesley, f) a consideration of Wesley’s place in Christian history, g) a consideration of our magisterium, in which Wesley is nevertheless seen as one magister, and h) a commendation of areas of fruitful research (biography, sermon registers, Wesley’s bibliography in a developmental perspective, attention to the older Wesley, work on a Wesley concordance, studies of Wesley in relation to the church fathers, Wesley as a doctor gratiae in the eighteenth century, consideration of Wesley in relation to other Protestant traditions, and of Wesley as evangelist and social reformer).

A drafting committee consisting of Outler, Turner, and Smith agreed to work on a draft report over the weekend.

10. Monday 2 August 1982, 9:00 a.m.

Report of Drafting Committee: Outler gave a summary of the draft plenary report, entitled “A New Future for Wesley Studies.”

Baker commended the draft report, and the group responded with applause. Chesnut urged a greater concentration on Wesley as a “lens” through which modern concerns can be seen. After several other concerns were raised, Langford suggested that individual members of the group might simply write these down, to be incorporated into the text of the report by the drafting committee. Dayton stressed that the paper needed more emphasis on the application and reappropriation of the Wesleyan tradition.

Plenary Session, Monday 2 August 1982, 11:00 a.m.

Outler read the revised plenary report to the session. In subsequent discussion, N. Wallwork wished to see more emphasis on and clarification of Wesley’s view of Christian authority and hermeneutics. P. Borgen stressed the need for the study of Wesley’s view of scripture as an

added item on the agenda. J. Fowler asked for a report on the Working Group's findings on Wesley and Christian antiquity. Outler responded briefly. R. Jones wanted to know what priority the Working Group would place on its proposed agenda, in the light of other projects and concerns in the church today. He questioned whether a "direct line" could be drawn from Wesley to contemporary efforts for the renewal of the church, due to changes in human understanding since Wesley's time. Jones noted, further, that this issue was not raised among the twenty agenda items suggested in the Working Group's plenary report. R. Tuttle wished to see an enquiry into hermeneutics not only as applied to Scripture, but also as applied to Wesley himself. C. Wiltshire wanted to see a) a discussion of Wesley's use of crucial terms, especially as they reflect Wesley's culture, and b) what Wesley demanded that the Methodist people do in relation to each other. Outler insisted that the latter item was already in the plenary report. T. Smith (of Atlanta) wanted to know how long, and how practical, the project of a Wesley concordance might be. G. Hunter stressed the importance of the continuation of the Works project. T. Runyon wished to hear more about Wesley's relation to the Continental Pietist tradition, especially with relation to Wesley's conception of the *ordo salutis*. A. Gussmann wanted to emphasize the historical facts concerning Wesley, as opposed to the later glorification of Wesley, and especially to see a concern to discover Wesley's secular relevance. J. Turner spoke in favor of this latter suggestion. C. Archer wished that agenda item #19 should be stated more radically, and more substantially. R. Matthews wanted to know how the Institute could help in the furtherance of the Works project. Outler suggested that individuals and groups should let their support for the project be known. D. Watson asserted that the Evangelism Working Group would support the plenary report, especially in its concern to discover how Wesley presented the Gospel. Watson suggested, in response to R. Jones, that Wesley is better known in, and more relevant to, the modern world than most figures from the church's past. A. Keighley proposed that a resolution be drafted supporting the Works project. This proposal was given general support by the session. Baker gave a report on the status of the Works project. H. Snyder suggested that the comparison of the rise of Methodism and the rise of industrialism and capitalism needed more study. W. Abraham wanted to see more concern for the study of Wesley's appropriation of tradition, and expressed his concern that this be seen with relevance to contemporary concerns for salvation and justice. M. E. Moore suggested that we also need careful study of contemporary society and culture in order to compare them with Wesley's society and culture. A. Kahn suggested a) that the work of the working group should continue, especially by cultivating younger persons concerned with Wesley studies, and b) that study be given to the world perspective of Methodist theologies. T. Hall stated that the twenty agenda items enunciated by the plenary report did not seem to reflect a "fundamental" redirection of Wesley studies as outlined in Outler's earlier plenary address. T. Smith responded that the sorts of basic historical research suggested in the agenda are necessary to what Outler called "Phase III" Wesley studies. Outler responded that in his opinion the agenda given in the plenary report would in fact bring about a fundamental reorientation of Wesley studies.

11. Monday 2 August 1982, 4:30 p.m.

Turner explained that the leaders of the Institute wished to have responses from the working groups concerning the form of the Institute itself. Haglund suggested that these questions be mimeographed for written responses, with only a small amount of time allowed for the public discussion of them. The group approved this suggestion.

Discussion of Continuation of Working Group Activities. Velasquez asked whether the activities of the Institute could be made available after the Institute. Outler responded that certain documents would be published, and suggested that the leadership of the Institute be requested to provide Spanish and German translations of the main papers. Langford suggested that conventional journals and other modes of communication could be used to further the aims of the group.

Discussion of Responses to Plenary Report. Chesnut suggested that a new paragraph be added explaining how historical studies such as those proposed in the report are relevant to contemporary concerns. Tabraham suggested that a paragraph be added in justification of the general enterprise of Wesley studies. Various comments to this effect were made, and the drafting committee was requested to revise the report along these lines. Hoffman suggested that the plenary failed to understand that the question of hermeneutics is in fact the key to the plenary report. He suggested that this could be made clearer, and that it should be made clear that this hermeneutic should be critical, i.e., should reject out-dated aspects of the Wesleyan tradition. Madron suggested that the language of the report be simplified so as to be understandable by “plain people.” Vanderpool questioned what audience the report was directed towards. Outler responded that the report was aimed at common persons, but also to those persons responsible to the academic community. Borgen argued that no concern for the contemporary relevance of Wesley should weaken our concern to understand Wesley within his own context. Hermeneutical matters should be formulated as questions, not as conclusions. Dunlap insisted that the report should encourage theological reflection from one’s own perspective, and should not necessarily be indexed to Wesley. English stated that Wesley studies do not rely strictly upon their relevance to the modern church, but rely simply upon the discovery of historical truth for its own sake. Secular historians, he explained, are not interested in the ecclesiastical relevance of Wesley. Robb pointed out that a sense of one’s roots is important for social transformation. Leith insisted that Christian theology cannot be formulated without reference to the Christian tradition. Keighley suggested that the gap between the level of sophistication of the working group and that of the audience of the report was larger than the group imagined, and in particular that complicated material such as that on pages 3–4 should be expanded. Vanderpool suggested that the languages of “stages” of Wesley studies suggested in Outler’s plenary address might be utilized in the plenary report. Outler refused this suggestion, but called attention to the suggestion of Chesnut. Baker stated that English’s concern is significant—e.g., we need to show where Wesley was a “plagiarist,” for strictly historical reasons. Chesnut clarified her earlier concern by stating that our attempt should not be to make Wesley “relevant”, but rather to make him *available* to common persons. Outler suggested that the new edition of Wesley’s works would make necessary a smaller edition of Wesley’s selected works. Smith asserted that even though secular historians do not speak of a “hermeneutic” of historical studies, they do in fact speak of their “preconceptions” and related concerns. Dayton suggested that it would be important for the report to specify some points of relevance to modern issues.

12. Monday 2 August 1982, 8:15 p.m.

Thomas Madron addressed the group by summarizing his paper, “Computer Use in History and the Humanities.” Madron outlined various uses for computers in these fields, such as word processing, notetaking and list management, generation of indices and concordances, content analysis of texts, authenticity studies of texts, quantitative historical research, and bibliographic work. He then gave some examples of these uses, utilizing three of Wesley’s

political treatises to show how the texts could be translated into machine-readable form, and then analyzed in various ways. Madron ended his presentation by pointing out the need for better software and data resources (machine-readable texts) in these fields.

Baker reported that the fourth volume of the Works project (the Hymnal) is being type-set by computer, and that an attempt will be made to obtain the tapes of it and subsequent volumes.

Donald Dayton addressed the group, and reported on the development of Wesleyan scholarship among the smaller and “more radical” Wesleyan churches in the U.S. and throughout the world. Dayton pointed out that almost all of the theological seminaries in these traditions (with the exception of Asbury Theological Seminary) have developed since the second World War. Dayton pointed to the importance of the Wesleyan Theological Society in this movement. The WTS has patterned itself after the Evangelical Theological Society, and has had to struggle with questions raised by fundamentalism, especially since the coming of younger scholars into the movement beginning in the 1960s. These discussions resulted in a change in the WTS statement on Biblical authority, which passed by one vote and which has opened up the Society to a considerable degree. In the 1970s a debate arose within the WTS over the propriety of referring to entire sanctification as a “baptism of the Holy Spirit,” which became customary among Holiness groups late in the nineteenth century. Dayton also reported that his own studies began with a study of Asa Mahan’s understanding of perfection, and have continued in the investigation of theological teachers in the Wesleyan tradition.

Haglund suggested that an understanding of the dynamics of this tradition could be helpful in dealing with contemporary fundamentalist and charismatic groups within the Methodist churches.

13. Tuesday 3 August 1982, 9:00 a.m.

Richard Jones, whose concerns had been enunciated earlier in response to the plenary report, was invited to address the working group and address these concerns more fully. Jones suggested that Wesley is not a significant figure in the recent development of Christian ethics, with the possible exception of the field of spirituality, in which Wesley may have made a significant contribution. For this reason, Wesley cannot rank high on our list of priorities for church enterprises. Within the history of the modern church, the nineteenth century bears more significance as a formative period. As regards practical concerns, Wesley is not of great relevance because his thought is pre-critical, i.e., predates the discoveries of Freud and other seminal modern thinkers.

Langford suggested that the question is not whether Wesley is of significance for one's own theological outlook, but rather how Wesley is relevant to the Methodist theological tradition. This is particularly crucial among the groups which the World Methodist Council represents, since Wesley represents the common point from which its member churches diverged. Baker stated that definitive editions of some of Wesley's works, such as the *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, will show Wesley's thought to have been more consistent than Jones has seen it. Chesnut suggested that the apparent "muddledness" of Wesley's view of sin can be traced to the conflict between Eastern and Western views of sin. She stated that the modern world's situation can be traced in many ways to the eighteenth century, and this fact makes Wesley of relevance to his modern interpreters. Smith suggested that Wesley may be seen as relevant in a post-critical age in much the same manner that the church's pre-critical Scriptures are seen to be relevant. Jones responded that the Scriptures are the authorized witness to the Christian faith in a way that Wesley's writings are not. A lively discussion ensued. Haglund suggested that the very priorities enunciated by Jones themselves reflect the Wesleyan heritage. Leith warned that judgements as to the relative importance of theologians are often made too hastily (e.g., estimates of the relevance of Augustine and Calvin prior to the rise of Neo-Orthodoxy), and that the same arguments applied against the relevance of Wesley or other representatives of the Christian tradition can be applied in principle against the relevance of the Scriptures. Jones responded that his priorities could be stated not only as his personal values, but as imperatives for the church. He clarified that he was not opposed at all to Wesley studies, but questioned whether the scale of studies suggested by the working group's plenary report was justified in the light of other claimants upon our studies and concern. In this light, he suggested, Wesley studies cannot be seen as a top-level priority for the churches. Tabraham suggested that the specific influence of Wesley upon individuals should be distinguished from the general influence that Wesley has had upon the Methodist theological tradition as a means by which Methodists appropriate the Christian heritage. He reflected that a view of ecumenism as a "showing of treasures" (as opposed to the deduction of a greatest common denominator among Christian groups) demands that we as Methodists know the "treasures" of our theological heritage. Heitzenrater suggested that the present situation of Christianity is more nearly influenced by the early twentieth century than the nineteenth century, and the nineteenth than the eighteenth, etc., so that there is no definitive breaking point before which Christian thinkers can be considered strictly "pre-critical." Nevertheless, the relevance of Wesley lies in his importance for Methodists' understanding of their roots.

Resolution Supporting Works Project. Langford presented a draft resolution supporting the Wesley Works project. After discussion, the resolution was amended so as to express the

importance of the project for the ecumenical church, and its relevance for the study of the history of Christian thought. Various other suggestions for promotion of the project were considered. (The resolution was sent on to, and approved by, the plenary of the Institute.)

14. Wednesday 4 August 1982, 9:00 a.m.

Discussion of Institute as a Whole: Borgen stated that he would prefer to see two papers on controversial issues, more attention to Biblical issues, and papers distributed prior to the Institute. Lim expressed his pleasure with the Institute and explained his intention to begin a library for Wesley studies in Singapore. Keighley stated that he would appreciate having at least one paper on the main theme of the Institute prior to it, and that he would appreciate having a clearer notion of what the working groups were expected to accomplish. Madron suggested that all persons presenting papers should simply bring enough copies to distribute. Attwell stated that he was pleased to have had the opportunity to come into contact with the “main stream” of Wesleyan thought, and that he would hope for a better representation of Southern Africa at the next Institute. Lim stated that many persons in Indonesian Methodism had been unaware of the Institute. Outler suggested that a continuing network of communication could encourage regional institutes of the same sort as the Oxford Institute. Vanderpool stated his concern that the field of “Wesley studies” be more broadly conceived. Dunlap expressed his hope that more work could be done in advance of the next Institute. Minor supported the notion of regional institutes, organized along linguistic or cultural lines. Chesnut differed with the suggestion that papers should be sent in advance. Smith stated his preference for advance papers, and Heitzenrater seconded this concern. Haglund explained that having papers in advance would be particularly helpful for persons in non-English-speaking contexts. Pain suggested a continuation of the working group as a society. Keighley suggested that the group might sponsor a newsletter, and Attwell and Baker expressed approval of this notion. Outler suggested that the next Institute might be focussed on the “Wesley Quadrilateral.”

John English addressed the group and expressed his concern that Wesley be understood in the context not only of the genealogy of his ideas, but also in the context of the historical circumstances of the eighteenth century in England. Aspects of this context that must be considered are social class structure, urbanization, the structure of legal institutions, common cultural presuppositions, and a range of other factors (nature and goals of government, justification of various forms of privilege, relation of church and state, fears and prejudices of the English populace, etc.). One must consider the rates at which each of these elements impacted Wesley, both by themselves and in correlation with each other. Wesley studies must appropriate the resources of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century “secular” English history, such as the Eighteenth-Century English Short-Title Catalogue, the union catalogue of eighteenth-century manuscripts, studies of the English political system, studies of eighteenth-century historiography, and studies of eighteenth-century views of sexuality, marriage, and families (e.g. , Lawrence Stone’s *Sex, Marriage, and the Family*). New material is also available on English Catholic history, and in the way of social-scientific studies of millenarian movements in this period. There is a need to relate Wesley studies to more general societies for the study of the eighteenth century. English expressed his hope that more scholars from other Christian traditions than Methodism become engaged in Wesley studies.

15. Wednesday 4 August 1982, 8:15 p.m.

Discussion of Continuation of Work of Working Group. Pain suggested that the work of the working group might be continued by the revival of the defunct "Wesley Society." Minor reported that he was considering putting together a European Wesley Studies Group. He stated that a meeting in Zurich in the near future would take up the suggestion. Hoffman would serve as a link with this group. Outler suggested that Lutheran historians be invited. It was also suggested that the group sponsor translations of some of Wesley's works. Keighley agreed to serve as a British link for the group, Borgen for Scandinavia, Velasquez for Latin America, Attwell for Southern Africa, and Lim for Indonesia.

Leith expressed his appreciation for having been invited to participate in the group. He expressed the opinion that the Christian tradition would be revitalized through the rediscovery of the Christian tradition. The group expressed to Leith their appreciation for his presence.

Discussion of Outler's Plenary Paper. (This subject was taken up again by request of the group.) Heitzenrater and Minor suggested that Outler's paper should be printed in its entire written form, not in the somewhat shorter form as it was given in the plenary session. Dunlap suggested that at any rate the working group should not attempt to revise the paper, and others voiced their approval of this sentiment.

Discussion of Plenary Report. Outler reviewed the revisions which were made to the report as a result of the Monday morning session (see report of session 10), viz., a) the expression of the concern to make Wesley available to others than specialists, and b) a particular stress on Wesley's Biblical hermeneutics. Heitzenrater expressed a hope that the report could be amended to correct the impression that Wesley studies are for a small group of scholars. Outler suggested that other corrections to the report could be sent to him after the Institute. Various suggestions were made for additions to the report's list of agenda, viz.: reference to women in early Methodism (Baker), reference to the Continental Reformation (Minor), reference to the over-all context of the European, American, and British revival movements of Wesley's age (Keighley), and reference to the importance of studying what happened immediately after Wesley's age (Leith). Smith questioned whether this might not extend the concerns of the group too far, although he agreed that Wesley's thought is inseparable from the subsequent Methodist and Holiness movements (citing, e.g., the Keswick movement in British Methodism). Dunlap expressed his concerns that a collection of Wesley materials could be made available to students, that the Wesley Quadrilateral be studied more carefully, and that the Halevy thesis be reexamined.

Note: This report has been produced on the basis of notes taken during the Institute by Ted A. Campbell. It has been subsequently read by Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater, and proof-read by Ms. Lila Kaesler. Reproduction of the report was supplied by Highland Park United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas.