

CURRICULUM VITAE

WALTER L. MICHEL

Revised September 1, 2001

PRESENT TITLE:

Professor Emeritus of Old Testament at the LUTHERAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CHICAGO

TEACHING FIELDS:

1. Languages: Biblical Hebrew, Biblical Aramaic, Ugaritic
2. Bible: Hebrew Bible, i.e., Tanakh (Jewish)/Old Testament (Christian). Emphasis on text, philology, poetry and exegesis in the Jewish and Christian communities.
3. The Ancient Near East: General courses on the ancient Near Eastern religions, cultures, and literatures, including history, geography and archaeology.
4. Specialty: Northwest Semitic Studies (Eblaite, Ugaritic, Phoenician-Punic, etc.) and their impact on the understanding, translation and meaning of the Hebrew *consonantal* text of the *whole* Hebrew Bible (especially the poetic sections, e.g. Psalms and Job).

I have studied M. Dahood's work thoroughly and critically. It is my conviction that Dahood's work is of *major* importance, because it makes it possible to understand the Hebrew text, in many instances, in a way which neither the Septuagint (Greek translation) nor the Targumim (Aramaic translations) were able to comprehend. The full exploration and the continuation of his work is very much needed, but it is pursued by only a handful of scholars.

PERSONAL:

1. Birth: May 19, 1932 (of Austrian parents) in Adolfovo selo ("Adolfsdorf," - named after the Swedish king Gustav Adolph), Yugoslavia, where my father served German Evangelical Lutheran congregations as a missionary, teacher and preacher ("Evangelischer Diakon"). I grew up in the "diaspora" (as a Lutheran Austro-German) and bilingual (German and Serbo-Croatian).
2. Marriage: Gundega I. Reinfelds, Professor of Chemistry (born in Riga, Latvia; Ph.D in Physical Chemistry) in 1964 (in Australia).
3. Children: Selga (1970); Dainis (1971), raised in a tri-lingual environment, speaking Latvian to their mother, German to their Austrian father and English in school and community.
4. Languages: I am fluent only in German (the literary as well as the heavy Viennese dialect) and in English. I also know quite a bit of Latvian. I am able to read Latin, Greek, and most of the Semitic languages. I also learned French, but I am no longer fluent.

EDUCATION:

1. 1970 Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison (Hebrew and Semitic Studies Department).
2. 1967 M.A., University of Wisconsin-Madison (Hebrew and Semitic Studies Department).
3. 1959 M.Div. (equiv.), University of Vienna. (Evangelische Theologische Fakultät)
4. 1952 Matura, Realgymnasium, Vienna, Austria).

CONTINUING EDUCATION:

1. 1980 *Loyola University*, Chicago. Summer seminar with M. Dahood on the Ebla texts which were discovered in 1974/75.
2. 1979 *Pontifical Biblical Institute*, Rome, Italy (April-June). Studies with M. Dahood, including thorough discussions of my manuscript on Job 1-24 in the light of Northwest Semitic studies (over 1,00 pages).
3. 1979 *Visit* at the Institute for Ugaritic Research (*Ugarit Forschung*) at the University of Münster, Germany (April). Discussions especially with O. Loretz and M. Dietrich.
4. 1972 *Yale University*, Research Fellow. Participated in studies leading to the publication of M. Pope's book *Job* (Anchor Bible, Vol. 15. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1973, for which I also prepared most of the Indexes.

5. 1966 *University of Wisconsin-Madison*, Summer Institute in Hebrew and Semitic Studies in Israel (including visits to archaeological sites in Italy, Israel and Jordan. Coordinator: M. Mansoor).
6. 1961, 1962 *Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary*, Maywood, Illinois. Attendance of courses one day during the week (throughout the academic years) and three weeks during the summers. Classes with Vööbus, Fischer, Kukkonen, Lindbeck, Rylaarsdam and several other scholars.
7. 1956-1957 *University of Heidelberg*, Germany. Studies with G. von Rad, G. Bornkamm, von Campenhausen, Pannenberg, Schlier, Köster and several other scholars.

SABBATICALS:

Sabbaticals granted by the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago:

1. 1978-1979
2. Fall 1982
3. Fall 1986 and Winter 1987
4. Fall 1989;
5. Fall 1992 and Winter 1993
6. Fall 1995

During the sabbaticals I have worked (and plan to continue to work) on the manuscript of *Job in the Light of Northwest Semitic Studies*. Three volumes are planned. The first volume was published in 1987.

ORDINATION:

1961 *United Lutheran Church in America*, January 1961. Since 1962 part of the *Lutheran Church in America* and since 1988 part of the *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

HONORS AND AWARDS:

1. Lutheran Brotherhood, Sabbatical Grant, see above.
2. Lutheran Church in America Unified Education Fund Grant, 1978-1979.
3. Aid Association for Lutherans Grant, 1978-1979.
4. Scholarships from the Board of Theological Education of the Lutheran Church in America, 1966-1969.
5. National Defense Education Act Title VI Fellowship, 1966-1970.
6. Scholarships from the Lutheran Campus Ministry, National Lutheran Council, 1963-1966.
7. World Council of Churches Scholarship, 1956-1957 (study: Heidelberg).

CAREER:

- 1988-2001 *Professor of Old Testament*, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.
- 1978-1988 *Associate Professor of Old Testament*, LSTC.
- 1972-1978 *Assistant Professor of Old Testament*, LSTC.
- 1972 *Research Fellow* at Yale University Graduate School, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures, working with M. Pope in courses in *Ugaritic* and *Job* and on M. Pope's third edition of his *Job* commentary in the Anchor Bible (January to July, 1972).
- 1971 *Instructor of Hebrew*, September, intensive, 1971.
- 1971 *Lecturer and Group Leader*. *Lecturer*, one course, "Genesis 1-11." 30 hours of lectures and discussions, and *Group Leader* in the First Quarter Program at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, October-December 1971.
- 1971 *Campus Pastor* at the Wisconsin State University of Platteville, Wisconsin, August and September 1971.
- 1970-1971 *Supply Pastor* for several congregations in Wisconsin (Atonement Lutheran Church, Beloit, Wisconsin, September 1970-March 1971; Peace Lutheran Church, Belmont, Wisconsin, July-September 1971).
- 1966-1970 *Graduate Student* at the Department of Hebrew and Semitic Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- 1962-1966 *Campus Pastor* at the University of Wisconsin-Madison for the National Lutheran Council (American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church in America).
- 1960-1962 *Assistant and Associate Pastor* at St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Dixon, Illinois.
- 1957-1959 *Teacher of Religion* in public schools in Vienna, Austria ("Evangelischer Religionslehrer" for the "Evangelische Religionsunterrichtsstelle").

TEACHING AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS:

1. University of Chicago, The Divinity School:
 - 1977 (Spring) "Job." In addition to the regular course I read a substantial part of the Hebrew text of Job with four students (three of them were students from the Oriental Institute) incorporating the most recent insights in Hebrew studies. This was, actually, like teaching a second course (for the price of one).
 - 1981 (Winter), "Introduction to the Old Testament: Pentateuch and Historical Books."
 - 1982 (Winter), "Introduction to the Old Testament: Pentateuch and Historical Books."
 - 1988 (Fall) "Introduction to the Old Testament: Pentateuch and Historical Books."
 - 1977-1991 During this time I was engaged by the Divinity School also as (1) reader of Ph.D. and D. Min. dissertations, as (2) participant in written and oral examinations for D.Min. and Ph.D. candidates, and as (3) the professor responsible for the preparation of the doctoral qualifying examinations in the area of Hebrew Bible.
2. McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago:
 - 1977 (Winter) "Ugaritic."
3. Spertus College of Judaica, Chicago:
 - 1989/90, "Elementary Biblical Hebrew I, II, and III."
 - 1990/91, "Intermediate Biblical Hebrew I, II, and III. Reading of selections from Genesis, Psalms and Job."
 - 1995 (Winter) "Religion of Ancient Israel."
 - 1998 (Fall) "Hebrew I (Lambdin)"
 - 1999 (Winter) "Job-Challenger of God."
 - 2000 (Winter) "Arguing With God: Examples from the Psalms. The law-court pattern of prayer as evident also in Job and Jeremiah."
4. North Park Theological Seminary, Chicago:
 - 1992 (Winter) "Job and the Theology of Suffering."

LEARNED SOCIETIES:

1. Catholic Biblical Association.
2. Chicago Society of Biblical Research.
3. Midwest Jewish Studies Association.
4. National Association of Professors of Hebrew.
5. Society of Biblical Literature.
6. World Union of Jewish Studies.

COMMITTEES:

I have served on the following committees

1. *AS A MEMBER:*
 - Academic Advisory • Admissions • Chicago Theological Seminary/Lutheran School of Theology Joint Doctoral Program Discussions • Church History Search Committee • Community Life • Comprehensive Examinations • Continuing Education=Extension Education • Curriculum and Instruction • Field Education • First Degree • Graduate Studies • Inter-Seminary Relations • Lay Ministry • Library Committee • Parish Life and Leadership • Personnel Committee • Planning Committee: "New Genesis Course" (Chicago Center for Religion and Science) • Professional Leadership Convocation: "The Economic Context for Ministry Today" (1982) • Recruitment • Search Committees (Homiletics, Christian Education) • Seminary Council • Worship, ... and many others.
2. *AS CHAIRPERSON:*
 - Transfer of Ministerial Credentials (12 years) • Biblical Division (2 times) • Recruitment • Continuing Education • Admissions
3. *AS COORDINATOR*
 - of • The Old Testament Professors of the Cluster of Theological Schools in Chicago (1984/85 - a very enjoyable experience!) and of • the LSTC Faculty Colloquies (1997/98, 1998/99)

CHURCH WORK:

1. *Chair* of the Interdisciplinary Faculty Panel/Transfer of the Ministerial Credentials Committee for the Lutheran Church in America and since 1988 for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1976-1988.

2. *Member* of the Professional Leadership Committee of the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Synod, Lutheran Church in America, 1984-1987.
3. *Representative* of the Lutheran Church in America to the Illinois Synod Examining Committee, 1977-1982.
4. *Translator* at the Lutheran World Federation Assembly, Helsinki, Finland, 1963.

LIVING AND TRAVEL IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES:

I have *lived* in • Yugoslavia (1932-1942), • Poland (1943-1945), • Austria (1945-1959), and • in the United States of America (1959-present). I have *also visited* in • Heidelberg, Germany (1956-57) • Rome, Italy (April-June 1979) and • Jerusalem, Israel (July 1993).

I have *traveled* in • Europe, • Canada, the Near East (• Israel, • Jordan, • Lebanon) • Fiji • Australia • Indonesia.

PUBLICATIONS:

A separate list of publications is available from me.

My major publication is the following book:

Job In the Light of Northwest Semitic. Volume I. *Prologue and First Cycle of Speeches Job 1:1 - 14:22*. *Biblica et Orientalia* (Sacra Scriptura Antiquitatibus Orientalibus Illustrata) - 42. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1987. XVII, 436 pages. Vol II (Job 15-28) and Vol III (Job 29-42) are in preparation..

REVIEWS: • Fensham, F. C., in *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 14 (1988) 229-230; • Job, J., in *The Journal of Theological Studies* N.S. 39 (1988) 168-169; • Kaiser, Otto, in *Zeitschrift für Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 100.1 (1988) 146-147; • Klein, R., in *Currents in Theology and Mission* 15.5 (1988) 448-449; • Müller, Hans-Peter, in *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 114 (1989) 23-24; • Tournay, R. J., in *Revue Biblique* (1988) 448-449. The most important review is the one by an expert in the field, namely, F. C. Fensham.

SCHOLARLY PAPERS PRESENTED AT PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS:

I have presented a number of scholarly papers since 1970. A full list is available from me.

For example, during the Summer and Fall of 1993, I presented the following scholarly papers at national and international meetings professional meetings:

1. *Eleventh World Congress of Jewish Studies*. **Jerusalem**, Israel. **June** 22-29, 1993.
Paper: "Hebrew Poetic Devices in the Service of Biblical Exegesis: Examples from Job (Job 25)."
2. *Society of Biblical Literature International Meeting*. **Münster**, Germany. **July** 25-28, 1993.
Paper: "Contra Dahood: Examples from Job."
3. *Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense*. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. Faculteit der Godgeleerdheid.
Leuven/Louvain, Belgium. **August** 24-26, 1993.
Invited Paper: "Confidence and Despair: A Study of Job 19:25-27 in the Light of Northwest Semitic Studies."
4. *Midwest Jewish Studies Association*. Fifth Annual Conference. Spertus College of Judaica. **Chicago**. **September** 12-13, 1993.
Paper: "Hebrew Poetic Devices and Exegesis: Breakup of Stereotyped Phrases or fixed Expressions, including Composite Divine Names."
5. *Chicago Society of Biblical Research*. Xavier University. **Chicago**. **October** 16, 1993.
Invited Paper: "Job 19:25-27: A Translation without Recourse to Changes of the Masoretic Text."
6. *Symposium on the Theological Interpretation of Scripture*. Theme: Resurrection. Northpark Theological Seminary. **Chicago**. **October** 8-10.
Invited Response to a paper presented by Dr. Ben Ollenburger (Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Old Testament) entitled, "If Mortals Die, Will They Live Again: The Old Testament and Resurrection." Friday, October 8. 7:00-7:30. Lecture: 7:30-7:40. Response: 7:40-8:30. Discussion.
7. *American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature 1993 Annual Meeting*. **Washington, D.C.** **November** 20-23.
Invited Paper: "Ugarit, Dahood, Job, and Exegesis." (Ugaritic Studies and Northwest Semitic Epigraphy Group).

LECTURES:

I have been invited to present lectures (of a more popular type) quite a number of times over the years. A full list is available from me.

The following list provides a few examples of such lectures:

- 1992, Sunday, November 15. 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
"A Response to the lecture by Byron L. Sherwin on the topic, 'Jesus: Brother or Other? New Jewish and Christian Perspectives on Jesus.'"
 Place: Bederman Auditorium. Spertus College of Judaica. 618 S. Michigan Ave. Chicago, Illinois 60605.
 KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Rabbi Dr. Byron L. Sherwin. Vice President and Professor Spertus College of Judaica.
 RESPONDENTS: Fr. Dr. John T. Pawlikowski (Professor, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago), Rev. Dr. Walter Michel (Professor, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago). Discussion following presentations.
- 1994, Sunday, February 6. 2:00-4:00pm
"How the Holocaust has Influenced my Understanding of the Bible and the Expression of my Christian Faith."
 Presented as part of
"How the Holocaust has influenced our Understanding of the Bible: An Interfaith Symposium." Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies. 618 South Michigan Avenue. Chicago, Illinois 60605.
 Participants: (1) Fr. Dr. Waldemar Chrostowski (Catholic Theological Academy in Warsaw), (2) Prof. Dr. Byron Sherwin (Spertus College of Judaica), (3) Rev. Prof. Dr. Walter L. Michel (Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago).
- 1995, Sunday, April 23. 1:00-3:00 p.m.
"A Christian in Crisis and the Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the Jewish Community."
 FROM THE BROCHURE: The Bernard and Rochelle Zell Center for Holocaust Studies at Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies and The Midwest Jewish Council invite the Chicago Jewish Community to join us in a solemn observance of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi Concentration Camps and the 52nd anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising "From Uprising to Liberation. Mather High School Auditorium 5835 North Lincoln Avenue, Chicago.
 PARTICIPANTS: • Prof. Timuel D. Black (Fellow at the Msgr. John Egan Center, DePaul University), • Rabbi Yehiel Eckstein (International Fellowship of Christians and Jews), • Zolman Emyanitoff (Vice President, Midwest Jewish Council), • Milton Herst (President, Midwest Jewish Council), • George Landman (Treasurer, Midwest Jewish Council), • Rev. Dr. Walter Michel (Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago), • Hasha Musha (Cantorial Soloist, Congregation B'nai Yehoshua Beit Elohim), • Fr. Dr. John Pawlikowski (Catholic Theological Union), • Rabbi Dr. Byron L. Sherwin (Vice President for Academic Affairs, Spertus Institute), • Joanna Turska (Noted Polish-Jewish classical musician), • Members of Chicago's Jewish Youth Groups.

ADULT FORUMS:

I have been invited to present Adult Forums on biblical books and topics from the moment I came to the United States of America (July 1959). A complete list of such presentations is available from me. Among the topics are, e.g., the following:

BIBLICAL BOOKS:

- GENESIS 1-11. A study of these chapters in the light of other ancient Near Eastern literature and the delightful message of these chapters for our lives today. This is one of the most often requested topics.
 TITLES OF PRESENTATIONS INCLUDE:
 - How the Ancient Near Eastern Religions have influenced the Biblical View of God. - Genesis 1: Thoughts About Beginnings. - Thoughts About Beginnings." A Brief Study of Genesis 1-3. - The Creation of Eve/Woman" or "The Gift of Eros. - An Exposition of Genesis 2. - Creation, Creationism and a Study of Genesis 1-4. - Royal Stewards - What it means to be Human and a Disciple of Jesus. - What Does it mean to be Human: Identity and Lifestyle. - What Does it mean to be Human according to Genesis 1-2? - The Creation of Eve. - Study of Gen 3 and a Discussions of the Meaning of Gen 4. - Genesis 3 and the Loss of Immortality. - Creation and Creationism. - Genesis 11 - The Biblical Understanding of Family. With special emphasis on "The Gift of Eros" and "The Bond of Love." A Discussion of what it means to be created as a Male and as a Female according to Genesis 1-3.
- ISAIAH.

TITLES OF PRESENTATIONS INCLUDE:

- The So-called Suffering Servant Songs in Isaiah. - Study and Meditation of the Lessons/Pericopes from the Book of Isaiah for Teaching and Preaching.

• **EZEKIEL****TITLES OF PRESENTATIONS INCLUDE:**

- Ezek 34:11-16, 23-24 (Sheep and Shepherd) - Ezek 33:7-9 and 3:16-21 (Watchman) - Ezek 37:1-3, 4-10, 11-14 (Dry Bones)”

• **JOB. JOB--CHALLENGER OF GOD.**

I have studied the Book of Job, in great detail, and I have read a great amount of literature on this book. I have also published a book and several articles.

TITLES OF PRESENTATIONS INCLUDE:

- The Book of Job and its Meaning. - Views of Suffering in Job. - The Abusive God and Arguing with an Abusive God. - You Have Not Spoken Of Me What is Appropriate. Text: Psalm 1 and Job 42:7-9. - The Chagall Tapestry: Job. Meditations while Standing in Front of the Chagall ‘Job’ Tapestry (Chagall’s last work) at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (345 East Superior). This is always a very moving event. The tapestry was presented to the RIC on Saturday, June 21, 1986 by the Friends of the Chagall Tapestry. A Seminar was held (concurrent with the presentation of the Chagall Tapestry) on Sunday, June 22nd 1986. Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman (of Emanuel Congregation, 5959 Sheridan Road at Thorndale Ave. Chicago 60660) and I led the seminar. - When God Seems Absent: A Study of Job. - Recent Studies in Job and Elihu as the Precursor of the Theophany. - Job--Challenger of God.

• **PSALMS.**

A Study and Meditation of Psalms. I have studied almost all of the 150 psalms in philological, literary and theological detail.

TITLES OF PRESENTATIONS INCLUDE: - How to Praise and Thank God

- How to Argue with God: Selected Psalms - How to Thank God for God’s Guidance and Teaching. Psalm 119.

• **ECCLESIASTES/QOHELET: Is Everything Fleeting or Futile?**• **PROVERBS.** Wisdom from the Ancients. Selections from the Proverbs.• **SONG OF SONGS.** Sexuality & Love Lyrics in the Bible: A Study of Song of Songs.

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs are almost totally neglected in Christian circles. This is tragic, because in these books God gives as numerous examples of how to praise God in our daily lives.

THEMES:

• Why the Hebrew Bible (Our Christian Old Testament) is Important for Christians. • Views and Aging in the Bible • The Ten Commandments. Their Meaning Then And Now. • Covenant and Covenants in the Old Testament: Their Importance for Understanding Aspects of the Christian Faith • Archaeology and the Old Testament: The Impact of the Discoveries of Ugarit and Ebla on the Translation of the Old Testament • Why Bible Translations Differ: Examples of Recent Insights into the Ancient Hebrew Text of the Old Testament • Biblical Views of Suffering and Death • Saving Violence in Scripture and Our Christian Response Today • Identity and Lifestyle. The biblical underpinnings of evangelism and stewardship as responses to our faith • Preaching From the Old Testament • Biblical Views of Suffering and Death • Suffering Because of the Truth • An Old Testament Scholar at Work, or Why Bible Translations Differ • The View of God in the Bible. Introduction: The View which Jesus of Nazareth had of his God. 1. God and Politics (Exodus); 2. God and Nature (Creation Accounts); 3. God and Ethics (the reasons for the prohibition against images) • What Does it mean to be Human: Identity and Lifestyle • That All May Enter-- Identity and Lifestyle and Jesus as “the Door” • The Many Different Messianic Expectations in the Old Testament and Among Jews of the First Century • Women in the Bible (OT) • Aging in the Bible.

PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TOPICS FOR CHRISTIANS ARE THE FOLLOWING: • Auschwitz: The Holocaust and We Christians. This is a particularly important topic for me because I am a Christian and I am determined to express my Christian faith in a way which is not anti-Jewish.

- How to Read the Bible After the Holocaust • Holocaust--The End of Christianity ... Unless. We Christians *must* express our Christian faith in such a way that it is not anti-Jewish. If we do not do so then we are just as guilty as the German National Socialists who (during World War II) attempted to exterminate all Jews. They based much of their ideology of their hatred of the Jews on the Christian teaching of contempt and hatred of the Jews throughout centuries. They quoted Luther’s diatribe against the Jews with relish.

